FOLLOW US:
thehindu.com
facebook.com/thehindu
twitter.com/the_hindu
instagram.com/the_hindu

THE HINDU

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2022

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

DELHI
CITY EDITION
14 pages • ₹10.00

Andhra Pradesh HC objects to ban on play 'Chintamani'
page 4

PLA Galwan Valley commander is Winter Olympics torchbearer
page 10

India records 1,000 COVID deaths, 1.7 lakh cases on Wednesday
page 10

Yuki Bhambri returns to Indian Davis Cup team to meet Denmark
page 13

PRINTED AT · CHENNAI · COIMBATORE · BENGALURU · HYDERABAD · MADURAI · NOIDA · VISAKHAPATNAM · THIRUVANANTHAPURAM · KOCHI · VIJAYAWADA · MANGALURU · TIRUCHIRAPALLI · KOLKATA · HUBBALLI · MOHALI · MALAPPURAM · MUMBAI · TIRUPATI · LUCKNOW · CUTTACK · PATNA

IN BRIEF

SC to start review hearing of case against Sidhu

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court will on Thursday open its review hearing of its May 2018 judgment letting Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu off with a ₹1,000 fine in a 30-year-old fatal road rage case.

NEWS ▸ PAGE 9

Delimitation panel likely to get another extension

SRINAGAR/NEW DELHI

The J&K Delimitation Commission is likely to get a second extension this month. This may further delay any announcement of Assembly elections in the Union Territory.

STATES ▸ PAGE 3

Shahdara sexual assault case: 4 more women held

NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has arrested four more women in connection with the abduction, sexual assault and public shaming of a 20-year-old woman in a colony in Shahdara last week.

CITY ▸ PAGE 2

PLUTUS IAS
PLUTUS IAS
G.S FOUNDATION COURSE 23-24
Offline Batch Register Now
Course Duration 10th-11th Month
7th Feb 2022
8448440231 www.plutusias.com

Process on to amend criminal laws: govt.

Clarify stand on criminalising marital rape, says CPI

JAGRITI CHANDRA
NEW DELHI

The government has started the process of comprehensive amendments to criminal laws, Minister for Women and Child Development Smriti Irani told Parliament on Wednesday in response to a question on marital rape, but warned against condemning every man as a rapist and every marriage as a violent one.

"The Government of India has initiated the process for comprehensive amendments to criminal laws in consultation with all stakeholders," Ms. Irani told the Rajya Sabha in a written reply to a query from CPI member Binoy Viswam on whether the Centre had taken a position on inclusion of marital rape as an offence under the Indian Penal Code.

Ms. Irani's comment comes at a time the Delhi High Court is hearing a clutch of petitions seeking criminalisation of marital rape and the government is soon expected to present its arguments. Its lawyers had earlier sought more time to formulate its stand on the ground that the issue needed wider consultations.

The petitions have sought striking down of the exception to Section 375 of the IPC, which says forcible sexual intercourse or sexual acts by a man with his own wife, the wife not being 18 years, is not rape.

> To condemn every marriage in this country as a violent marriage and to condemn every man in this country as a rapist is not advisable in this august House
>
> **SMRITI IRANI**, MINISTER FOR WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

When the CPI MP asked if the government had taken note of the contradiction in Section 3 of the Domestic Violence Act and Section 375 of the IPC, Ms. Irani, in her oral reply, said, "To condemn every marriage in this country as a violent marriage and to condemn every man in this country as a rapist is not advisable in this august House."

Section 3 of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 provides a definition for domestic violence, which includes physical, sexual, verbal and emotional abuse.

The National Family Health Survey-4 (2015-16) shows that 7% of ever-married women experienced spousal sexual violence. Among ever-married women aged 15-49 who have ever experienced sexual violence, 83% report their current husband and 9% report a former husband as perpetrators.

To a question from CPI(M) member John Brittas seeking a timeline for the amendments, Minister of State for Home Affairs Ajay Kumar Mishra said, "The legislation of such laws is a complex and lengthy exercise, given the spectrum of divergent views of stakeholders. The entire process is a long drawn out one and no time limit can be fixed or given for this legislative process."

Stating that marital rape should be granted immunity, otherwise the institution of marriage would be destroyed, BJP member Sushil Modi said it was difficult to prove when a woman had consented to sexual intercourse and when she had withdrawn her consent.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

SEE ALSO ▸ PAGE 3

₹3,358 cr. in MGNREGA wages not paid

Govt. reply in RS comes amid cut in Budget allocation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) workers are still waiting for almost ₹3,360 crore in pending wage payments, with the largest pending payments in West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, according to the government's reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.

This comes as the Centre reduced its Budget allocation for the scheme by 25% in comparison to revised estimates for the current year. If these pending wage and material payment liabilities are carried forward into the next financial year, it will further reduce the amount of money available to pay workers next year.

Wait gets longer: Women working at a children's park in Tamil Nadu under the MGNREGA. ▪ B. VELANKANNI RAJ

In a written response to a question from CPI(M) member John Brittas on the State-wise details of the MGNREGA work provided during the pandemic, as well as arrears in wage payment, Minister of State for Rural Development Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti provided scheme data as on January 27, 2022. On that date, pending wage liabilities stood at ₹3,358.14 crore, out of which workers from West Bengal had the largest amount of wage arrears of ₹752 crore, followed by U.P. and Rajasthan with ₹597 crore and ₹555 crore respectively. The scheme's financial statement, available on its website, shows that payment due for material costs amounts to ₹11,027 crore as on February 2.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

'Ram temple will be built faster under Akhilesh'

SP leader responds to Shah's remark

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Samajwadi Party leader Ram Gopal Yadav said in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday that the Ram temple in Ayodhya will be built faster and better if Akhilesh Yadav becomes the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh.

He was responding to a remark made by Home Minister Amit Shah at a rally in Chitrakoot in U.P. that Mr. Akhilesh could not stop the construction of Ram Mandir however much he tried to.

"Who is stopping the construction of Ram temple? We were opposing the financial irregularities done in the name of temple construction. Under Akhilesh, the temple will be built faster and better," Mr. Yadav said during a discussion on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address.

He said BJP members were not being welcomed in U.P. villages. "You should thank the Election Commission that it stopped election rallies. There are videos where people are chasing you [BJP] away," he said.

Electoral bonds worth ₹1,213 cr. sold in January

It is double the figure of April 2021

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

Electoral bonds worth ₹1,213 crore were sold by the State Bank of India (SBI) in January, with most of them (₹784.84 crore) being encashed in the New Delhi branch, pointing towards national parties, while the Mumbai branch sold the most (₹489.6 crore worth), according to a Right to Information reply this week.

This comes as campaigning for the Assembly polls in Goa, Manipur, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand is in full swing, after being announced on January 8.

RTI activist Kanhaiya Kumar, whose query the SBI responded to on Monday, said the amount of bonds sold this time had been the highest before any Assembly poll since the scheme began in 2018. In fact, the value of bonds sold in the 19th tranche, from January 1 to 10, was nearly double of that sold in the run-up to the last set of Assembly polls in April 2021 (₹695 crore).

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

Bird watch

Favourite pocket: Flamingoes flocking a wetland in Mumbai on Wednesday. February 2 is celebrated as World Wetlands Day to raise awareness about these critical ecosystems. ▪ PTI

Fitch Ratings flags high fiscal deficit target

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Rating agencies are not enthused by the fiscal consolidation road map and the lack of major reform proposals in the Union Budget.

Fitch Ratings said on Wednesday that beyond the higher capex drive, the Budget was short on major reform plans and the fiscal deficit target for 2022-23 at 6.4% of the GDP, was higher than the 6.1% it had anticipated. "Deficit targets in the Budget are a bit higher than our forecasts when we affirmed India's 'BBB-'/negative sovereign rating in November," Jeremy Zook, director and primary sovereign analyst for India at Fitch Ratings, said.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

BSP will make a comeback: Mayawati

She says poll can be a rerun of 2007, when it was ignored as a contender but won big

SOBHANA K. NAIR
AGRA

Addressing her first public rally ahead of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly election, Mayawati, president of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), said she was not "missing in action", as her opponents would like voters to believe. Instead, she pitched a reconstructed "BSP 2.0", where she is very much in charge, and warned media that the election could be a rerun of 2007, in which the BSP was completely ignored as a contender but won 206 seats.

"A section of media, which is 'casteist', has been spreading the news with the aim to demoralise BSP workers that the BSP leader is not visible anywhere," she said.

The truth, she said, was that as soon as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic waned, she returned to Lucknow from Delhi, and for the last year, she had been in Lucknow, reconstructing her party and rebuilding the polling booth-level committees and cadres.

Party's tagline

This is the crux of her campaign, too. Her party's tagline this time is "*Har* polling booth *ko jitana hai*, BSP *ko satta main lana hai*", which roughly translates to "we have to win each polling booth to bring BSP to power". "In the last one year, I have gone to Delhi only for two days when my mother died," she said.

In the 2017 Assembly poll, the BSP won only 19 seats. Its vote share exceeded that of the Samajwadi Party, which got only 21.82% of the votes but cornered 47 seats.

She blamed the dismal performance on leaders in her own ranks who "betrayed the party". Many of them, she said, had joined the other parties, put up "dummy candidates" in cahoots with the opponents. She did not name anyone, but the reference to former BJP Minister Swami Prasad Maurya, who recently joined SP, was not lost on anyone.

"I have paid extra attention to the selection of candidates this time. I have met each one of them before giving them ticket to avoid a repeat of the betrayal of the last time," she said.

Ms. Mayawati said the exercise to revive booth-level committees and meet the candidates ended only on Tuesday, and the first place she decided to come was "*Daliton ki Rajdhani*" or Dalits' capital, Agra.

"I want to tell the media which have been asking where is *behenji*. *Behenji* has been busy working towards the U.P. Assembly election. And I also want to tell them, just like the 2007 election, the results of the 2022 election will be equally surprising for them," she said.

'BJP works for the rich'

She was not soft on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), in a counter to rumours about the BSP helping the ruling party. The BJP, she said, only works for the "rich capitalists" and seeks to implement the narrow agenda of the RSS. In the name of religion, the BJP, she said, "promotes an atmosphere of hatred and fear". Media, she said, hide BJP's mistakes and accentuate their achievements.

"The BJP government has filled the prisons with innocent people who have been trapped on the basis of their caste and religion," she said.

BSP WORKING FOR A HUNG HOUSE ▸ PAGE 9

Plea seeks ban on slaughter of cows, bulls and buffaloes

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday asked the Centre to respond to a petition seeking "total prohibition" on slaughter of cows, old bulls, bullocks and buffaloes.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh asked the Ministry of Home Affairs to reply to the petition before the next date of hearing on March 15.

The order came on a petition by Brishbhan Verma, an RTI activist and social worker. He sought to extend the prohibition on slaughter of cows to bulls and bullocks. Mr. Verma said these animals continue to provide dung and urine that can be used by farmers as manure and fertiliser even if they cannot assist in agricultural work and breeding after a certain age.

The petition, filed through advocate Prashant Shukla, also stated that the existing cow slaughter ban discriminates between male and female animals.

Delhi riots: HC rejects bail to one, grants relief to two in murder case

Bail denied to accused who 'participated with mob' that set fire to victim's house

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has rejected the bail plea of a man facing prosecution in the murder case of 85-year-old Akbari Begum during the north-east Delhi riots.

While dismissing the plea of the accused, Vishal Singh, the court noted that he was not a "mere curious onlooker" but a part of the mob which set fire to a house, resulting in Begum's death on February 25, 2020.

The court, however, granted bail to two other accused – Arun Kumar and Ravi Kumar – in the same case, saying they were not seen actively participating with the mob in the video footage of the incident.

The case relates to an FIR registered on February 27, 2020, at the Bhajanpura police station by a man whose house was set on fire by a mob. According to the complainant, the crowd was chanting slogans of "Jai Shri Ram".

He complained that the mob broke open his house locks, entered the premises and set it on fire. He said his family members ran to the rooftop and were later rescued by the police with the support of local residents.

Up in smoke: Vandalised shops and houses in the Bhajanpura area of north-east Delhi during the riots in 2020. ▪ FILE PHOTO

'Too old to escape'

The complainant said his mother, Akbari, was too old to escape. After extinguishing the fire, the family found her body on a folding bed on the second floor.

The investigation into the case was later transferred to Special Investigation Team-II, Crime Branch, Delhi.

Justice Subromonium Prasad passed three separate judgments on the bail pleas of the three accused.

In the case of Vishal Singh, the court said: "The petitioner (Vishal Singh) was not a mere curious onlooker and the mob, in which the petitioner was participating, set fire to the house of the complainant resulting in the death of an old lady."

"The clinching evidence that tilts this court to prolong the incarceration of the petitioner is his presence in the video clipping wherein he is clearly identified at the scene of crime, dragging a scooty and pelting stones towards the residence of the complainant," the court said.

In Arun Kumar's case, the High Court remarked that "even though the petitioner was spotted with a lathi, he was not been seen attacking any person with the lathi".

"The atmosphere where incident took place was charged and considering that the petitioner (Arun) herein is the neighbour of the complainant, it cannot be said with certainty that the presence of the accused at that time with the lathi alone is sufficient to conclude that he was an active member of the unlawful assembly that set the house of the complainant on fire," the court said.

On Ravi Kumar, the High Court said the video footage only shows him muffling his face. "He is not seen actively participating with the mob. The petitioner (Ravi) only seems to be a curious onlooker," the court said.

4 more women arrested in Shahdara sexual assault case

Women's panel asks police to provide 'safe house' to victim

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police on Wednesday arrested four more women in connection with the abduction, sexual assault and public shaming of a 20-year-old woman in a colony in Shahdara last week, officers said on Wednesday. The police have so far arrested 13 people and apprehended three minors in the case.

In a related development, the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) on Wednesday issued summons to the police seeking immediate protection for the vicitm.

While issuing the summons to Deputy Commissioner of Police (Shahdara) R. Sathiyasundaram, DCW Chief Swati Maliwal sought a detailed action-taken report on the steps being taken by the police to ensure the safety and security of the victim and her family. The commission also asked the police to provide a 'safe house' to the victim, away from the locality where she was assaulted and where her parents live.

> **Police have been given 48 hours to appear before the DCW with a detailed report on measures being undertaken for the safety of the survivor and her family members**
>
> DCW SUMMONS

The summons issued to the police stated: "Delhi Police has been given 48 hours to appear before the commission with a detailed report on measures being undertaken for the safety of the survivor and her family."

The police have also been asked to provide details of previous cases, if any, against the 16 accused, including three minors, pertaining to their alleged involvement in illicit drugs and liquor trade. The commission also asked the police to share details of any previous cases against the accused arrested in a separate case of harassment of the victim's younger sister.

The victim, a married woman, was abducted from near her husband's house, sexually assaulted, tonsured and paraded on the streets by the accused, all members of the same family, who blamed her for the death of their minor son. The DCW had issued a notice to the police asking them to take cognisance of the incident and arrest the accused, after which an FIR was registered and a probe was launched.

A Special Investigation Team has been formed to probe the case and all the accused named in the FIR have been arrested.

Anganwadi workers start creche for their children at protest site

Strike enters third day; prepared for the long haul, says union

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Wednesday marked the third day of the indefinite strike held by anganwadi workers and helpers, demanding higher wages, near the residence of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

The Delhi State Anganwadi Workers and Helpers Union, through a statement, said it had also started a temporary creche at the protest site so that more women could join the protest with their children.

Poonam Rani, 40, said she came to the protest site at 10 a.m. with her two children – Samriti, 7, and Ankit, 10. "I left my children at the creche where they were drawing pictures with other children. We were at the protest site till 4 p.m.," Ms. Rani said.

About 20-30 children were at the creche at different times through the day, said the workers' union.

"The creche had toys and games for the children of the anganwadi workers. An art and craft session was also organised at the creche today [Wednesday]. Learning from the experience of their strikes in the past, the workers have prepared for the long haul," a statement from the union read.

Children of anganwadi workers playing at the temporary creche set up at the protest site. ▪ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Last hike in 2017

The honorarium for anganwadi workers in Delhi was last increased in August 2017 after 58 days of strike. The present honorariums of anganwadi workers and helpers in Delhi stand at ₹9,678 and ₹4,839, respectively, as per the union.

"On September 7, 2021, we met Delhi government's Women and Child Development Minister [Rajendra Pal Gautam] and were assured that our demands would be addressed within a week. But he never got back to us after that meeting. On January 6 this year, we tried to meet him again at the Secretariat, but were not given an appointment," the spokesperson of the union said.

DUTA rejects proposed UG curriculum framework

'It's different from what was passed in AC'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Delhi University Teachers' Association has rejected the proposed undergraduate curriculum framework that the university had released keeping in line with the National Education Policy.

In a letter to Vice-Chancellor Yogesh Singh, the DUTA said the proposed structures are different from what was passed in the Academic Council and the Executive Council of the university.

In the new proposal, there is a reduction of credits for award of three years honours degree, which will translate to a loss of direct teaching hours for students, leading to academic dilution. The association added that the changes or decrease of teaching workload would lead to job loss and hence was not acceptable.

"The University of Delhi has faced too many structural and course revisions in the last decade. These hurried and unmindful changes have led to ad hocism, instability and dilution of academics in the name of reforms. Therefore, the university needs to be careful and do proper consultations on curriculum framework with detailed syllabus among all the stakeholders," the DUTA said.

DU teachers protesting against NEP. ▪ FILE PHOTO

Opposes online courses

It added that DU's three-year flagship honours should continue to be offered and opposed the introduction of online courses for compulsory credits to obtain a degree.

The DUTA asked the university to discuss the matter in the statutory bodies for further strengthening the framework already passed by the Academic Council.

RML issues, revokes order on referrals

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Central government-run RML Hospital on Wednesday issued an order stating that patients referred by VVIPs and Ministers should be attended to on a "priority basis", only to withdraw it later in the day.

"All the references from the Hon'ble Ministers/VVIPs regarding treatment/admission at AVBIMS, Dr. R.M.L Hospital, New Delhi should be attended appropriately by doctor concerned on priority basis. This is for strict compliance," the order, which was later withdrawn, read.

Second order

A second order issued by the hospital later in the day stated that the first order was "withdrawn with immediate effect".

When contacted, an official at the hospital said the order was withdrawn as it was being "misrepresented". "There was no intention in the order that people referred by VVIPs should be given preference over common people. But it was being misrepresented, so we withdrew the order immediately," the official said.

City's COVID positivity rate falls below 5%

Analysis shows Omicron presence in 90 of 91 deaths

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The drop in COVID-19 cases in the city continued on Tuesday with the test positivity rate (TPR) falling to 4.73% from 5.09% a day earlier, according to a Delhi government bulletin.

The TPR had peaked to 30.64% on January 14 and 15 and has been on the decline since.

The number of new COVID-19 cases over 24 hours increased to 3,028 from 2,683 on Tuesday, mainly due to an increase in the number of tests, which stood at 63,982, about 21% higher than Monday when 52,736 tests were conducted.

Twenty-seven new deaths were reported, taking the total to 25,919, as per the bulletin. Of the total 15,426 hospital beds for COVID-19, 90.9% remain unoccupied.

Since COVID cases are declining across the country, the Delhi government's 'Mukhya Mantri Tirth Yatra Yojna' – facilitating free pilgrimage for senior citizens – is likely to resume from mid February, officials said on Wednesday. The scheme was halted in January amid rise in the COVID cases.

A health worker collecting swab sample near Anand Vihar ISBT. ▪ R.V. MOORTHY

Genome sequencing

Genome sequencing of samples of COVID-19-related deaths in January by the government has shown that 90 out of 91 cases, whose results are out, were infected with the Omicron variant and one only case was of Delta variant, an official told *The Hindu*.

Also, BA.2, a sub-variant of the Omicron variant, was found in over 90% of the 90 deaths, the official said. BA.2 is more prevalent in India now as opposed to BA.1 being more dominant initially.

"The death audit committee will look into how many of these deaths can be attributed just to COVID. Many deaths are due to other diseases," the official said.

Govt. inducts 30 engineers, 22 Green Delhi Fellows

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Wednesday inducted 30 junior environmental engineers and 22 'Green Delhi Fellows'. The engineers and the fellows will add strength to the government's environment enforcement and regulatory measures, authorities said.

"The Green Delhi Fellowship Programme is a one-of-a-kind initiative by the Arvind Kejriwal government for young, motivated professionals to innovatively and creatively support Delhi's environmental governance. DPCC too has been further strengthened by hiring 30 Junior Environmental Engineers for the first time in almost three decades," Environment Minister Gopal Rai said.

The fellows and engineers will work under the close supervision of senior officials on various environmental issues ranging from air pollution to preservation of forests, as per the government.

SEARCH FOR MISSING

Mansi

General Public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Mansi D/o Sh. Niwas R/o** H.No. F-102, DTC Colony, Shadipur, Delhi has been missing since 28.01.2022 from the area of P.S. Ranjit Nagar, Delhi. In this regard a case vides **DD No. 05-A** dated **28.01.2022** has been lodged at PS. Ranjit Nagar, Delhi.
The description of missing girl is as under

Age : 20 yrs., **Built:** Normal, **Height** : 5'2", **Face** : Round, **Complexion** : Whetish, **Wearing** : Yellow Kurta, blue jacket and blue jeans with shoes in her feet.
If anyone having any clue/information about this missing girl may kindly inform to the following:-

Website : http://cbi.nic.in
e-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax : 011-24368639
Ph. : 011-24368638, 24368641
DP/1225/CD/2022

SHO
P.S., Ranjit Nagar, Delhi
Ph.: 011-25704008, 25704009

TO ADVERTISE PLEASE CONTACT
Mr. N SELVA KUMAR
PH: 9820350726
selvakumar.n@thehindu.co.in
THE HINDU
India's National Newspaper

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

CHANDIGARH ADMINISTRATION
DEPARTMENT OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH, GOVT. MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL, CHANDIGARH
(Hospital Building), Sector 32-B, Chandigarh - 160030
Ph. no. 0172-2665253-60, Fax no. 0172-2609360
(ESTABLISHMENT BRANCH-I)
PUBLIC APPOINTMENT NOTICE

ONLINE applications are invited for filing up the faculty post on Contract Basis in this Institute. The details of posts and other terms & conditions are available on the website of this Institute i.e. www.gmch.gov. in.
The schedule of last date of receipt of ONLINE application is as under: -

Late date for apply online is	**21.02.2022**
Last date of submission of Hard copy alongwith ONLINE print of application form and requisite documents.	**28.02.2022** upto 04:00 PM in the office of Director Principal, (Diary & Dispatch Section), GMCH-32, Chandigarh.

NOTE:
1. For further details like educational qualification, experience, age & emoluments, application performa etc. may visit the website of this Institute i.e. www.gmch.gov.in.
2. Though every step has been taken care to ensure the accuracy for preparing the details of advertisement, still the department reserves the right to deal with any error
3. The applications received after due date will not be considered under any circumstances and will be rejected straightaway and no correspondence in this regard will be entertained.

Director
Medical Education & Research,
Chandigarh Administration
Dated: 02 Feb 2022

Advt. No.GMCH/1EA1/7(282-Vol-VII)/2K22/04411

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION (SPORTS)
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION
SPORTS BRANCH, GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI
CHHATTRASAL, STADIUM, MODEL, TOWN, DELHI
No. DE.41/Sports/Tender/2018/7133 Dated: 01/02/22

E-Procurement Tender Notice

Name of Work	Online Tender for Procurement/Supply of Sports Material to Various Stadia/Sports Complex/Sports centres/schools of Delhi
Tender ID	2022_DE_215538_1 2022_DE_215675_1 2022_DE_215677_1 2022_DE_215679_1 2022_DE_215680_1
Date of release of Tender through e-procurement platform	01.02.2022 from 10.00 AM
Last date and time for submission of samples	02.03.2022 upto 03.30 PM
Last date and time for receipt of Tender through E-procurement	02.03.2022 upto 03.30 PM
Opening of Technical Bid	02.03.2022 at 04.00 PM

Entire details can be seen at https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in

-Sd/-
(SANJAY KUMAR AMBASTA)
Deputy Director of Education (Sports Branch)
DIP/Shabdarth/0620/21-22

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY
MATERIAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
E-tender notice for the supply of stores, No. E-66225046, 66225047, 66225056
Dy CMM/WRS/KOTA on behalf of the President of India invites the following advertised tender through E-procurement system no. manual/postal offers shall be entertained. Tenders can be accessed under the link www.ireps.gov.in for details and for submission of tender. **S.No.-1 Tender No.-**E-66225046, **Short Description-** Set of Brake pipe for twin pipe for air brake, **Tendered Qty.- 150 sets,** Opening date-01/03/2022, 12.30 hrs, **Earnest Money- Nil, Estimated Value(INR)-** 1339713/-, **S.No.-2 Tender No.-** E-66225047, **Short Description-** Air Hose Coupling support complete, **Tendered Qty.- 3905 Nos., Opening date-** 01/03/2022, 12.30 hrs, **Earnest Money-** Nil, **Estimated Value(INR)-** 824814/-, **S.No. - 3 Tender No.-** E-66225056, **Short Description-** Argon Gas, **Tendered Qty. - 17500 cum,** Opening date - 01/03/2022, 12.30 hrs, **Earnest Money-71860/-, Estimated Value(INR)-** 35,93,100/-.
Dy Chief Material Manager
West Central Railway, Kota
कोरोना को हराना है , तो टीका लगवाना है

ARMY WELFARE EDUCATION SOCIETY
(Registered under Society Act XXI of 1860)
"Request for Information (RFI)"
For identifying possible service providers who can operate, maintain, upgrade and customize the existing school management system of **Army Public Schools.**
For details please log on to **www.awesindia.com**

Chief Engineer (PMU), Jal Shakti Vibhag Mandi 175001
Himachal Pradesh
NOTICE INVITING E-PROCUREMENT BID
Chief Engineer, PMU, Jal Shakti Vibhag, Mandi 175001 Himachal Pradesh, India on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh, invites the online design built and operate contract bid from eligible bidders of Indian Entity andADB member countries through online bidding system on or before 28th February, 2022 at 03:00 PM IST(GMT + 5:30 Hrs) on the site https://hptenders.gov.in

Sr. No.	Description	Estimated Cost	Bid security	Time	Cost of form
1.	CW-HZ02 Design, Build including Civil works and Operation and Maintenance for 5 years of Rural Water Supply Scheme at District Una	Rs. 126.96 Crore	Rs. 126.96 Lakh	24 Months including all season and 5 years O&M	Rs. 2500-Only

Last date of filling uploading the tender upto 28/02/2022 at 03.00PM and opened on same day at 3.30 PM
The tender form and other detail and condition can be obtained from the website https://hptenders.gov.in
Chief Engineer (PMU)
HPRWSP Jal Shakti Vibhag Mandi (H.P)
HP / 6634/21-22

Timings
DELHI

THURSDAY, FEB. 03		
RISE	07:09	SET 18:02
RISE	08:49	SET 20:21
FRIDAY, FEB. 04		
RISE	07:08	SET 18:03
RISE	09:24	SET 21:23
SATURDAY, FEB. 05		
RISE	07:07	SET 18:04
RISE	09:56	SET 22:20

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	20	11
Safdarjang	20	11
Palam	21	10

Delhi Palam Today
20°C Intermittent spells of moderate rain and thundershower with strong winds will occur at many places. The cold day conditions is possible.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
16°C The cold day conditions may occur. One or two spells of rain and thundershower will occur over many places of the city.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2019
All rights reserved.

IN BRIEF

Honey Singh told to submit voice sample

NAGPUR

A court here has directed singer Honey Singh to appear before a local police station to submit his voice sample in connection with a case filed against him for singing and uploading a vulgar song. PTI

J&K Delimitation Commission likely to get another extension

Move may further delay any announcement of Assembly polls in the UT

PEERZADA ASHIQ
DAMINI NATH
SRINAGAR/NEW DELHI

The J&K Delimitation Commission, which was constituted on March 6, 2020, not long after Jammu & Kashmir's special Constitutional position was ended in August 2019, is likely to get a second extension of its term this month. This may further delay any announcement of Assembly elections in the Union Territory.

Official sources said the three-member Commission, headed by retired judge Ranjana Prakash Desai, after sharing its first draft report with five associate members, including three Members of Parliament (MPs) of the National Conference (NC) and two Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MPs, in December 2021, is planning to make its draft proposal public this month for broad-based feedback from J&K's parties, civil society groups and citizens.

Activists of the National Conference protesting against the proposals of delimitation commission in Srinagar. ▪FILE PHOTO

With its second tenure nearing an end in the next 34 days, the J&K Delimitation Commission's members are likely to hold a meeting in New Delhi in the coming days to take a final call on the extension and its period.

Official sources said discussions on the progress of the work would also be held this week in New Delhi.

The Commission was granted one year extension in March 2021 after the National Conference (NC) boycotted its meetings, affecting the process of delimitation. The NC decided to participate only after Prime Minister Narendra Modi held an all-party meeting in June 2021.

Both NC and BJP members have already submitted their responses on the first draft proposal to the Commission. It remains to be seen if the Commission will incorporate suggestions in the draft proposal likely to be made public.

The Commission came into being by virtue of an Act of the Parliament, under the provisions of Part V of the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019. It is redrawing boundaries of seven additional seats for the 83-member Assembly.

Reservation of seats

In its first draft proposal, the Commission suggested an increase of six Assembly segments in the Jammu province and one in the Kashmir province. It has also suggested the reservation of seven seats for Scheduled Castes and nine seats for Schedule Tribes.

Most Kashmir-based political parties, including the NC and the PDP, accused the Commission of "gerrymandering" and termed the report "unacceptable". The BJP in Jammu, however, welcomed the proposal.

Family awaits return of missing man

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

The return of an "abducted" teenager from China on January 27 has rekindled the hope of another Arunachal Pradesh family whose bread-earner went missing from the Line of Actual Control in August 2015.

Members of Tapor Pullom's family have renewed their plea to the Centre and the Indian Army after 19-year-old Miram Taron, who went missing on a hunting trip close to the India-China border on January 18, was handed over by the People's Liberation Army of China nine days later.

Taron is from a border village in the Upper Siang district, while Pullom is from the Monigong area in the Shi-Yomi district.

Recently, they appealed to Law and Justice Minister Kiren Rijiju for New Delhi to take up his case with Beijing. "It has been seven years but we still hope that he will return," his daughter-in-law told *The Arunachal Times*.

Two decades on, women on the fringe of Uttarakhand politics

Women MLAs are still to touch double digits in the 70-member Assembly

NAMITA SINGH
DEHRADUN

The Chipko movement of the 1970s, spearheaded by the women of Uttarakhand, made national and global headlines. However, the political process in the State has not hugged them back and they are still awaiting robust representation in the Assembly.

The Congress, which in the neighbouring Uttar Pradesh, has made women the main pivot of its general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra-led campaign, has just given five tickets to women in Uttarakhand while the Aam Aadmi Party, a new entrant in the State, has fielded seven.

The Bharatiya Janata Party has not done any better by fielding eight women candidates, a bit more than 10% of the total 70 seats.

"Only 18 women had applied for Congress tickets in the State. We have given tickets to five of them," "said Mathura Dutt Joshi, general secretary (organisation) of the Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC). According to him, the Mahila Congress has its own units in every district. He added that women also get accommodated in the PCC.

BJP's spokesperson Shadab Shams said they have already given 33% reservation to women in the party organisation.

"The BJP always respects *matri shakti* (woman power)," he said. According to him, more than 100 women applied for the party ticket this time.

Of the total 13 women candidates fielded by the BJP and the Congress, four are carrying forward the legacy of their husbands. Mamata Rakesh (Congress), Savita Kapoor, Chandra Pant, and Kunvrani Devyani (all BJP) are contesting from Bhagwanpur, Dehradun Cantt, Pithoragarh and Khanpur respectively, seats which were represented by their husbands in the past.

While Ritu Khanduri (BJP), who is the daughter of former Chief Minister B.C. Khanduri, is in the fray from Kotdwar, the Congress has fielded former Chief Minister Harish Rawat's daughter Anupama Rawat from Haridwar (rural) seat.

Former Minister Harak Singh Rawat's daughter-in-law Anukriti Gusain is the Congress candidate from Lansdowne.

"Women's organisations have been demanding 33% reservation in the ticket distribution. But these are mere talks, nothing happens on the ground,"said Kamla Pant, associated with Uttarakhand Mahila Manch, an organisation which played a big role in mobilising women during the Statehood movement.

'Equations different'

On the question of lesser women candidates in the 2022 battle, Congress spokesperson Garima Mehra Dasauni said, "Uttarakhand is a newly created State. Political equations are different here. It will take time to break the shackles of the existing mindset. We have done an internal survey before giving the tickets. We are trying to give more representation to women."

According to Census 2011, the literacy rate for women in Uttarakhand is 70.01%. Approximately 48% of the total voters are women. They have 50% reservation in 7,426 gram panchayats of the State. In six Assembly constituencies women voters outnumber men.

It is hence a surprise that the number of women entering the Assembly has not toucheddouble digitsin the last two decades.

In the first polls in 2002, only five of the 72 women candidates were elected to the Assembly. In 2007, 56 women were fielded of whom four won. In 2012, four out of the 63 women candidates got elected. The 2017 Assembly polls saw the presence of 58 women candidates of whom five won.

42 MLAs wanted me to be Punjab CM: Jakhar

'Only two legislators favoured Channi'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHANDIGARH

Senior Punjab Congress leader Sunil Jakhar has claimed that 42 MLAs wanted him to be the Chief Minister of the State after the unceremonious exit of Amarinder Singh last year. Only two legislators favoured Charanjit Singh Channi, he said.

Mr. Jakhar is heard saying this in a video, which has surfaced online, while addressing a gathering in Abohar on Tuesday.

His nephew, Sandeep, is contesting the Punjab Assembly polls as a Congress candidate from Abohar.

Mr. Jakhar was among the front runners for the chief ministerial post after Amarinder Singh's resignation in September last year. But the party preferred Mr. Channi, who became the first Chief Minister of Punjab from the Scheduled Caste community.

"Forty-two votes went for Sunil (Jakhar), 16 for Sukhjinder Randhawa, 12 votes for Maharani Preneet Kaur (Amarinder Singh's wife and Patiala MP), six votes for Navjot Singh Sidhu and two votes for (Charanjit Singh) Channi," Mr. Jakhar said in the video.

He claimed he even declined the post of Deputy Chief Minister offered to him by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

Opposition parties in Punjab hit out at the Congress after Mr. Jakhar"s revelation, saying this showed that the party is run from Delhi and lacks internal democracy.

Senior Shiromani Akali Dal leader Daljit Singh Cheema said Mr. Jakhar's statement has exposed the "fraud" committed by the Congress high command.

'Riots accused using names to deflect blame'

Prosecution opposes Umar Khalid's bail plea in 'larger conspiracy' case

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Opposing the bail application of former JNU student leader Umar Khalid in the Delhi riots "larger conspiracy" case, the prosecution on Wednesday told a city court that the accused persons had "pinned the blame" of the riots on BJP leader Kapil Mishra and the Bhim Army in order to deflect their own involvement in the case.

Special Public Prosecutor Amit Prasad made the argument before Additional Sessions Judge Amitabh Rawat, who had clubbed the bail pleas of several other accused, including Mr. Khalid, in the case.

Mr. Prasad submitted the Delhi Protest Support Group (DPSG), constituted to coordinate various protests against CAA and NRC, tried to deflect its culpability in the riots by blaming Mr. Mishra's speech and the Bhim Army, which called for a Bharat Bandh days before the riots.

Former JNU student Umar Khalid. ▪FILE PHOTO

"...On one side we have seen you say that after a [bandh] call by Bhim Army, there is an escalation [in movement]. Then a complaint against Kapil Mishra...the first front is Bhim Army and the second front you are opening against Kapil Mishra...," SPP Prasad argued.

The prosecution also submitted that there was no participation of local residents in the anti-CAA and NRC protests. "When no local women are there, what is the option? Importing from somewhere..."

The SPP said the meetings conducted by the DPSG on February 16 and 17 pertained to the "collection of acid", as stated by a protected witness before a magistrate.

"If you are doing peaceful protests, then why are you stocking up on acid? The purpose was to create violence," said Mr. Prasad.

Reiterating that it was a "conspiracy of silence", he told the court that there were a total of 34 messages in the group between February 18 and 21. "...as soon as the violence began, there was absolute silence in the group, limiting the interaction to sharing messages and forwards," the court was informed.

CCTV footage

Mr. Prasad also played out CCTV footage of the protest sites to buttress his argument that several cameras installed there were diverted, covered or disconnected to ensure that no evidence was left.

Citing an alleged statement of Mr. Khalid that "blood had to be shed", Mr. Prasad asked, "You are not shedding your own blood. Whose blood are you shedding?"

Veteran actor Ramesh Deo passes away

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Veteran Hindi and Marathi cinema actor Ramesh Deo died of heart attack on Wednesday at a hospital here, his son Abhinay Deo said. The actor was 93.

Deo worked in many Hindi and Marathi films in his extensive career.

Memorable roles

Beginning his career as a villain in Hindi cinema with *Aarti* in 1962, Deo went on to deliver memorable roles alongside Amitabh Bachchan, Rajesh Khanna, Shatrughan Sinha, Hema Malini and Dharmendra in films like *Anand, Aap Ki Kasam, Mere Apne* and *Dream Girl*.

He is survived by actor wife Seema, and two sons.

J&K, U.P., M.P., Tripura topped in attacks on scribes

At least 6 journalists were killed and 108 attacked in 2021, says rights group report

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Tripura topped the list of States and Union Territories where journalists and media houses were targeted in 2021, a report by a New Delhi-based rights group said on Wednesday.

At least six journalists were killed, 108 attacked and 13 media houses or newspapers targeted across the country, according to the India Press Freedom Report 2021 by the Rights and Risks Analysis Group (RRAG) said.

"The highest number of journalists or media organisations targeted was in J&K (25), followed by Uttar Pradesh (23), Madhya Pradesh (16), Tripura (15), Delhi (8), Bihar (6), Assam (5), Haryana and Maharashtra (4 each), Goa and Manipur (3 each), Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal (2 each), and Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Kerala (1 each)," the report stated.

Photojournalists protest the killing of Reuters photographer Danish Siddiqui, in Hyderabad on July 17, 2021. ▪FILE PHOTO

While J&K recorded the maximum attacks by State actors, Tripura had the most cases of attacks by non-State actors, the analysis of data showed.

Eight women journalists faced arrest, summons and registration of First Information Reports. "The widespread attacks on the press freedom from J&K to Tripura are an indicator of the continuing deterioration of civic space in the country. The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, is an affirmation of the government's intent to crack down on media freedom," RRAG director Suhas Chakma said.

Spotlight on J&K

The spotlight on attacks against media freedom during 2021 remained on J&K. Out of the 17 journalists arrested or detained in the country, five were from J&K, followed by Delhi (3), Maharashtra, Manipur and Tripura (2 each), and Assam, Chhattisgarh and Haryana (1 each), the report noted.

In 2021, at least 24 journalists were allegedly physically attacked, threatened, harassed and obstructed from doing their professional works by public officials, including police, across the country. The police assaulted 17 of them.

'Marital rape exception takes away woman's right to say no'

Will put husbands out of the ambit of rape, Delhi HC told

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court was told on Wednesday that retaining the marital rape exception will nullify the object behind rape law as it takes away the right of a married woman to say no.

Counsel appearing for petitioners NGOs RIT Foundation and All India Democratic Women's Association argued that the exception, which is rooted in fiction, takes away a class of humans i.e. husbands of adult wives out of the ambit of the offence of rape, and the same cannot be permitted.

Lawyer Karuna Nundy, appearing for the petitioner NGOs, contended that the marital rape exception placed "privacy of marriage as object above privacy of an individual within the marriage" which violates several fundamental rights guaranteed to a married woman including Articles 15 and 19(1)(a) of the Constitution.

"Exception curtails a woman's freedom to sexual expression. A woman is not allowed to say whether or not she wants to have sex with her husband. Not only does it not recognise the right of a married woman to say no, it takes away her ability to say a joyful yes. A wife's consent and desire are reduced to a nullity," the lawyer stated.

A Bench of Justices Rajiv Shakdher and C. Hari Shankar was hearing petitions to strike down the exemption from prosecution for the offence of rape granted to husbands under the IPC.

Ms. Nundy contended that striking down the exception would not create a new offence but only create a new class of offenders. The existence of a high mandatory minimum cannot be reason for the court to not strike down an act that is unconstitutional.

Senior advocates Rebecca John and Rajshekhar Rao, who are amicus curiae in the matter, have contended that the exception is unconstitutional and ought to be struck down. Hearing will continue on February 3.

Soon, homestays to come up around Sultanpur National Park

Tourists would be able to experience local culture and catch a glimpse of rural life, says Haryana CM

A view of the Sultanpur bird sanctuary near Gurugram. ▪SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

Homestays would soon be allowed in the villages around Sultanpur National Park in Gurugram to promote tourism and provide an opportunity to the visitors to catch a glimpse of rural life in Haryana.

It was announced by Chief Minister Manohar Lal at World Wetlands Day programme held at Sultanpur National Park here on Wednesday. Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav was also present.

Mr. Lal said many tourists come to Sultanpur and Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary in Jhajjar to spot migratory birds and plans were being made for their stay. Recently, homestay policy was made for Tikkar Tal in Morni Hills and on the same pattern homestays would be started in the villages around these two places.

With this, tourists would be able to experience local culture and catch a glimpse of rural life, he said.

The Chief Minister said it was imperative to strike balance between earth and water as wherever there were wetlands, birds from all over the country and the world migrated to such places.

Every year 50,000 birds of more than 100 species reach Sultanpur. Similarly, 40,000 birds of more than 80 species come to Bhindawas every year.

Mr. Yadav said Forest Department had on record 49 Ramsar sites in India, including Sultanpur and Bhindawas lakes of Haryana.

Published by N. Ravi at Kasturi Buildings, 859 & 860, Anna Salai, Chennai-600002 and Printed by S. Ramanujam at HT Media Ltd. Plot No. 8, Udyog Vihar, Greater Noida Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. 201306, on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath (Responsible for selection of news under the PRB Act).
Regd. DL(ND)-11/6110/2006-07-08 • RNI No. UPENG/2012/49940 • ISSN 0971 - 751X • Vol. 12 • No. 28

A.P. HC objects to ban on stage play 'Chintamani'

STAFF REPORTER
VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Wednesday took strong objection to the imposition of a blanket ban on the stage play 'Chintamani' during the hearing of a petition filed by YSR Congress MP K. Raghurama Krishna Raju. A Division Bench comprising Justices C. Praveen Kumar and K. Manmadha Rao ordered that notices be served on the government, CEO of the A.P. State Creative and Culture Commission and A.P. Arya Vysya Mahasabha to file their affidavits by February 7.

Justice Praveen Kumar grilled the government pleader concerned as to why a total ban had been imposed on the play when its original source – the book written by Kallakuri Narayana Rao – was still in the public domain.

He observed that independent action could be taken against those portraying a particular character in a manner that might have hurt the sentiments of a community, but the whole play could not be prohibited from being staged on that pretext.

When the government pleader said the ban was imposed in response to representations made by the aggrieved community, Justice Praveen Kumar commented that many things had to be stopped if decisions were taken on such pleas.

Umesh Chandra P.V.G., counsel for the petitioner, argued that if a book was to be banned, it should be in accordance with Section 95 of the CrPC, and the Central Board of Film Certification was the competent authority to clamp down on a feature film. In this case, imposing a ban on the mere basis of representations struck at the very roots of artistic freedom, he asserted.

Sasikala, two senior Bengaluru prison officers chargesheeted

She was illegally provided amenities while serving sentence in corruption case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), Bengaluru, has filed a chargesheet against six persons, including two senior prison officials of Karnataka and V.K. Sasikala, a close aide of former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalithaa, in a corruption case, of illegally providing preferential facilities when Ms. Sasikala was lodged in the Central Prison in Bengaluru. She was serving a sentence in a corruption case against Jayalalithaa.

A submission on filing of the chargesheet was made before a Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi and Justice Suraj Govindaraj on Wednesday during the hearing of a PIL petition filed by K.S. Gita, a social worker and educationist from Chennai.

The ACB had registered an FIR in 2018 on illegally providing preferential facilities in prison to Sasikala and Ilavarasi.

ACB counsel Manmohan P.N. told the Bench that the chargesheet was filed on January 7, 2022 after the Karnataka government on December 30, 2021 accorded sanction for the prosecution of two senior prison officials, Krishna Kumar and Anitha R. Mr. Krishna Kumar was the Chief Superintendent, and Ms. Anitha the Superintendent, of the Central Prison at Parappana Agrahara in Bengaluru, when the illegal facilities were provided to Ms. Sasikala and her sister-in-law Ilavarasi, who was also serving a sentence in the prison.

They have been booked under Sections 465, 468, 471, 120B and 109 of the IPC related to forgery, using as genuine the forged documents and electronic records, criminal conspiracy, abatement, and Sections 13 (1)(c) and 13(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.

The PIL plea was filed early in 2021 complaining that the ACB had registered a FIR in 2018 on illegally providing preferential facilities in prison to Sasikala and Ilavarasi, but had not completed the investigation even after three years.

On June 11, 2021, the High Court had disposed of the petition giving two months to ACB to complete the probe and file the final investigation report in the jurisdictional court.

BKU's Dharmendra Malik meets Akhilesh, Jayant

ANUJ KUMAR
GHAZIABAD

As the photo of Bharatiya Kisan Union media incharge Dharmendra Malik with Samajwadi Party chief and Rashtriya Lok Dal president Jayant Singh went viral on Wednesday, it put a question mark on the apolitical nature of the organisation. The photo was taken on the SP bus during the election campaign in western U.P.

Jayant Singh with Dharmendra Malik and Akhilesh Yadav. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Mr. Malik said he was invited to discuss how the alliance could implement its promise on timely cane payment and guaranteed MSP for crops. "We suggested that a revolving fund of ₹15,000 crore could be created. It will help in making payment to farmers within three weeks, in case a sugar mill is unable to do so in the required period."

On the MSP, he said, the Kerala model could be followed where the government intervenes in the market when the prices go below the MSP.

"In Kerala, it is limited to fruits and vegetables. Here we could expand to all the crops," he said.

On the political connotation of the meeting, Mr. Malik said, thought he met in his private capacity, the BKU leadership has appealed to vote against the BJP.

"After that, farmers could make up their mind in this polarised election."

He said the SKM is expected to make an appeal to vote against the BJP.

Chargesheet against 8 in IS module case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The National Investigation Agency filed a chargesheet in the NIA special court in Bengaluru against eight persons, including former MLA B.M. Idinabba's daughter-in-law Deepthi Marla alias Mariyam, in connection with the IS terrorist Kerala module case.

The others named in the chargesheet are Mohammed Waqar Lone alias Wilson Kashmiri, Mizha Siddeeque, Shifa Haris alias Ayesha, Obaid Hamid Matta, Madesh Shankar alias Abdullah, Ammar Abdul Rahiman and Muzamil Hassan Bhat. The NIA had registered a case in March 2021 pertaining to the alleged terrorist activities of Mohammed Ameen alias Abu Yahya, a resident of Kerala, and his associates, who had allegedly been running various IS propaganda channels on different social media platforms, such as Telegram, Hoop and Instagram, and radicalising and recruiting new members for the IS module.

Earlier, NIA had filed chargesheet against three accused persons in this case in September 2021. According to officials, investigation revealed that all the eight accused are affiliated with banned terrorist organisation IS.

They were involved in radicalising, recruiting, organising terror funds and grooming like-minded gullible Muslim youth through different social media platforms to join IS.

Amaravati is A.P. capital: Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai informed the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday that Amaravati remains the capital city of Andhra Pradesh and the government has learnt from media reports that the State government has withdrawn a law to create three capital cities.

The Minister, during the Question Hour in the Upper House, also said the division of assets between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, as per the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, can be speedily undertaken with mutual agreement and the Centre can only act as a coordinating agency. Responding to BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) leader G.V.L. Narasimha Rao's query on "confusion" over the capital city of Andhra Pradesh, the Minister said the State government has the right to take a decision on creating a capital city.

Mr. Rai said that the Union Home Secretary has held 26 rounds of meetings to resolve the issues between the two States. "Union Home Secretary held a meeting on January 12 through video conference with the Chief Secretaries of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana along with representatives from various Ministries/Departments concerned, to review the progress of implementation of Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014.

Actors, distributors face action for GST evasion

K.S. SUDHI
KOCHI

Eight leading actors and a few film distributors of Malayalam cinema who together have allegedly evaded payment of Goods and Services Tax of around ₹20 crore are facing legal proceedings.

The intelligence wing of the State GST department, which confronted these actors with the statements given by producers and distributors of their movies over the past few years, has estimated the tax evasion by the actors at around ₹8 crore. A prominent young actor who is estimated to have allegedly evaded around ₹4 crore tops the list.

The evasion by distributors is estimated around ₹12.5 crore, according to sources.

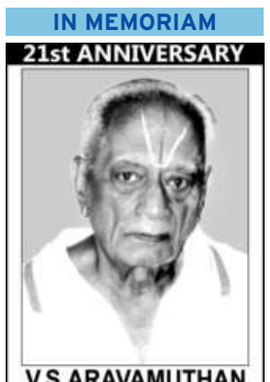
OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

M. Sivaramakrishnan
Retired Principal DTEA Schools, Delhi passed away on 2nd February peacefully at home at the age of 92.
S. Sridhar
9874491311

IN MEMORIAM

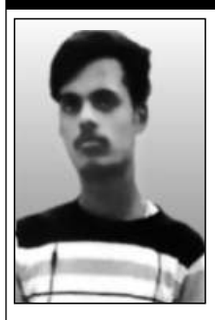
21st ANNIVERSARY



V.S.ARAVAMUTHAN
08-09-1913 - 03-02-2001
V.A.Raghu, Vatsala Raghu
Anjana Rajesh, Dipika Rajesh
A.Rajesh

In memory of your loved ones
To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:
011-43579797
from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. &
For Placing Advertisements Online log on to
www.thehinduads.com
DONATE EYES-GIFT SIGHT

SEARCH FOR MISSING



NEERAJ

General Public is hereby informed that one boy **Namely:** Neeraj, **S/o** Ram Lalit, **R/o:** H.No. B-132, Prem Nagar, 3rd, Nangloi, Delhi, **Age:** 17 Years, **Height:** 5'5", **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Long, **Built:** Thin, **Wearing:** Yellow and White Colour T-Shirt, Blue Half Pant Jeans has been missing since 10.07.2019 from H.No. 5366, Gali No. 69, Reghar Pura, Karol Bagh, Delhi. In this regard **FIR No. 180/19, U/s 363 IPC,** has been registered at **P.S. Prasad Nagar, Delhi.**
Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing boy but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing boy please inform to the following:-
Web-site : http://cbi.nic.in
E-Mail ID: cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-23011334
DP/1221/CD/2022
SHO
P.S. Prasad Nagar, Delhi
Ph.: 011-25725652 & 25751048

SEARCH FOR MISSING

HIMANSHU GUPTA

General Public is hereby informed that a person (depicted in the photo), **Namely:** Himanshu Gupta **S/o** Devender Gupta **R/o** House No. RZ-18, Gali No. 03, Shankar Park, West Sagarpur, New Delhi has been missing since 23.01.2022 at 11:00 PM from his house. In this regard a case vide DD No. 60A dated 25.01.2022 has been lodged at Police Station Sagarpur, New Delhi. His physical description is as under:-
Age: 28 Years, **Height**: 5'8", **Complexion**: Fair, **Face:** Long, **Built:** Normal, **Wearing**: Black Colour Huddy & Black Colour Jeans and Grey Colour Chappal in feet.
Any person having any information/ Clue about this missing person, may inform SHO, Sagarpur, New Delhi at E-mail Id- **cic@cbi.gov.in** or website: **http://cbi.nic.in**
Phone:
011-24368638, 24368641
Fax No. 011-24368639
DP/1015/SW/2022
SHO
P.S. Sagarpur, New Delhi
South West Distt., Delhi
Ph. No. 011-28522653, 28522654

ED arrests businessman for money laundering

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

The Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday arrested Maharashtra-based businessman Pravin Raut in a money laundering case linked to alleged irregularities in the sale of floor space index (FSI) of a plot by a firm, linked to him, that is a subsidiary company of Housing Development Infrastructure Ltd (HDIL).

The firm is under investigation by the ED and a few other agencies in connection with the ₹4,300-crore alleged fraud at the Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank.

Official sources said the ED arrested Mr. Raut following his questioning at its office in Mumbai.

I-T dept. checking legality of Noida private locker facility

Vault service being provided by a retired IPS officer

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Income-Tax Department, which has so far found cash and jewellery totalling about ₹8.50 crore from the lockers maintained by a private company and the premises in Noida, is trying to determine under which rule the vault service was being provided.

Following a tip-off, the agency conducted searches on the premises of a retired Indian Police Service officer, from where the vault service was being provided. While it had 650 lockers, it is learnt that only 20 of them were currently in use. The Department officials are examining the details of the persons to whom the lockers were rented out.

The vault/locker service provided by the banks is governed by the guidelines issued from time to time by the Reserve Bank of India. It requires them to follow the Know Your Customer norms and adhere to other directives. The relevant State laws are also to be complied with, apart from ensuring safety of the lockers.

"It seems that there are no such specific guidelines for the safety deposit locker service offered by private companies. The RBI directions related to banks. Such services are more common in major cities like Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata, mostly used by traders," said a former agency official, adding that similar cases have been reported in the past.

The agency had seized ₹12 crore from two private safety deposit vaults in Mumbai in October 2019. In January 2018, it had searched the premises of a private vault service provider in South Delhi.

The basement facility had more than 100 lockers. The agency found bullion, cash and jewellery with a total value of ₹85 crore. The Department had also detected 40 kg of gold and some diamonds from a private locker during the searches on a Gurugram-based private company in 2017.

"There have been many instances wherein such private locker facilities were used by tax evaders and other unscrupulous elements," said the official.

CLASSIFIEDS MART
TO ADVERTISE:
www.thehinduads.com

SITUATION VACANT

GENERAL

ST. ALOYSIUS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, Jabalpur (M.P.)
WANTED
The College invites the applications for the Posts of Principal & Assistant Professor for BALLB & LLB in Law Faculty as per BCI/ UGC norms. To fill the form please visit our website www.saiteducation.in.
Contact - 9981556411.
Last Date :- 10-02-2022
Joint Secretary DCJ.

EDUCATIONAL

EDGE IAS & ENSURE IAS
FREE INTERVIEW GUIDANCE
By Recently Selected Officers with 200+ Score
DAF Questions on Every Possible aspect
Exact UPSC Type
Interview by the Best Mentors
Send DAF on 9560596865/9910922241 or mail on ensureias@gmail.com

TRAVEL

MYTRIPSTATION.COM / Maldives (Rs.68999) & Goa (Rs.11999) Air Tour Packages /Whatsapp: +918700535913

PUBLIC NOTICE

NATIONAL INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)
IRDAI Regn. No. - 58
CIN No.: U10200WB1906GOI001713
Delhi Regional Office -II : Scope Minar, Core-3, 2nd Floor, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi-110092

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is for the information of all Policy Holders, Stakeholders, Ombudsman, Government Offices and General Public that our following offices will not be functional w.e.f. **01/04/2022**. All services will be provided by the new Servicing Office.

Sr. No.	Offices to be Non-Functional	New Servicing Office
1.	**DO XI (Code - 360500)** 2nd Floor, 6/90, Padam Singh Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110005	**DO V (Code- 360200)** 7th Floor, Hemkunt Tower, 6, Rajendra Place, New Delhi - 110008
2.	**KARAM PURA BO (Code-360303)** 201, Harsha House, Near Milan Cinema Complex, Karampura, New Delhi - 110015	**DO VIII (Code-360300)** 2nd Floor, C-3, Puja House, Near Milan Cinema Complex, Karampura, New Delhi - 110015
3.	**DO XXXIV (Code-360801)** 2nd Floor, Indraprastha Bhawan, 17-18, New Subzi Mandi, Azadpur, Delhi - 110033	**DO XIX (Code-360800)** C-1/3 Laxmi Tower, Naniwala Bagh, Azad Pur Commercial Complex, Delhi - 110033
4.	**BHIKAJI CAMA PLACE BO (Code - 360901)** - 617-620/A, Somdutt Chamber, Bhikaji Cama Place, New Delhi - 110066	**DO XXIII (Code-360900)** First Floor, 106, Palika Bhavan, Sector 13, Ring Road, R K Puram, New Delhi - 110066
5.	**NOIDA DAB (Code - 361303)** B-11, Vardhman Plaza; 2nd Floor, Sector-16, Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh - 201301	**NOIDA DO (Code-361300)** Sector 18, Dharam Cinema Complex, Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh - 201301

(DHANANJAY SINGH) Deputy General Manager

Karnataka Veterinary, Animal & Fisheries Sciences University, Bidar
E-PROCUREMENT MODE
7 Days Tender Notification
No. R/EO/Eproc/KVAFSU/eProc.74/2021-22/1298-A Dt.: 01.02.2022
KVAFSU Bidar invites bids through e-procurement in 2 covers system for Supply of **Equipments, Annual Maintenance of Laboratory and Specialized works** required for IAH&VB, Hebbal, Bengaluru of KVAFSU, Bidar from Tenderers registered in e-procurement cell of Government of Karnataka, Total cost of the tendered amount is **Rs. 194.00 Lakhs.**
7 Days Tender Notification
No. R/EO/Eproc/KVAFSU/eProc.75/2021-22/1299-A Dt.: 01.02.2022
KVAFSU Bidar invites bids through e-procurement in 2 covers system for Supply of **Equipments** required for Veterinary College, Hebbal, Bengaluru of KVAFSU, Bidar from Tenderers registered in e-procurement cell of Government of Karnataka, Total cost of the tendered amount is **Rs. 27.90 Lakhs.**
The detailed notification of tender can be obtained by logging on to website: **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **03.02.2022**. The last date for uploading tender documents is **10.02.2022** up to **5:00 PM**. Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.
DIPR/DDU/LC/3182/2021-22
Sd/- Er. Ramappa. H. Korawar, Estate Officer(I/c), KVAFSU, Bidar-585226. Ph.: 9483969344
COVID-19. DO NOT PANIC, BE AWARE
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

DEPARTMENT OF STAMPS AND REGISTRATION
Office of The Inspector General of Registration and Commissioner of Stamps, Kandaya Bhavan, 8th Floor, KG Road, Bengaluru - 560009 Tel: 080-22220436, e-mail: aigrcomp@karnataka.gov.in
No. Comp/108/2020-21 Date: 02-02-2022
TENDER NOTIFICATION
Tenders are invited by the Department of Stamps and Registration for **Selection of a Service Provider for the "Procurement, Installation, Operations and Maintenance of IT Infrastructure along with Deployment of Operational Manpower in the Department Offices" on BOO (Build Own and Operate) Model .** The tenders forms, terms and conditions may be obtained through e-tender procurement. The last date for submitting completed tender forms is **04-04-2022 till 5.30 PM.** For further details please contact **Assistant Inspector General of Registration (Computers)**
DIPR/DDU/YC/3172/2021-22
Sd/- Inspector General of Registration and Commissioner of Stamps, Bengaluru.
COVID-19. DO NOT PANIC, BE AWARE
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

DR. HARISINGH GOUR VISHWAVIDYALA, SAGAR (M.P.)
(A Central University)
Telephone No.: 07582-297115
Advt. No. : R/NT/2022/02 02 February 2022
RECRUITMENT NOTICE
Online Applications in the prescribed format are invited from the eligible candidates for non-teaching Group A Positions i.e. Registrar, "Finance Officer and Controller of Examinations on Direct/Deputation basis. The Last Date for receipt of Online Application is 19.03.2022.
First Finance Officer
For further details, visit the University Official Website: www.dhsgsu.ac.in
Registrar (Offg.)

CBI takes over probe into royal family member's murder

DEVESH K. PANDEY
NEW DELHI

The CBI has taken over the probe into the murder of Vishwanath Nair, nephew of the Rajmata of erstwhile Kawardha princely state in Chhattisgarh. His body was found in a Kabirdham farmhouse in August last year.

The case has been reregistered following a directive from the Chhattisgarh High Court. The murder was earlier being investigated by the local police, which had apprehended five accused, including four minors. The police determined robbery as the motive. However, the victim's family raised doubts about the findings.

Rajmata's will

As alleged in the petition, there were major differences between the Rajmata and her son and she was quite close to her nephew. The Rajmata had also executed a will transferring all her property to both the daughters and the nephew. No share was given to her son, who is one of the respondents.

After the Rajmata's death, it is alleged, her daughters also reposed faith in the nephew for managing and administering not only their properties but also that of the Rajmata. "This closeness of late Vishwanath Nair with Rajmata and her daughters was hurting respondent No.8 and caused anguish and hatred in his heart and before the murder of Vishwanath Nair, he (respondent No.8) threatened him with dire consequences," it alleged.

The petitioners alleged that the police were informed about the animosity, but it was not probed. They also disputed the post-mortem report, stating that the doctor opined that two weapons, a blunt-heavy object and a sharp-heavy object, were used.

A NEW CHAPTER OF GANDHI'S VISION
NYAY DELIVERED TO LAST MILE

Inaugurating in the August Presence of

Hon'ble Member of Parliament

Shri Rahul Gandhi

On 3rd February, 2022

Nyay Brings New Hope

Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Bhoomihin Krishi Majdoor Nyay Yojana

Transfer of First Installment to More than 3.5 lakh Beneficiaries
₹6000 per Person, ₹212 cr per Annum

Centre to Foster
Mahatma Gandhi's Vision & Philosophy

Sewagram Ashram
in Naya Raipur

Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony

Nurturing Young Leadership in the State

Rajiv Yuva Mitan Club
Inauguration Ceremony

Eternal Flame
Honoring the Sacrifices of
Martyred Soldiers

Chhattisgarh Amar Jawan Jyoti

Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony

Imperial excess

Governors must work within constitutional parameters, not as agents of the Centre

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's outburst against Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar on Monday was not a first but it brought to the fore, yet again, the role of the Governor in relation with the elected government and legislature. Mr. Dhankhar and his counterparts in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra appear to be testing the limits of their power and confronting the elected governments and legislatures in recent weeks. Tired of Mr. Dhankhar's constant tirade against her on Twitter, Ms. Banerjee blocked him on the platform. The Governor then sent her a message for "dialogue and harmony amongst constitutional functionaries" but promptly posted that too on Twitter. The Chief Minister said the Governor was trying to treat the elected government as "bonded labour". He has been summoning the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police on a regular basis, and when they do not turn up, taking to Twitter and often tagging the Chief Minister. Mr. Dhankhar also had a run-in with Assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee recently, on the premises of the State Assembly. He has withheld assent to the Howrah Municipal Corporation (Amendment) Bill 2021, delaying polls to the civic body. He has made allegations of impropriety in welfare schemes, questioned Government claims about investments in the State, and taken up the cudgels for the Opposition BJP.

In Maharashtra, Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari has stalled the election of Speaker since the post fell vacant in February 2021. He has taken umbrage over the amendments in the legislative rules for holding the Speaker's election through voice vote instead of secret ballot. The Governor's view that the State Assembly cannot decide its own rules is unacceptable to the ruling coalition, but is being cheered by the Opposition BJP. Mr. Koshyari had in the past batted for the BJP, supporting its demand for a special session of the Assembly on women's safety and security. He had refused to accept the recommendation of the Council of Ministers on the nomination of 12 members to the Legislative Council, until the matter reached the High Court. In Tamil Nadu, Governor R.N. Ravi has not acted upon the T.N. Admission to Undergraduate Medical Degree Courses Bill, adopted by the Assembly in September 2021. The Governor is required to either send it to the President of India for approval or return it for reconsideration by the Assembly, but the indefinite delay in taking a decision amounts to undermining the legislature, and is unjustifiable. The Bill relates to a question of State-Centre relations, as it proposes to dispense with the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) for medical graduate admissions in the State. NEET has been criticised for curtailing State powers, and the Governor's delay in processing the Bill is only aggravating the situation. Some of these issues may require debate and discussion before resolution. But any imperial overtone of Governors can only do harm to the constitutional scheme of things.

A dose of realism

Disease prevention with COVID-appropriate behaviour and vaccination is still necessary

The World Health Organization (WHO) chief, Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, in a recent briefing, noted that 90 million cases of coronavirus have been reported since the Omicron variant was first identified 10 weeks ago. His statement comes in the context of many countries easing their restrictive movement measures amid public fatigue. From WHO's perspective, the blanket lifting of restrictions poses a problem as most people appear to believe that Omicron is less threatening compared to previous variants and that two shots of vaccines are an adequate defence against the virus. He underlined that a narrative that "preventing transmission is no longer possible and no longer necessary" had taken hold and this was problematic. This was false, he underscored at the briefing, as the virus continues to evolve and four of the six WHO regions globally are reporting an increasing trend in deaths.

Britain, France, Ireland, the Netherlands and Finland are on the path of easing COVID-19 restrictions. In India too, with current evidence pointing to a fall in the daily caseload, several States have moved to ease movement restrictions. WHO has also said that the newly emerged variant, BA.2, is as transmissible as Omicron and that all measures needed to contain the original Omicron variant are applicable to it too. After facing criticism that it did not move soon enough in 2020 to alert the world of the magnitude of the calamity that it awaited, WHO, which takes a global view of the crisis, cannot be faulted for airing concerns from the evidence available so far. It has also consistently warned that the pandemic cannot be over until all regions of the world are sufficiently vaccinated and that economic inequity continues to be a driver of the pandemic. The coronavirus, while secular in its infectiousness, affects nations differently. The richer ones can afford to bear the consequences of disrupted social activity a little longer than the rest. Just about half the world has been fully vaccinated; unfortunately, so far, the available vaccines are only equipped to protect against disease rather than infection. WHO must use its influence to continue to encourage vaccination and step in with advice and expertise to help countries access necessary doses and bear upon governments to do more to meet vaccination targets. Framing the pandemic as a war that humanity must 'win' was useful to accelerate the development of vaccines. However, science is not equipped yet to predict the future trajectory of the coronavirus; COVID-appropriate behaviour, vaccines and accessible health care remain the only credible defences.

There is a discourse shift in Uttar Pradesh

Economic hardship, chronic unemployment and farm distress appear to be at the centre of public discussion

ZOYA HASAN

The Uttar Pradesh elections of 2022 are the most important Assembly elections in living memory. The poll outcome in India's weightiest State will be a crucial metric of public sentiment ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha election. Uttar Pradesh invites attention not merely because of its size but right now because of its centrality to the Hindutva project, and equally importantly, the Opposition taking shape against it. One question repeatedly asked in this election is: will caste trump religion or will Hindutva triumph again over Mandal? The poll results would provide an indication of whether the aggressive Hindutva line pushed by the ruling party over the last five years was successful.

A challenge on its hands

A quick survey of political economy, identity politics, alliances, resources and campaign strategies leaves one with one clear impression: the winds of change are sweeping the State but how they will affect voting patterns is not clear. But even so, one trend is clear – the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) faces a tough fight in Uttar Pradesh as communal polarisation loses its edge. Economic hardship, chronic unemployment, and farm distress are at the centre of public discussion. As politics returns to normality at the State and local levels, it is quite conceivable that BJP dominance in Uttar Pradesh will be challenged.

The landslide victory of the BJP in the 2017 Assembly elections created the conditions for the establishment of a communal-authoritarian regime in Uttar Pradesh. The new political dominance was reflected in the increasing mainstreaming of Hindutva in Uttar Pradesh's public arena. The huge legislative majority enabled the BJP to advance its political agenda virtually unopposed. Most Opposition parties during this period were not visible on the streets against the BJP government (with the exception of the Congress which led several public protests). They barely existed on the ground. The Opposition parties came to life only in the last few months with the farmers' movement and the Lakhimpur Kheri incident proving to be the springboard for launching their respective campaigns.

Cracks in identity politics

Identity politics has been at the centre of Uttar Pradesh politics for the last three decades. After 2014, Hindu communalism gained momentum at the expense of caste politics which was weakened by the BJP's campaign of uniting voters across caste lines by building a wide-ranging Hindu coalition. This was made possible because the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) intervened to garner the support of non-Yadav Other Backward Classes and non-Jatav Dalit communities by assuring them that they would no longer be neglected as they had been under the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and the Samajwadi Party (SP) governments. But the tables have turned as those very groups that helped the BJP to gain power in Uttar Pradesh are now disgruntled that they have not got their share of power. The exodus of some OBC MLAs

AP

and cabinet Ministers from the BJP to the SP is a sign of that. As early as 2019, more than 100 BJP MLAs, mostly belonging to backward castes, had staged a dharna inside the Vidhan Sabha and shouted slogans against their own government. It was only after the senior party leadership intervened and gave them assurances that they could be pacified.

Brewing discontent

The disgruntlement of the OBCs underlines the privileging of caste over communal politics driven by a tension between the political and social domains. Since the BJP has privileged the former over the latter, the 'social' was left out as all attention was centred on the 'political', i.e., Hindutva. The exit of influential OBC leaders and Jat anger in western Uttar Pradesh against the BJP following the year-long farmers' agitation indicate the difficulties of seeing groups as permanent majorities and minorities. In democratic politics, categories of majority and minority are not fixed – there is no pre-existing Hindu majority that will always vote en bloc against an imagined enemy – the Muslim minority. Shifting electoral majorities do not coincide with persistent social cleavages. Indeed, democratic politics offers the possibility of redefining who belongs to a majority and whom to a minority across multiple arenas.

The substantive shift in political discourse in this election has been encouraged by a surge of protests in the last two years. The anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) protests, the farmers' movement, the student agitation despite the brutal police crackdown and the thousands of people regularly taking to the streets demanding jobs have pushed this shift. What is striking about these protests is that they were not organised by political parties and that people are willing to take to the streets despite concerted efforts to stop them, but also, above all, they are concerned with the everyday issues of life. The discontent brewing and growing across the State is propelling the shift towards the material conditions of life. This has shaped opposition against the BJP especially with regard to the crucial issue of jobs as the State has failed to provide employment.

The Union Home Minister's decision to start the campaign from Kairana is a clear attempt to neutralise the discursive shift by driving a wedge between communities through communal polarisation – the BJP's master strategy for fighting elections. The party's brazen communal appeal to Jat farmers, for instance, to think as Hindus, is not making much headway, though. The OBC revolt, demands of caste census and the farmers' agitation are important barriers to polarisation in eastern and western Uttar Pradesh. No communal consolidation has built up so far despite the concerted efforts of the ruling party and its principal campaigners. This reveals the challenges in creating a stable political model centred on identity.

But this also reveals the limits of caste-driven identity politics which too cannot solve the dilemma of representation or inequality or unemployment. Caste alliances can win elections, but they will do so by merely displacing religion with caste as the central organising principle of politics. This will, in the process, further empower the Hindu community as it promotes caste-based political mobilisation and power sharing between caste groups. Caste is the exclusive identity around which the politics of social justice, equality, and discrimination is organised in Uttar Pradesh today to the exclusion of other communities even when they are persecuted by the regime.

As political counterweight

However, popular anger is shifting the political discourse to social and economic issues which have become more salient, buttressed by voter fatigue against hate politics. This development would probably bring the lived reality of everyday life back to the fore and could serve as a counterweight to Hindu majoritarianism. More to the point, voters do not seem to be terribly excited about their experience of living under a Hindu Rashtra in Uttar Pradesh. But still, what is not clear is to what extent the popular discontent will impact elections and translate into votes against the ruling dispensation. People have paid the economic price for the Government's neglect of their basic needs. Will the ruling party pay the political price for the discontent of millions of poor workers who had to trek back home after the pandemic and lockdown, the appalling shortage of public health facilities, and massive unemployment in one of the most crucial States of the Union?

Zoya Hasan is Professor Emerita, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Ink India-Britain free trade, unlock new opportunity

There are good economic and strategic reasons for an FTA that will spell many opportunities for both countries

ALEX ELLIS

In May last year, Prime Ministers Narendra Modi and Boris Johnson announced their shared vision for a transformative decade for the India-United Kingdom partnership. That they met in the middle of India's second wave of COVID-19, shows their determination to turn their shared political will into action. As part of that transformation, the two leaders declared their ambition to more than double bilateral trade by 2030, which totalled over £23 billion in 2019. They directed their governments to take rapid steps to reduce barriers to trade, and to complete the groundwork necessary to begin work on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) by the end of 2021.

A beginning

These words have now been made real. Both governments have already taken action; for example, unlocking the export of British apples to India and enabling a greater number of Indian fisheries to export shrimp to the U.K. Small but meaningful steps by which both countries have demonstrated they can and have taken concrete measures to stimulate growth.

The big next step was the launch of FTA negotiations last month. On January 13, 2022 in New Delhi, India's Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and the U.K.'s International Trade Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan announced their shared ambition to finish negotiations on a comprehensive and balanced FTA by the end of 2022. This is a big task; all trade negotiations are complex, and especially so between two partners of such different sizes and at such different stages of their development. The opportunities an FTA presents, however, are bigger – for both countries.

Businesses in both nations

Before looking at the future, it is worth taking stock of the present. There are nearly 600 U.K. companies in India employing more than 3,20,000 people. This includes: Barclays which has its biggest office outside of London in Pune, whilst JCB's products manufactured in India are exported to over 110 countries across the globe, as are those by consumer goods giant Hindustan Unilever headquartered in Mumbai; just two of many examples of British companies supporting Prime Minister Modi's vision for an Atmanirbhar Bharat.

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Similarly, India is already a big investor into the U.K. – especially in dynamic sectors such as fintech, electric vehicles and batteries. In 2020-21, India was the U.K.'s second largest source of investment in terms of number of projects. Just last week, both Essar Group and Ola Electric announced investments into the U.K. But given the size of our two economies – the fifth and sixth in the world – our trade relationship in particular has underperformed. An FTA will change that.

The U.K. thrives on free trade. Having left the European Union's common trade bloc after 47 years (in 2020), we are building a network of like-minded democracies committed to free trade. The Indian government is showing its determination to agree to a new set of trade deals; and it is not coincidental that both governments are negotiating with similar countries, for example, Australia. India has an extraordinary opportunity to transform its economy and society in the next 30 years, as it hits its demographic sweet spot, at the heart of the Indo-Pacific region where half the world's people live and 50% of global economic growth is produced. Freer trade with the U.K. will help through greater access to a highly open and competitive market, offering valuable opportunities for India's booming companies – for example giving Bengaluru's start-ups direct access to London's capital markets.

Fine prospects

A U.K.-India trade agreement will stimulate growth and employment in both countries. U.K. government analysis shows that, depending on the depth of the deal, an FTA would add around £14.8 billion to the GDP of India and the U.K. collectively by 2035. A trade deal helps diversify supply chains by making it easier and cheaper for more businesses to do business across borders. Lower barriers coupled with greater regulatory certainty would incentivise new small and medium-sized enterprises to export their goods and services. An agreement also means Indian and British consumers see improvements in the variety and affordability of products.

There are good economic reasons for agreeing to an FTA. There are also good strategic reasons. The British Government's Integrated Review of our overseas policy, which I worked on before coming to India, describes the world we are in; messier, with more geostrategic competition. It is one in which two dynamic democracies such as India and the U.K. need to work closer together to promote open economies.

From past to future

Finally, an FTA would mark a new way of working between the U.K. and India. It gives a new framework within which the two countries can grow and flourish together, putting the colonial economic relationship where it belongs – in the history books. We should acknowledge that past, especially in this 75th year of India's Independence, and build a future which is about opportunities for both countries.

This month also marks one year since I presented my credentials to India's President Ram Nath Kovind. I am honoured to be here at this defining moment – when the U.K. and India will shape the next 25 years of our destiny, as equal, forward looking partners.

Alex Ellis is British High Commissioner to India

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

To read more letters online, scan the QR code

Essence of the Budget

While the Finance Minister finds enough money in her Budget to boost the country's infrastructure or digital connectivity, it is strange that she has failed to provide much-needed relief to the middle, salaried and poor classes (Page 1, "Medium wave", February 2). It would appear as if the Finance Minister had anything but sympathy for the masses who have faced the heavy impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Budget could exacerbate the divide between the rich and the poor. Economists agree that widespread inequality is one of India's most pressing problems. It is also disappointing that there was no special COVID-19 surcharge on the rich.

KANGAYAM R. NARASIMHAN,
Chennai

■ One thought that the Union Budget would have had a human face, given the turbulent period the country faces. Alas! It has turned out to be a Budget with a virtual face. There is support for all things digital but an obliviousness to reality: an exponential rise in unemployment, widening economical inequality and disturbed livelihoods. Unless the immediate issues of lives and livelihoods are addressed properly, there is no use in focusing too much on the long term. In these difficult times, the rural employment guarantee scheme needs to be expanded, perhaps even to urban areas. The Budget fails to infuse confidence in a majority of people.

DR. D.V.G.SANKARARAO,
Nellimarla, Andhra Pradesh

■ Those who have aired their views in support of the Union Finance Minister are generally business magnates. There is nothing new or novel about this. For the rest of us, we watched eagerly for the Finance Minister to announce an increase – even nominal – in the usual interest paid in bank fixed deposits. Instead, it was a disappointment. If the Centre can earmark crores to construct mega projects, it can surely find the will to raise interest rates. Pandemic or otherwise, the spiralling cost of living confronts families.

MANI NATARAJAN,
Coonoor, The Nilgiris

■ The next 365 days alone will provide the answer to whether the Union Budget is really the substance of *Amrit Kaal* or not. Usually, there is a lot of word play and a tossing of digits but we seldom witness 100% realisation of the projections. Much more was expected by those who are unemployed and people in the agricultural sector. Reducing the cost burden of the farming sector should have been given better thought. Caution and precaution is needed where digital banking is being thought of. The most disappointing factor is of scarce relief for the income-tax assessee.

GOVARDHANA MYNEEDU,
Vijayawada

■ While the Budget has received its fair share of bouquets and brickbats there can be no two opinions that the expectations of the salaried class have been belied again. We expected an increase in the tax exemption limit, a rise in standard deduction and a raising in the limit of ₹1.5 lakh under Section 80C. By leaving these sections untouched, the Government has shown its indifference towards the salaried class, which unlike the powerful corporate and agricultural sectors has no lobby to plead its case.

C.V. ARAVIND,
Bengaluru

■ There is no doubt a big boost for infrastructure and also a futuristic vision. But more pronounced is a betrayal of the social sector.

C.A.C. MURUGAPPAN,
Kothamangalam, Tamil Nadu

■ The Budget has been an extreme disappointment. There is high inflation but no tax breaks for the middle class. Criticism by the political Opposition and citizens is genuine. The promised '*Acche din zaroor aayega*' is a mirage for the middle and salaried class.

SHIVAM AMBWANI,
Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh

■ There has been the big push to capex, touted as the magic wand to set right all economic ills. But if one is to go by the track record of the government of the day, it inspires little confidence. It promised the moon in preceding years which turned out to be a dud.

DEEPAK SINGHAL,
Noida, Uttar Pradesh

■ The article, "A betrayal of the social sector when it needs help" (OpEd page, February 2), has sufficient data to prove that the resource allocation for schemes in the social sector in the Budget is a disappointment especially when only around 4.7% of India's workforce is formally trained. According to UNESCO, 35% of the world's illiterate population resides in India. Of greater concern is that a large chunk of the population, despite being educated, is still not sufficiently equipped or skilled enough to be absorbed productively in the workforce. India's employability score is an estimated 46.2%. How can governments, in Budget after Budget, accord low priority in resource allocation to the social sector? There is such a strong link between economic growth and human development.

RAMEEZA A. RASHEED,
Chennai

Creating jobs by increasing capex

The thrust on capital expenditure is laudable, but it comes with some caveats and risks

ANANTH NARAYAN

PTI

If we had to look for one single metric that held the key to us achieving our immense economic potential as a nation, creation of gainful jobs, particularly for our underemployed youth and women, would perhaps be a strong candidate.

Data from the International Labour Organization (ILO) suggest that India's employment to population (over the age of 15) ratio has steadily dropped from 55% in 2005 to 43% in 2020. In 2020, it was 52% in Bangladesh, 63% in China and 73% in Vietnam. Specifically, women form just 20% of India's workforce, while they comprise between 30% and 70% of the workforce in the other three countries. Further, CMIE data suggest that across manufacturing and services, India lost nearly 1 crore jobs between December 2016 and December 2021.

Amidst a global and domestic context muddied by the COVID-19 pandemic, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, and indeed the entire administration, has their job cut out, trying to enable creation of sustainable jobs over time. In the 2022-23 Budget speech, she went all-in on allocating ample money towards productive infrastructure investments as the way forward.

Momentum in tax collections

Before we get into that, let's start with some good news. Data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) shows that for the first nine months of the current fiscal year 2021-22 (FY22), the Centre's revenue receipts across taxes and dividends already stood at ₹17.3 lakh crore, just shy of the full year budget of ₹17.9 lakh crore. There are many factors that contribute to this remarkable outcome. First, higher income tax and Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections are on the back of a robust performance of India's organised sector, amidst increased formalisation of the economy. Second, the government deserves full credit for the conservative Budget projections of last year, even as it enhanced credibility by coming clean on expenditures hidden in off-balance sheet in the books of the Food Corporation of India. Put together, for the first time in many years, notwithstanding the pandemic and the intense hurt amongst the unorganised sectors, tax collections for this fiscal year will end well ahead of the original Budget projections.

This Budget, therefore, revised up FY22 Central revenue receipts to ₹20.8 lakh crore, nearly ₹3 lakh crore higher than the original Budget. Given the momentum in tax collections till December, notwithstanding the Omicron wave, actual revenue receipts may exceed even this number by an additional ₹0.5 lakh crore-0.7 lakh crore. All this will more than make up for the projected shortfall in the government's disinvestment Budget for this year.

Despite the much higher revenue receipts than budgeted, the overall FY22 fiscal deficit is projected to end at ₹15.9 lakh crore (6.9% of GDP), higher than the Budget Estimates of ₹15.1 lakh crore. Additional spending towards food and fertilizer subsidies, increased allocations towards the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and export incentives, and a clean-up of the books of Air India prior to its sale all contributed towards increased expenditures.

Going forward, however, a sustained momentum in tax collections will provide additional degrees of fiscal policy freedom to the Finance Minister as she tries to foster domestic jobs and output. She has chosen to back investments into capital expenditure as the way to achieve this.

For the next fiscal year FY23, she has increased her capital expenditure budget - or investments into productive capital creation - to ₹7.5 lakh crore, 24% higher than the FY22 revised estimate of ₹6 lakh crore. Alongside she has pencilled in just 1% increase in revenue expenditure, i.e., into items such as salaries, pensions, interest, and subsidies. In this regard, she is continuing a trend that she started in last year's Budget. Between FY11 and FY21, capital expenditure averaged just 12% of the government's overall expenditure. For the current FY22, that ratio increased to 16%, and for FY23, the Finance Minister has proposed to take it to 19%.

The intent and commitment behind this strategy is clear and laudable. The expectation is that sustained investment in roads, railways, freight corridors, power, renewable energy along with initiatives such as Production-Linked Incentives (PLI) and other enabling legislation, will create the conditions for drawing in private sector investments into manufacturing, and foster job creation and sustainable growth.

The key lies in execution

But as with everything else, this strategy does come with a few caveats and risks.

First, not all the headline capital expenditure is indicative of fresh greenfield investments. The ₹0.5 lakh crore of clean-up of Air India's books this year counts as capital expenditure. Similarly, for FY23, the government has set aside ₹0.8 lakh crore to partly clean up the books of NHAI and BSNL. Nevertheless, the transparency this brings about is still very welcome.

Second, while there is a visible thrust on hard capital expenditure, the outlays towards critical areas such as education, healthcare and urban infrastructure remain subdued. One would think investments in these areas are equally, if not more critical, than hard infrastructure alone.

Third, the thrust on capital expenditure has resulted in notably higher fiscal deficit numbers than expected. Notwithstanding the intent and commitment, such high fiscal deficits can put pressure on interest rates and the Reserve Bank of India, even as it raises the risk of inflation, higher current account deficits, and the attendant threats to financial stability.

Ultimately, the key lies in execution. The Finance Minister has provided ample funds for the infrastructure thrust. It is up to the entire administration - Central, State, and local - to ensure that the funds are utilised in a timely fashion, and result in delivery of world-class infrastructure. Alongside, ease of doing investments have to be continually addressed, especially around key areas such as land acquisition, contract enforcement, and policy stability. Sustained investments in manufacturing and value-added services hold the key for the growth of small businesses, jobs, and our economic well-being.

Ananth Narayan is Associate Professor (Adjunct), Finance, and Head of Public Policy, SPJIMR

A feminist manifesto

The Congress in U.P. has made a push to recognise the electoral value of women and, in turn, help women recognise it

VAISHNA ROY

At a time when crimes and hostility against women are being plotted on a disquietingly rising graph, the special manifesto for women released by the Congress ahead of the Uttar Pradesh elections is a landmark. That it comes on top of the party's move to field 40% women candidates in these polls provides cautious hope.

A bold move

While cynics could dismiss this as Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, whose brainchild it is, clutching at the one electoral constituency she can claim in the absence of obvious religious or caste affiliations, what it could mean for women in politics as a whole cannot be underestimated. Given that the Women's Reservation Bill remains firmly buried, Ms. Vadra's decision to reserve 40% seats for women candidates is a bold one. The party has been criticised for not extending the move to other States but to make a tentative beginning in U.P. might not be a bad idea.

Interesting also is the direction of thought that is apparent in the manifesto. For instance, there is a promise to reserve 40% of 20 lakh new jobs for women, but it goes beyond Anganwadi and ASHA jobs to talk of training women as bus drivers, of reserving 50% ration shops to be run by women, 40% reservation in MGNREGA jobs, and of constructing mahila chaupals in villages where women can gather and organise. The manifesto also promises mandatory creches in government offices and waiving of fees for land registered in women's names.

These are not new ideas but there is attention to detail from a woman's point of view and to see this in a political manifesto is significant. In fact, explaining the need for such a manifesto, Ms. Vadra has spoken of the hyper-masculine and hyper-aggressive political discourse in vogue today and has called for countering it with hyper-femininity, with compassion, with constructive debate. Similarly, she has spoken of replacing the language of victimhood with that of agency – of women not asking for justice but shouldering political roles to seize justice.

One does not often hear this strongly feminist tenor in India's populist political corridors, where women either receive a passing pat or have internalised the patriarchy. It's a gap she seems to have identified. Aware of the disingenuity in the "free gas cylinder" and "ma-beti" model of women-friendly policies, she appears willing to go beyond such pigeonholing. Thus, even the manifesto promise of a scooter for college girls and a smartphone for girls in Class 12 comes with a nuanced qualification that this is not for safety or education alone, but because many families allow only boys these amenities. The scooter or phone, therefore, becomes as much about women's personal freedoms.

Similarly, along with promises of 25% placements for women in the police and the suspension of personnel who don't register complaints within 10 days, there is mention of a special commission to fight victim-shaming. One has little faith in commissions, but the acknowledgment of victim-shaming as a problem is quite remarkable in the misogynistic cesspool that is Indian politics today.

Raising the bar

The move, launched late and with little groundwork in the last five years, may not become a game-changer in U.P. But at the very least it will raise the bar. Across the world, and certainly in India, women are relegated to the margins of political life, despite the Mayawatis, Mamatas and Jayalalithaas who occasionally blaze across the firmament. Everyday realities don't change, polls are not won or lost on women's issues, chauvinism remains rampant. Even campaigns ostensibly meant to uphold women's rights do the opposite. A 2019 poster in BJP-ruled Haryana for the Beti Bachao (save daughters) campaign featured a girl child making rotis and asked, 'How will you eat rotis made by her if you don't save her life?' On a sweet box one recently saw online, 'beti bachao' was followed by 'vansh bachao' (save lineage). Women must be saved not because they are valuable individual entities but because they make rotis or bear progeny. In fact, so little have women mattered in Indian politics that they are expected to, and mostly do, vote along caste, community and family lines and only seldom for their own issues or beliefs.

The need for such a manifesto thus becomes immediately apparent – unless women participate in, and are considered during, political decision-making, their interests will not be taken into account. It is in this context that the document assumes importance. Regardless of how the Congress performs in the polls, the manifesto will have performed one vital role – that of recognising the electoral value of women and, in turn, helping women recognise it. Who knows, it might even one day result in women consolidating as a vote bank.

vaishna.r@thehindu.co.in

STATE OF PLAY

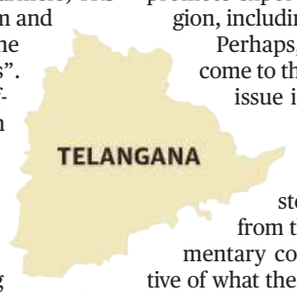
Turmeric woes in Telangana

A farmers' agitation backed by the TRS is intensifying, but the Centre refuses to relent

B. CHANDRASHEKHAR

Nizamabad MP Dharmapuri Arvind, who belongs to the Bharatiya Janata Party, chose a novel way of making his pre-election promises before the 2019 general election. Unlike other candidates who make promises in manifestos or at rallies, Mr. Arvind made them on stamp paper, mostly in vogue at the village level in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. He won the election.

Last week, Mr. Arvind's convoy was obstructed by turmeric farmers, whom he later called TRS (Telangana Rashtra Samithi) activists, when he was on a visit to Nandipet mandal. Mr. Arvind alleged that disguising themselves as turmeric farmers, TRS activists had attacked him and damaged his vehicle as the police "played spectators".



Nearly three years after the novel way in which he made his poll promises, Mr. Arvind has not been able to give a reason for his inability to fulfil two of his promises: one of getting a Turmeric Board sanctioned to Nizamabad and the other of getting a minimum support price fixed for turmeric and red jowar, both of which are grown extensively in his parliamentary constituency. He had also said in 2019 that he would quit as MP and join the farmers'/ people's movement if he fails to keep these promises.

India is the largest producer, consumer and exporter of turmeric in the world. In the country, Telangana was the largest producer of turmeric in 2020-21. Since 2014, the Telangana government has been requesting the Centre to establish a Turmeric Board in the State along the lines of the Spices Board but its efforts have not borne fruit. The erstwhile Nizamabad district is one of the biggest centres of turmeric trade in the State. Telangana's argument is that the mandate of the Spices Board is too large and it handles too many spices, which is why it needs a separate Turmeric Board. Special zones to promote and export the spice have not been created, which is why exports are low, said TRS Lok Sabha Member K. Kavitha in 2018. While the BJP-led Central government has not conceded to this demand, it promised before the 2021 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections a Turmeric Board in that State. This further enraged farmers in Telangana.

In reply to a question by TRS MP K.R. Suresh Reddy in the Rajya Sabha last year, Union Minister for Agriculture Narendra Singh Tomar made it clear that there was no proposal to set up a Turmeric Board in Telangana. He said that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry had set up regional office-cum-extension centres of the Spices Board at Nizamabad to promote exports of spices in the region, including turmeric.

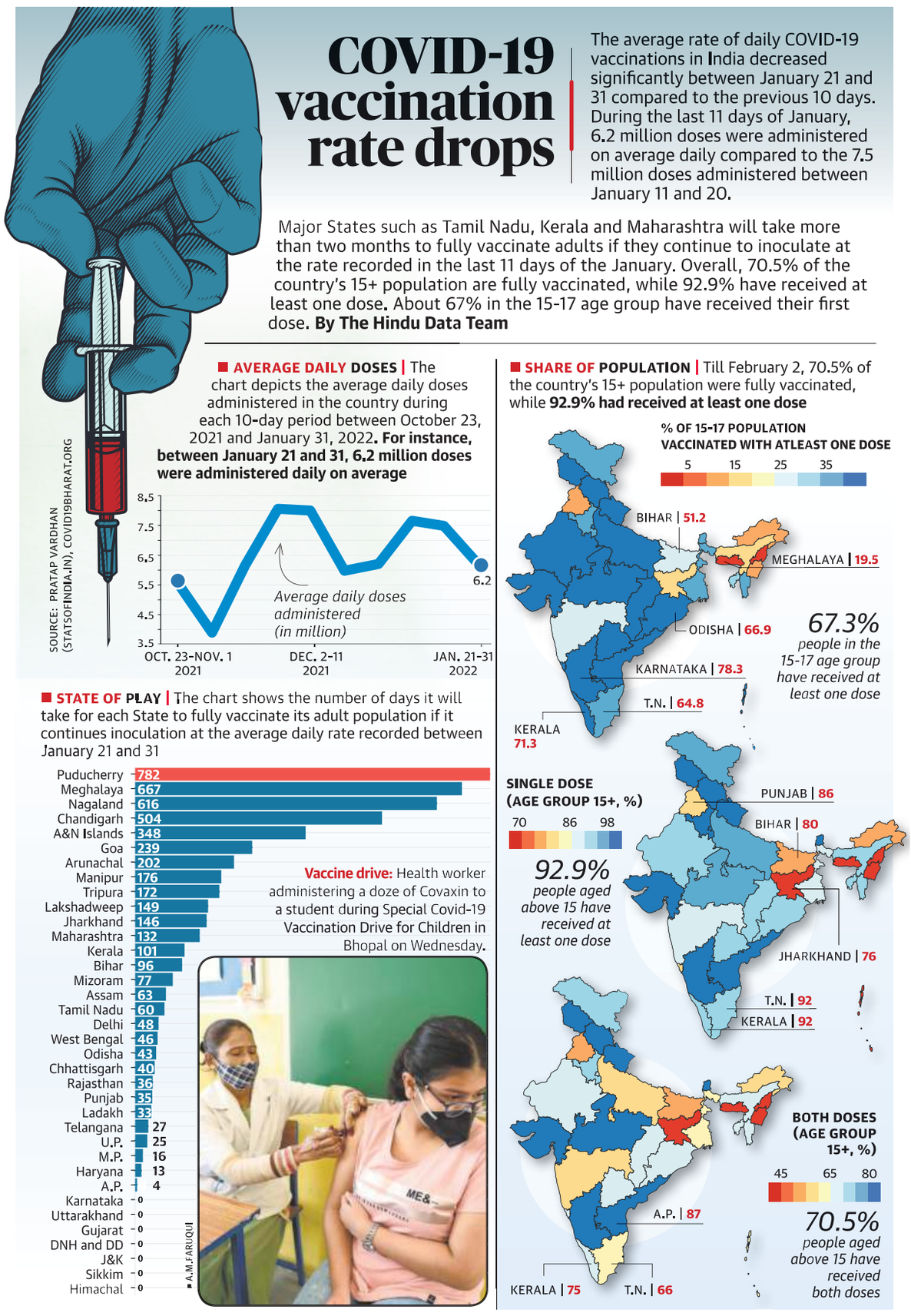
Perhaps, Mr. Arvind has also come to the conclusion that the issue is beyond his control now and is mulling contesting the Assembly election instead of re-contesting from the Nizamabad parliamentary constituency, irrespective of what the party leadership has in store for him.

During the war of words between the BJP and TRS, particularly between him and Armoor MLA A. Jeevan Reddy of the TRS, Mr. Arvind vowed that he would contest from Armoor in the next election and defeat Mr. Reddy with a majority of at least 50,000 votes. Mr. Reddy, in turn, said he will mobilise 10,000 farmers and felicitate Mr. Arvind if the latter gets the Turmeric Board sanctioned.

The turmeric-growing farmers in the State continue to mount pressure on the Centre for a Turmeric Board. They argue that it is essential for them to get MSP for the spice crop. They say that the price of the crop has crashed while production costs have increased. They believe that a Board will address their problems. The farmers are planning to intensify their protests. Resolving the issue quickly would help the government avert another farm-related crisis.

chandrashekar.bhalki@thehindu.co.in

DATA POINT



The Hindu.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 3, 1972

"Dislike the term 'backward classes'"

Hyderabad, Feb.2: The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, said here to-day that the sooner the problem of backward classes was solved the better it would be for the country. She did not like the term "backward classes," Mrs. Gandhi said. Addressing the All-India Backward Class Conference the Prime Minister said: "We should strive to build a society where all will get equal opportunities." The backward classes were given some extra facilities to speed up their uplift. She deplored that a few of the backward classes, who had progressed, showed little interest in the welfare of the rest of the backward classes and kept aloof. The Prime Minister regretted that in certain places, where the sarpanches belonged to the backward community, they were not given the co-operation they deserved. She said officials, who went to rural areas, should bring to the notice of the Government instances where justice was denied to the backward classes. She did not know what the Kaka Kalelkar Commission's report, submitted 20 years ago, was about. She would go into it at the first available opportunity on her return to Delhi. Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, welcoming the Prime Minister, stated that a search for really talented people from among the weaker sections was going on so that they could be provided opportunities to march forward. Mr. Konda Lakshman, Chairman of the Reception Committee, regretted that the Centre's silence over the Kaka Kalelkar Commission's report, had caused much frustration among backward classes.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 3, 1922

Malabar Situation

Delhi, Feb. 2: The following is an official summary of the Malabar situation for the week ending 29th January: Fighting gangs under Avokar Mussaliar and Konnara Thangal are still concealed in hills south-west of Calicut Taluq – some of them have been killed or captured. Abdul Haji and a small party were killed in a Hindu temple near Pukkottur and Karath Moidin Kutti Haji was captured in the same area, leaders named Coyamu and Muku Ayamad now practically remain to be accounted for. Chin Hills Battalion of military police has returned to Assam. Restoration of normal conditions is still delayed by reluctance of Jenmis to return. The most important criminals have been arrested. Minor arrests are delayed by congestion in jails.

FROM PAGE ONE

Process on to amend criminal laws: govt.

To this, Ms. Irani said his opinion was reflected in the 172nd report of the Law Commission of India and also in the report of the Standing Committee related to Home Affairs in 2013.

The 172nd report of the Law Commission in 2000 said it was "not satisfied that [marital rape] exception should be recommended to be deleted since that may amount to excessive interference with the marital relationship."

The 2013 J.S. Verma Committee, formed in the aftermath of Nirbhaya gangrape, recommended making marital rape a crime, but this was not part of the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act passed in 2013 and a Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs formed to examine the ordinance before the passage of the law said, "the entire family system will be under great stress" should marital rape be criminalised.

This is the stand that the NDA government too has continued to take. In 2017, when the Delhi High Court was hearing the matter, the government, in its affidavit, submitted that it had to be ensured that marital rape doesn't become a phenomenon that destabilises the institution of marriage and an easy tool for harassing the husbands. It added, "What may appear to be marital rape to an individual wife, it may not appear so to others."

In Delhi High Court on Wednesday, advocate Karuna Nundy, arguing for petitioners RIT Foundation and All India Democratic Women's Association, said marital rape exception reduced a wife's sexual desire and consent to a nullity and that if the court found a provision in law to be unconstitutional, it must be struck down.

(With inputs from Soibam Rocky Singh)

₹3,358 cr. MGNREGA wage pending: Centre

In a statement criticising the 2022-23 budget allocation for the scheme, which is 25% lower than the revised estimates for the previous year, the NREGA Sangharsh Morcha estimated that only ₹54,650 crore would be available for the scheme next year taking all pending liabilities into account.

"Every year about 80-90% of the budget gets exhausted within the first six months, resulting in heavy slowdown of work on the ground. The government has not been able to provide employment to all active job card holding families due to inadequate budget allocation," it said.

The worker advocacy group added that at a per person per day cost of ₹334, if all active job card workers requested work, the government would only be able to provide 16 days of employment out of the guaranteed 100 days, given the current budget estimates.

Fitch Ratings flags high fiscal deficit target

"Our expectation of modest fiscal outperformance in 2021-22 from last year's Budget target appears unlikely to materialise, with the Budget flagging a revised deficit of 6.9% of GDP against our 6.6% forecast," Mr. Zook noted.

From a ratings perspective, India has limited fiscal space with the highest general government debt ratio among any similarly rated emerging markets at just under 90% of GDP, as per Fitch Ratings.

"The gradual pace of fiscal consolidation continues to place the onus on nominal GDP growth to facilitate a downward trajectory in the debt ratio, which is key to resolving the negative outlook on the sovereign rating," Mr. Zook said.

If fully implemented, the planned infrastructure capex acceleration will likely provide a fillip to near- and medium-term growth, Fitch said, adding it would be assessing whether the capex drive's growth impact was sufficient to offset the 'higher than expected deficits' and keep the debt ratio on a 'slight downward' trajectory.

Fitch expects the economy to grow at 10.3% in 2022-23 and average 7% growth in the coming five years. The potential risks and headwinds for this outlook stem from the pandemic, the durability of private consumption as household incomes are constrained, and 'recent setbacks to the reform drive'.

In its initial comments, Moody's Investor Service also flagged that "various spending initiatives were not offset by any significant announcements related to further increasing revenue generation".

"The announced target for the Central government deficit to narrow to 6.4% in 2022-23 from a projected 6.9% in 2021-22 suggests that the government is relying on strong economic growth to help drive fiscal consolidation in light of the large bump in capital expenditure. This poses some uncertainty given the prevalence of pandemic-related risks," Christian de Guzman, senior vice-president, sovereign risk group at the firm, said.

Both Fitch and Moody's expressed worries about the States' finances, as their deficits would add further pressure on India's general government deficit levels.

Electoral bonds worth ₹1,213 cr. sold in January

While the New Delhi branch was used to encash the most bonds, electoral bonds worth ₹117.12 crore were sold there. The RTI reply showed that bonds worth ₹227 crore, ₹154 crore and ₹126 crore were sold in the Chennai, Kolkata and Hyderabad branches respectively.

After New Delhi, the Kolkata branch had the most electoral bonds encashed (₹224 crore) followed by Chennai (₹100 crore). States where elections are going on had smaller amounts of bonds encashed – ₹50 lakh in Chandigarh, ₹3.21 crore in Lucknow and ₹90 lakh in Goa.

The scheme, started in 2018, enables Indian citizens or companies to buy the bonds from 29 SBI branches in denominations of ₹1,000, ₹10,000, ₹1 lakh, ₹10 lakh and ₹1 crore to be used as anonymous donations to political parties. Since the last set of Assembly polls in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal, Assam and Puducherry in April 2021, bonds worth ₹150 crore were sold in July 2021 and ₹614 crore in October 2021.

India isolated, voice of States muffled, says Rahul

Nation facing threat from a united front of China and Pakistan, while there are many fights raging within, says Congress leader

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday said the Narendra Modi government had put India at risk by bringing China and Pakistan together as a "unified front", and the country now found itself isolated and surrounded by the neighbours even as there were fights raging within.

Participating as the first Opposition speaker in the Lok Sabha in the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President for his Address to the joint session of Parliament, Mr. Gandhi said "the judiciary, Election Commission and the Pegasus spyware are all instruments to destroy the voice of Union of States".

"When the Prime Minister personally goes to Israel and authorises the use of Pegasus in India, he is attacking the people of Tamil Nadu, he is attacking the people of Assam, he is attacking the people of Kerala, he is attacking the people of Bengal," Mr. Gandhi said.

The comment prompted Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju to demand an "unconditional apology" from the Congress leader for "abusing the constitutional authorities from the Parliament House".

Mr. Gandhi started his speech of more than 44 minutes by attacking the policies of the government, and said the gap between the two Indias – a rich and a poor one – was growing.

Then he delved into what he called as two competing visions to rule India: one that viewed India as a Union of States, where States are equal partners and believe in decision-making through conversation and dialogue; and the other that believes that India can be ruled by a "Shahenshah, a ruler of rulers, a master of masters".

"We had smashed that idea of a king in 1947. Now the idea of a king has come back," he said.

> The single biggest strategic goal of India's foreign policy has been to keep Pakistan and China separate. This is fundamental. What you have done is that you have brought them together. Don't be under any illusion, don't underestimate the force that is standing before you
>
> **RAHUL GANDHI**
> Congress leader

Stressing the importance of federalism, the Congress leader said the Centre cannot rule the States by suppressing the different cultures, languages and histories.

Asserting that his views should not be taken as criticism but concerns expressed by a citizen, Mr. Gandhi said the Presidential Address did not touch upon strategic issues, did not reflect a vision of leadership and looked like a bureaucratic list.

China and Pakistan

Focussing on the growing hostilities with China, he said, "The single biggest strategic goal of India's foreign policy has been to keep Pakistan and China separate. This is fundamental. What you have done is that you have brought them together. Don't be under any illusion, don't underestimate the force that is standing before you. And this is the single biggest crime that you have committed against the people of India." He said China's plan against India had been put in Doklam and Ladakh and "this is a very serious threat to the Indian nation" as the Chinese and the Pakistani are planning and buying weapons.

Mr. Gandhi said India made a "huge strategic mistake" in diplomacy and in Jammu and Kashmir and "we must make absolutely sure that we can defend ourselves against the Chinese".

"Remember, you will be responsible if anything happens. That is why we start this conversation as a nation," Mr. Gandhi said, adding that the government should use the experience of the Congress in dealing with complex diplomatic issues.

"Ask yourself why you could not get a guest for the Republic Day function? The nation is at risk. The nation is at risk from outside and the nation is at risk from inside. And that is a very dangerous place for a nation to be in," he noted.

Talking about the risks inside, the Congress leader spoke about the growing income disparity and poverty.

Joblessness, poverty

He said while the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government had pulled 27 crore people out of poverty, the Modi government had pushed 23 crore people back into poverty with its wrong policies such demonetisation and a flawed goods and services tax (GST).

He referred to the agitation by youth in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar over Railway jobs and said that unemployment was at a 50-year high, with three crore youth losing their jobs in 2021 alone.

Assam CM criticises Cong. leader

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma reacted sharply to Congress MP Rahul Gandhi's charge that Home Minister Amit Shah disrespected a delegation from Manipur by asking them to remove footwear when meeting him.

"Mr. Gandhi, those who prefer to feed biscuits to dogs in the presence of leaders from Assam and then offer them the same biscuits should be the last people to talk about political decency," he tweeted.

Focus on providing basic amenities: PM

'We have given three crore poor people pucca houses, and made them *lakhpatis*'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A day after the presentation of the Union Budget, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told partymen that it was focussed on providing basic amenities for the poor, the middle class and the youth.

At a function organised by the BJP, Mr. Modi said his government was working on the saturation of basic services for all, especially the poor. "After the Second World War, there was a change in the world order and post COVID too we will be seeing a reordering of the world order. People, globally, want to see an empowered and strong India. It is imperative for us that we take our country forward at a rapid pace and strengthen it across several sectors."

> People, globally, want to see an empowered and strong India. It is imperative for us that we take our country forward at a rapid pace and strengthen it across several sectors
>
> **NARENDRA MODI**
> Prime Minister

"It is very important that India not only becomes self-reliant but also that a modern India is built on the foundation of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'."

Mr. Modi said migration from border villages was not good for national security and the Budget has provisions to develop "vibrant villages" there. He said soon every village will have optical fibre connectivity and 5G technology will usher in a new era.

Talking about the agri sector, he said farmers are expected to get more than ₹1.5 lakh crore as MSP for paddy. He said the houses provided under the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana have in a way turned the poor into *lakhpatis* . "In the past seven years, we have given three crore poor people pucca houses, and made them *lakhpatis*. Those who lived in slums, have their own houses."

Jaishankar rebuts Rahul allegation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

China and Pakistan have been close partners for decades, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on Wednesday, in response to Rahul Gandhi's Parliament speech.

Mr. Jaishankar tweeted that Pakistan had handed over the Shaksgam Valley illegally to China in 1963, and allowed China to build the Karakoram highway through PoK in the 1970s.

"So ask yourself: were China and Pakistan distant then?" he tweeted.

Amendments on Pegasus, COVID not allowed

President's Address failed to mention spyware issue and govt.'s failure in handling pandemic: Kareem

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Amendments to the Motion of Thanks to the President that mentioned the government's alleged used of Pegasus spyware and its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic were not allowed to be moved in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.

The Motion of Thanks was moved and discussed in the House on Wednesday. A list of 99 amendments by Opposition members was allowed and 80 were actually moved due to some of the MPs not being present at the time. Two amendments by Communist Party of India (Marxist) member Elamaram Kareem, expressing regret that the President's Address to Parliament on January 31 did not mention Pegasus and the handling of COVID-19, were not allowed. On COVID-19, Mr. Kareem's amendment stated that the President's Address did not mention "the failure of the government in handling the COVID-19 pandemic, the unfortunate incident of floating of dead bodies in the holy rivers and the failure of the government in formulating an effective vaccine policy...".

House in order: Rajya Sabha Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu conducting proceedings in the House on Wednesday. • PTI

The second amendment regretted that the address did not include mention of the "Government of India's engagement with the Israeli firm, NSO, and the State sponsored illegal surveillance over hundreds of journalists, activists, Opposition politicians, government officials, business executives and even judges of the apex court using Pegasus spyware".

Mr. Kareem tweeted on Wednesday that the government's intolerance was at its peak. "...MPs can't even present crucial amendments on motion of thanks to President's address. 1st list of amendments approved by "RSS" (Rajya Sabha Secretariat) got released. Amendments about Pegasus & gov's failure in dealing COVID are disallowed".

Earlier in the day, Rajya Sabha Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu informed the House that some notices under Rule 267 to raise issues, including the alleged use of Pegasus, had been received, but he had not allowed them.

Children's share in 2022 Union Budget plummets to 11-year low

Allocation for child health has decreased by 6.08%

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Children in the country received the lowest share of allocation in the Budget in 11 years, according to an analysis by the NGO, HAQ-Centre for Child Rights.

The total allocation for children in Union Budget 2022-23 is ₹92,736.5 crore, against an allocation of ₹85,712.56 crore in the last Budget.

Though this is an increase of 8.19% in absolute terms, it is not proportionate to the increase in the total expenditure in the Budget.

The share of the Budget for children is a meagre 2.35% of the Budget for the next fiscal, which is a reduction of 0.11 percentage points from this fiscal, says HAQ. This is the lowest share children have received in the last 11 years.

The allocation for child health has decreased by 6.08%. It has dropped from ₹3,727.57 crore in 2021-2022 to ₹3,501.11 crore for the next fiscal. One of the most important child health schemes, the NRHM-RCH Flexi Pool, has observed a reduced allocation of 8.22% at ₹3,174.57 crore in Budget 2022-23.

The share for children is a meagre 2.35% of the Budget for the next fiscal.

Development schemes

As far as child development programmes are concerned, they have seen a drop of 10.97% in allocation for the next fiscal at ₹17,826.03 crore. These include supplementary nutrition and anganwadi (day care) services.

The share of child education in the overall Budget 2022-23 has witnessed only a marginal increase of 0.3 percentage points from 1.74% in the current fiscal to 1.73% for the next fiscal. However, in absolute terms, the allocation has increased by 15.04% with ₹69,835.72 set aside, notes HAQ.

Though the Finance Minister announced a 'One class, one TV channel' programme from 12 to 200 TV channels to enable States to provide supplementary education in regional languages for Classes 1 to 12, studies have shown this is a difficult mode of learning for children.

Schemes for the protection and welfare of children clubbed under the Mission Vatsalaya of the Ministry of Women and Children received ₹1,472.17 crore. This is 65% more than this fiscal, but below the allocation of ₹15,000 crore in 2019-2020, before the scheme was restructured.

Join hands to protect the oppressed, appeals Stalin

Tamil Nadu CM writes to 38 leaders

B. KOLAPPAN
CHENNAI

DMK president and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Wednesday requested leaders of key political parties across the country to nominate their party representatives to the All India Federation of Social Justice, a platform he announced on January 26.

"At this juncture when repressive forces are challenging the progress made in social justice over decades, it is vital that all progressive forces join hands to protect the interests of the oppressed. Only together we can bring real and meaningful social justice to the oppressed," he said in a letter to 38 political party leaders, including Congress leader Sonia Gandhi, RJD leader Lalu Prasad, SP leader Akhilesh Yadav and the Chief Ministers of non-BJP ruled States.

He said the objective of the platform was to bring together leaders, members of civil society, like-minded individuals and organisations to strive towards achieving the principles of federalism and social justice at the national level.

Creating road map

"The federation will be a platform for us to create a road map to take forward the battle for social justice in India and to identify areas in which we can do more and bring about a common minimum programme to be uniformly adopted by all States," he said in the letter.

Contending that "our unique, diverse and multi-cultural federation is under threat of bigotry and religious hegemony", Mr. Stalin said these forces could be fought only if all those who believed in equality and social justice were united together. Mr. Stalin reiterated "reservations are not sufficient to ensure social justice", saying that at every step the oppressed should be accorded positive affirmation to enable them to unshackle centuries of oppression and exclusion from mainstream society.

IN BRIEF

Recovery of fake notes is not static, says Minister

NEW DELHI

Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai told the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday that recovery of fake notes is not static as members questioned the objectives of the 2016 demonetisation exercise. "Fake notes are increasingly being seized, sometimes it increases or decreases," he said.

BJP MLA Rane sent to two-day police custody

MUMBAI

BJP MLA Nitesh Rane has been sent to two-day police custody by a court at Sindhudurg in an attempt to murder case. He surrendered before the court after withdrawing his bail plea before the Bombay High Court. On February 1, Additional Sessions Judge R.B. Rote rejected Mr. Rane's bail application.

Licence of Wankhede's hotel cancelled

MUMBAI

The Thane District Collector on Tuesday cancelled the licence granted to hotel 'Sadguru' in Navi Mumbai which is owned by former Narcotics Control Bureau officer Sameer Wankhede. Maharashtra Minister Nawab Malik had last year complained that Mr. Wankhede owned a permit room and a restaurant, the licence for which was obtained in 1997, when he was a minor.

Security guard threatens to shoot judge in Bihar

PATNA

A security guard deployed at the residence of a family court judge in Bihar's Khagaria district allegedly threatened to shoot the latter after being reprimanded for laxity in discharging his duty. In his complaint, the judge said the guard trained his gun at him and threatened to shoot him. He also hurled abuses at the judge,the police said.

IN BRIEF

Yogi heats up campaign with aggressive tone

GHAZIABAD

The election campaign has taken a belligerent tone in Uttar Pradesh with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath saying in election rallies in western U.P. that those who are feeling emboldened in Kairana and Muzaffarnagar will be "taken care of" after March 10. On Wednesday, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav objected to the language of Mr. Adityananth. "This could not be the language of the Chief Minister of a State. The Election Commission should take note of it," he said at a press conference in Shamli.

Manipur Lokayukta deals blow to BJP candidate

GUWAHATI

The Manipur Lokayukta has dealt a blow to the Bharatiya Janata Party ahead of the Assembly elections. On Wednesday, the Lokayukta asked the Manipur government to register a case against 22 people, including ex-IAS officer and BJP candidate Dinganglung Gangmei for involvement in the misappropriation of ₹18 crore meant for beneficiary schemes in a tribal council. The Lokayukta heard the complaints concerned on January 7. The BJP has fielded Mr. Gangmei from the Nungba Assembly seat. He was the chief executive officer of the Tamenglong Autonomous District Council (ADC) when it received the funds under the 14th Finance Commission.

In Goa, AAP candidates pledge to stay in party

PUNE

Candidates of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Wednesday signed a legal affidavit ahead of the Assembly elections, while taking a 'pledge' to remain loyal to the State's voters and their party after the results. This oath, which was taken in the presence of AAP National Convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, comes days after the 'loyalty pledge' taken by Congress candidates vowing not to switch parties after the polls. Mr. Kejriwal said the defecting from a party after results was tantamount to cheating voters.

BSP working for a hung House to reap rewards

Party indulging in caste engineering at the micro level

ANUJ KUMAR
GHAZIABAD

BSP chief Mayawati's helicopter taking off after an election meeting in Agra on Wednesday. ▪ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

The silence of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) was finally broken on Wednesday with party chief Mayawati addressing a rally in Agra, the 'Dalit capital of Uttar Pradesh'.

While many feel that she has chosen to sleep through the 2022 Assembly elections, a look at the ticket distribution shows that she has not lost the pulse of the ground. Party sources said the BSP was working for a hung Assembly and reap its rewards.

Agra-Aligarh is the region where the BSP experimented with broad social engineering by bringing together Dalits, Thakurs and Brahmins in 2007. Since then a lot of water has flown down the Yamuna as its Brahmin and Thakur faces in west U.P., Ramveer Upadhyay and Jaiveer Singh, have switched to the BJP.

Undeterred, the party is indulging in caste engineering at the micro level, and perhaps that is the reason, the sources said, the party has changed its tickets so many times to arrive at the best possible combination.

In Agra, the party has relied on fresh faces to free the party from Mr. Updhayay's hold. Even the local BJP sources felt that the Samajwadi Party (SP), which does not have many bases in the Agra-Mathura belt, would not be able to break into the BSP's traditional vote bank in the region.

In the sugarcane belt, the party has pushed turncoats to make the contest triangular in several seats.

In the run-up to the elections, the BSP was giving an impression that it was busy wooing Brahmins by holding meetings across the State but when it came to distributing tickets, the focus shifted to Muslims, with as many as 26% of tickets going to the candidates of the community for the first two phases, followed by Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Dalits.

Turncoats flock to BSP

Many of them are turncoats who switched to the BSP at the last minute with the hope of getting a better opportunity of defeating the BJP. They include Congress heavyweights Salman Saeed, son of former Minister Saiduzzaman, and Noman Masood, brother of Imran Masood, who are contesting on BSP ticket from Charthwal and Gangoh respectively. Observers said such candidates would bring some votes because of their personal appeal even if the community decides to move the other way. "The party knows that Muslims are mobilised in favour of SP-RLD but feels that in seats where Muslims and Dalits could beat the BJP candidate, the Muslims would prefer the BSP's Muslim candidate, particularly in seats where the alliance has put up a non-Muslim," said a senior BSP leader from west U.P. He cited seats like Meerapur in this context where the BSP has fielded Mohd. Shalim in front of Gurjar candidates of the BJP and the RLD.

The combination is exactly the same in the Loni seat of Ghaziabad.

Among the fresh entrants, Kartar Singh Bhadana could prove a sting in the flesh of RLD's Rajpal Saini in Khatauli. In Mathura, the BJP is feeling the pain of ignoring S.K. Sharma as he is giving a tough fight to Shrikant Sharma in a triangular contest.

Meanwhile, Maant continues to be a fortress of Shyam Sundar Sharma.

In some constituencies, caste equation seems opportunistic but effective. In the Khair reserved seat in Aligarh, Ms. Mayawati changed the candidate at the last minute and brought in Charu Ken, whose father-in-law Tejveer Singh Guddu joined the party on January 20.

Mr. Guddu, a strongman from Aligarh, wanted in multiple cases, belongs to the Jat community.

SP ally Sanjay Chauhan seeks clarity on seats

Janvadi Party(S) among key players

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

Sanjay Chauhan

Sanjay Chauhan, a key player in the backward caste matrix of the Samajwadi Party (SP) and its allies in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly election, is getting impatient.

The chief of the Janvadi Party (Socialist), which claims a support base among the Noniya, Loniya and Loniya Chauhan communities mostly in central and eastern Uttar Pradesh, is still waiting for his ally to allocate seats to his party even as the other allies such as the Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party and the Apna Dal (Kameravadi) have declared many of their candidates or have been allotted constituencies.

He said he had submitted to the SP a list of 10 or 11 seats for his party.

"Our commitment is to form the SP government and remove the BJP. Whatever they [SP] are giving us they should make it clear, so I can tell the workers about the situation and ask them to go campaign on the ground," he said. Mr. Chauhan said he was not considering severing ties with the SP yet but said that if Mr. Yadav did not take a decision soon, then the "discontent" among his workers would increase further. "And I will be compelled to go where my workers and community goes," he said.

Though the JP(S) has not had much electoral success, in the 2012 Assembly election it secured a respectable 2.33% votes (about 1.5 lakh votes) in the 35 seats it contested.

SC to start review hearing of case against Sidhu

He was acquitted in May 2018

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Navjot Singh Sidhu

The Supreme Court will on Thursday open its review hearing of its May 2018 judgment letting Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu off with a ₹1,000 fine in a 30-year-old fatal road rage case.

The court had acquitted Mr. Sidhu of culpable homicide in the case while finding him guilty of the lesser offence of voluntarily causing hurt under Section 323 of the Indian Penal Code.

A Special Bench of Justices A.M. Khanwilkar and Sanjay Kishan Kaul will hear the review at 3.30 p.m. on February 3. The hearing is significant as the Punjab Assembly elections are due in days.'

The May 2018 judgment, written by a Bench led by Justice J. Chelameswar (now retired), reasoned that the crime was 30 years old and there was no former enmity between Mr. Sidhu and his victim, Gurnam Singh.

Gurnam Singh's family, however, decided to return to the Supreme Court for a rare remedy – a review of its own judgment, that too, through an open court hearing.

SGPC accuses Congress of hurting Sikhs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) – the body responsible for the management of gurdwaras – on Wednesday hit out at the Congress accusing it of distorting Sikh prayer for its political interest.

A written complaint has been lodged by the SGPC with the Chief Electoral Officer of Punjab seeking action against the party, besides asking the Congress to issue a public apology.

SGPC president Harjinder Singh Dhami alleged that the Congress party had distorted the last lines of a Sikh prayer for its personal and political interests in the run-up to the polls. He said it had caused hurt and resentment in the community.

Crucial battles in Lucknow constituencies

SP leader takes on former ED official in Sarojini Nagar

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

Back in the game: In this photo dated January 31, 2017, Abhishek Mishra addresses supporters in Lucknow. ▪ FILE PHOTO

The Samajwadi Party (SP) has fielded Abhishek Mishra, former Minister and its prominent Brahmin face, to take on Rajeshwar Singh, the former Joint Director of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) who joined the BJP after voluntary retirement, in Sarojini Nagar seat in Lucknow. Mr. Mishra had lost the last election from the Lucknow North seat, from where he is also campaigning this election. Over the last couple of years, he has been active in pushing the narrative over Lord Parshuram to attract the Brahmin community to the party.

Mr. Mishra, an SP national secretary, is not the only one to change constituency. Senior OBC leader Swami Prasad Maurya, who rebelled against the BJP to join the SP, is contesting from Fazilnagar seat in Kushinagar this time rather than Padrauna from where he is the sitting MLA. The shift of R.P.N. Singh, who holds clout in Padrauna, from the Congress to the BJP may have altered the caste equation for Mr. Swami Prasad Maurya.

The SP has meanwhile fielded Pallavi Patel, the sister of Union Minister Anupriya Patel, against BJP leader and Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya in Sirathu in Kaushambi. Mr. Keshav Prasad Maurya was fielded by the BJP after dropping a sitting MLA Sheetla Prasad. By fielding Ms. Patel, a Kurmi and daughter of Krishna Patel, president of the Apna Dal (Kameravadi), the SP is trying to leverage that factor.

In Sarojini Nagar, Mr. Rajeshwar Singh's candidature came at the cost of sitting MLA Swati Singh, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Women's Welfare, Child Development & Nutrition. Ms. Singh and her husband Daya Shankar Singh, a BJP vice-president in Uttar Pradesh, had both staked claim to the seat this time in an embarrassing situation for the party. In 2016, Mr. Daya Shankar Singh had grabbed attention for his sexist remarks made against BSP chief Mayawati. However, while the BSP tried to take political mileage out of the situation, the BJP swiftly counter-attacked by magnifying the alleged sexist language used by BSP workers against Mr. Daya Shankar Singh's wife.

Courts must come to children, says SC

Young witnesses to use virtual services

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

> **We direct the RPCs to ensure that child-friendly practices are adopted during the examination of the witnesses**
>
> SUPREME COURT

India's status as a "technological powerhouse" is in jeopardy if it cannot use technology to protect its children, the Supreme Court observed while directing that videoconferencing facilities be established across the country for child witnesses, especially victims of trafficking, to remotely testify against their attackers.

The order came in a plea that victims of child trafficking, mostly based in far-flung and under-developed areas of the country, should not be made to travel long distances during the COVID pandemic to trial courts, usually located in metros, where they were brought and held by their captors.

The court, in a hearing on February 1, highlighted how the pandemic had put more children out of school and into forced labour. Cases of child trafficking and abuse were bound to rise.

The court said videoconferencing facility for child witnesses should not be limited to the pandemic period alone, but should be a regular feature in cases involving child witnesses. Virtual recording of evidence should be held in-camera whenever necessary.

The court confirmed a standard operating procedure (SOP) prepared by its *amicus curiae*, advocate Gaurav Agrawal, and senior advocate Anita Shenoy, for recording the evidence of child witnesses through videoconferencing. The apex court said the High Courts too, on consultation, had given their nod to the SOP.

According to this SOP, a child can testify either at the 'court point', that is, cities or places where the trial has to take place, or at the 'remote point', which is his or her place of residence.

All districts

The SOP said that the videoconferencing facility should be created in every district, especially in States where incidence of child trafficking cases are high.

Other safeguards prescribed by the SOP include compliance of the "best practices" mandated by the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Rules, 2020, while recording the evidence of child witnesses.

"We direct that the SOP shall be followed in all criminal trials where child witnesses, not residing near court points, are examined and not physically in the courts where the trial is conducted. We direct the RPCs to ensure that child-friendly practices are adopted during the examination of the witnesses," the court said.

SC effort to fill HC vacancies continues into 2022

On Feb. 1, the Collegium drew up a list of recommendations for appointments to seven High Courts

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

> **The exercise is collaborative in nature and we would expect promptness in this process to facilitate the larger cause of dispensation of timely justice**
>
> SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court Collegium led by Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana has continued into 2022 its marathon recommendations and reiterations to fill up vacancies in High Courts across the country.

The Collegium met on February 1 and finalised the names of lawyers and judicial officers for appointment as judges to seven different High Courts, including Bombay, Calcutta and Delhi.

February 1 happened to be the very day the government published the latest list of vacancies in the High Courts. The latest statistics published by the Law and Justice Ministry on February 1 showed that the judicial vacancies in the 25 High Courts total 411. The sanctioned judicial strength in the High Courts is 1,098. That means 687 judges form the working strength of the High Courts' judiciary.

Chief Justice Ramana has termed judicial appointments an "ongoing process", while Law Minister Kiren Rijiju has said the government needs to do due diligence on the recommended names and the process cannot be restricted to a timeline. On April 20 last year, a Special Bench of the Supreme Court had fixed timelines for the various stages in the appointments process, saying the "exercise is collaborative in nature and we would expect promptness in this process to facilitate the larger cause of dispensation of timely justice".

After the February 1 meeting, the Collegium has recommended seven advocates and five judicial officers for elevation as judges of the Telangana HC alone. They are advocates Kasoju Surendhar, Chada Vijaya Bhaskar Reddy, Surepalli Nanda, Mummineni Sudheer Kumar, Juvvadi Sridevi, Mirza Safiulla Baig, and Natcharaju Shravan Kumar Venkat, and judicial officers G. Anupama Chakravarthy, M.G. Priyadarshini, Sambasivarao Naidu, A. Santosh Reddy and D. Nagarjun.

It has recommended six judicial officers for elevation to the Delhi High Court. They are Poonam A. Bamba, Neena Bansal Krishna, Dinesh Kumar Sharma, Anoop Kumar Mendiratta, Swarana Kanta Sharma and Sudhir Kumar Jain.

The Collegium also approved the proposal for elevation of advocate Rajiv Roy to the Patna High Court Bench.

The Collegium has made several reiterations of its earlier recommendations. They include advocate Cheppudira Monnappa Poonacha for Karnataka High Court; advocates Khatim Reza and Dr. Anshuman Pandey for Patna; Shampa Dutt (Paul) and Siddhartha Roy Chowdhury for Calcutta; judicial officers U.S. Joshi-Phalke and B.P. Deshpande for Bombay; and judicial officer Pradeep Kumar Srivastava for Jharkhand.

Mamata re-elected party chief

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday was re-elected chairperson of the Trinamool Congress unopposed.

She appealed to all regional parties to come together and defeat the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the 2024 general elections.

Addressing party functionaries and observers during the organisational elections, Ms. Banerjee said that the BJP was her "main enemy".

She also targeted the Congress and said that she "felt sad" when the party did not join forces in the fight against the BJP.

Mumbai court summons Mamata

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

A magistrate court has issued summons to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on a complaint filed by the BJP's Mumbai unit secretary accusing her of showing disrespect to the national anthem here.

"*Prima facie* evidence brought on record by the complainant is sufficient to issue process against the accused," the court said.

She joined in singing the national anthem while allegedly remaining seated.

Bomber had visited India on suicide mission: ISKP

'He was deported in 2017 after a tip-off from CIA'

VIJAITA SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Islamic State bomber who stormed the Kabul airport in August 2021 during the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan was sent on a suicide mission to India in 2017, a new magazine by Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP) has claimed.

This claim is in addition to the one made by ISKP last year that the bomber was deported from India in 2017.

The bomber identified as Abdur Rehman Al-Logari (25) had walked into a crowd outside Kabul airport on August 26, 2021 killing more than 150 persons who were trying to leave the country after Taliban took over the reins. The deceased included 13 members of the U.S Marines.

The ISKP e-magazine in English, *Voice of Khurasan*, released on various Telegram channels on Tuesday night, said that in 2017, Logari "was given a mission to go to India for a suicide mission approved by the Wilayath Khurasan." The magazine was shared with *The Hindu* by an Indian intelligence official.

It said that he travelled to Delhi and got admission in a private university as cover for his mission. The magazine claimed that he prepared for the mission "with the help of a few brothers in the country". He was arrested one week before the attack after one of his associates were arrested by the Indian intelligence services, the propaganda magazine claimed. ISKP is engaged in an armed conflict with the Taliban.

Enrolled in college

Son of a wealthy merchant in Afghanistan, Logari enrolled himself in an engineering college in Faridabad and stayed on rent in Lajpat Nagar.

The Hindu could independently verify that he was deported to Afghanistan in 2017 but it is unclear whether the security agencies then had an inkling of what the ISKP is claiming now.

A senior government officer said he could not share details as "his lips are sealed".

The New York Times reported in January that Logari frequently visited India and Pakistan on business. The report said that he moved to India in 2017 to study engineering at Manav Rachna University near Delhi. The report added that Logari was "arrested" after the "CIA tipped off Indian intelligence agents that he was plotting a suicide bombing in New Delhi".

Attack foiled

After being caught, he was handed over to the CIA by India's foreign spy service, the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW).

"Indian authorities foiled the attack and turned Logari over to the CIA, which sent him to Afghanistan to serve time at the Parwan prison at Bagram Air Base. He remained there until he was freed amid the chaos after Kabul fell," the *NYT* report stated.

IN BRIEF

J&K transfers 289.8-acre land for housing

SRINAGAR

A month after Dubai-based realtors signed deals with the J&K government, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday approved the transfer of 289.8 acres of land in seven villages in 17 locations of Srinagar and Budgam districts. "The land has been transferred for construction of housing colonies 'free of cost', to meet the increased appetite for housing and give a push to the housing sector", a government spokesperson said in a statement.

Annual meeting on Indus water treaty due

NEW DELHI

The annual meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission between India and Pakistan is due, but no schedule has been finalised as of now, India's Indus Commissioner P.K. Saxena said on Wednesday. Mr. Saxena was reacting to a Pakistani media report that a delegation, headed by the Indian Commissioner for Indus Waters, is set to visit Pakistan in March to attend the annual meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission.

Court asks jail to provide medical aid to Parra

SRINAGAR

A special National Investigation Agency (NIA) court on Wednesday directed the jail authorities to extend medical aid to incarcerated Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) youth leader Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra, 34, who was found unconscious in his cell in the Central Jail, Srinagar last week. When jail authorities were unable to facilitate medical aid, Parra was shifted to the police hospital, where doctors recommended an ECHO check-up by a specialist.

'Step up second dose coverage for teens'

Timely completion of dosage is important, says Ministry

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Health Ministry has directed all the State governments to accelerate the coverage of the second dose of COVID-19 vaccine for the 15-17 age group.

Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan, in a letter on Wednesday, said that to confer full protection of vaccines on the recipients, timely completion of dosage was important. "Hence it is important that the coverage of the second dose amongst adolescents is reviewed daily at your level at the State/Union Territory and similar review is undertaken at the district level as well. Data regarding due beneficiaries in the 15-18 year group for the second dose can be accessed at CoWIN portal," he said.

Only Covaxin is administered to the 15-17 age group. ▪ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

The Health Secretary also asked the States to ensure that the remaining adolescent population get their first dose.

The Ministry has also recommended rolling out of a tailored communication strategy focusing on adolescents and their caregivers in order to make them aware of the need for timely completion of the vaccination.

COVID-19 vaccination for the 15-17 age group started on January 3 with the administration of Covaxin. An interval of 28 days is mandatory between both doses. Mr. Bhushan said all the 42 lakh adolescents who received their first dose on January 3 were eligible for the second dose from January 31.

The Health Secretary said India had administered 166.68 crore of COVID-19 vaccine doses, which was among the highest in the world.

India records 1,000 COVID deaths

Daily case tally of the country reaches 1,71,934; total number of infections 4.17 cr.

THE HINDU DATA TEAM
CHENNAI

The country recorded 1,71,934 new COVID-19 cases on Wednesday. The total number of infections has reached 4.17 crore, and the active cases have crossed the 15.6 lakh mark.

The figures are based on the State bulletins released until 10 p.m. on Wednesday.

However, Ladakh, Tripura, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Jharkhand, and Lakshadweep had not yet released data for the day.

Kerala recorded 52,199 infections on Wednesday, followed by Karnataka (20,505) and Maharashtra (18,067).

On Wednesday, 1,000 deaths were recorded in India, considerably higher than the average levels recorded in the last week.

The total number of recorded fatalities has reached 4,98,924. Kerala also reported the most deaths with 500 fatalities (335 were from a backlog), followed by Karnataka (81) and Maharashtra recorded 79 deaths.

At risk: A crowded weekly market at Mahanagar in Lucknow on Wednesday poses a high risk of transmission of the virus. ▪ SANDEEP SAXENA

COVID-19

On Tuesday, 17.4 lakh tests were conducted (the results for which were made available on Wednesday).

The test positivity rate (the number of cases detected per 100 tests) was 9.8%. As of Wednesday, 92.9% of the eligible population has been vaccinated with at least one dose, while 70.5% have received both doses. In the 15-17 age cohort, 67.3% of the population have received their first dose.

Altogether, 94,50,85,052 first doses, 71,48,90,669 second doses, and 1,23,92,459 booster doses have been administered across India.

Protest over acid attack on woman

Three accused arrested in Srinagar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

Kashmir witnessed public outrage on Wednesday over the acid attack on a 24-year-old woman in Srinagar, even as the police arrested three persons, including the main accused, in the incident.

The Jammu and Kashmir police said they had arrested three accused and sealed a shop for the illegal sale of acid.

After the preliminary investigation and technical analysis, a Special Investigation Team (SIT) led by Superintendent of Police Raja Zuhaib said the victim, who is from the Eidgah area here, had rejected the proposal of the accused, who then started stalking her.

"The accused [also from Srinagar] went to the place where the woman used to work. As the victim was heading home late in the evening, acid was thrown on her," the police said.

According to hospital sources, the victim's face and an eye were affected.

Scores of youth held a demonstration in Srinagar's Jehangeer Chowk and demanded capital punishment for the attacker.

Several political parties demanded swift action against culprits and to put an end to targeted harassment against women.

Militant behind Shopian attack dead

Umar Ishfaq Malik was a categorised terrorist active since 2020, say police

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

The Jammu and Kashmir police on Wednesday said they had killed a Hizb-ul-Mujahideen militant, involved in the attack on an off-duty policeman on February 1, in south Kashmir's Shopian.

"A joint cordon and search operation of the police, the Army and the CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force) was launched in Shopian's Nadigam village following a tip-off. In the ensuing encounter, Umar Ishfaq Malik alias Musa from Shopian's Bongam was killed. He was linked to the Hizb," Inspector General of Police Vijay Kumar told *The Hindu*.

Slain Malik, as per the police records, was a categorised terrorist and was active since 2020.

Constant vigil: Army jawans stand guard near the encounter site in Shopian district on Wednesday. ▪ NISSAR AHMAD

Active in recruitment

"He was involved in a recent attack on Assistant Sub Inspector Shabir Ahmad at Amshijipora in Shopian while he was returning back from a nearby mosque after offering prayers.

He was also instrumental in motivating the gullible youth to join terror folds and other criminal activities," Mr. Kumar said.

Ahmad, who had sustained multiple bullet wounds in the attack on Tuesday, has been admitted to a Srinagar hospital. According to the police, Malik was providing logistic and other support to the active terrorists in the area before joining the terror ranks.

"Incriminating materials, arms and ammunition were recovered from the site of the encounter. All the recovered materials have been taken into case records for further investigation," the police said.

Malik became the 400th militant to be killed during the tenure of Mr. Kumar, who took over as Kashmir's top police officer on December 30, 2019.

ZyCoV-D supply to Centre starts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Pharmaceutical company Zydus group on Wednesday announced that it had started the supply of its COVID-19 vaccine, ZyCoV-D, to the Central government against their order. The group is also planning to make the vaccine available in the private market.

ZyCoV-D, a three-dose vaccine administered intradermally, will be priced at ₹265 a dose and the applicator at ₹93 a dose, excluding GST. The Union Health Ministry had announced that ZyCoV-D will be initially introduced in Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

PLA Galwan commander is Olympics torchbearer

Selection of Qi Fabao follows other moves by authorities to keep Galwan Valley clash in spotlight

ANANTH KRISHNAN
HONG KONG

A People's Liberation Army (PLA) regiment commander who was involved in the June 15, 2020 clash with India in Galwan Valley was chosen by the Chinese government to carry the Winter Olympic torch in Wednesday's torch relay in Beijing.

The Winter Olympics will open on Friday in a lavish ceremony to be attended by President Xi Jinping and more than a dozen world leaders, including Russia's Vladimir Putin, five Central Asian Presidents and Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan.

On Wednesday, the capital held a torch relay with 1,200 torchbearers. Among them, the Communist Party-run *Global Times* reported, was Qi Fabao, regiment commander who was later honoured by the Chinese military after he sustained a head injury in the Galwan Valley clash in June 15, 2020.

He "took the flame from Wang Meng, China's four-time Olympic short track speed skating champion, at Winter Olympic Park on Wednesday," a report in the *Global Times* said.

China previously hit out at Western countries for "politicising" the games after the U.S., U.K., Australia and Canada said their officials would not attend the opening ceremony because of human rights violations in Xinjiang, although their athletes are participating in the winter games. China's government has continued to keep the Galwan clash in the public spotlight even as both sides continue talks on disengagement along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Qi Fabao relays the Olympic flame in Beijing. ▪ REUTERS

On Tuesday, the first day of the new "year of the tiger", China's state channel China Central Television (CCTV) began broadcasting a five-part documentary on PLA soldiers of the Xinjiang military command stationed along the LAC in eastern Ladakh. The first episode showed patrols along the border, including flag raising ceremonies held in Galwan Valley and boats patrolling Spanggur Lake, south of Pangong Lake. A preview of the series included interviews with the relatives of the PLA soldiers who died in the Galwan clash.

In July last year, Mr. Xi bestowed the Communist Party's July 1 medal, to mark its 100-year anniversary, on Chen Hongjun, one of the four PLA soldiers reported killed in the Galwan clash. In February 2021, the Chinese military announced honours posthumously for Chen and three others, finally confirming it had suffered casualties eight months after the clash.

The Chinese military last year also organised a series of activities around the country so more people in China could "learn how PLA heroes, including the martyrs of the Galwan Valley conflict, defended and guarded the country's borders", reports last year said.

Webinar held on Indian education and the future

Experts speak on use of technology and blended learning

S. POORVAJA
CHENNAI

A webinar on "Vision 2035: Overcoming Limitations and Supporting Change in the Indian Education Ecosystem" was organised by Blackboard and *The Hindu* EducationPlus on Wednesday,

"Success inside and outside classrooms involves admission and enrollment management, teaching and learning, retention, alumni student success, and more," said Philip Murray, Regional Vice-President Asia, Blackboard.

Vivek Iyer, Vice-President, Asia Pacific, Anthology, said areas such as admissions, exams and more were in silos. "With technology, however, we can start intervention mechanisms for students, track red flags in a timely manner and course correct, thus leading to better learning outcomes."

S.S. Mantha, former Chairman, AICTE, Adj. Professor, NIAS Bangalore, and Emeritus Prof. VJTI (AI and Robotics), spoke about how, with the introduction of the NEP 2020, much will change as technology evolves. However, he also said, "Blended learning will become a part of mainstream education and that is where the virtualisation of education will gain prominence."

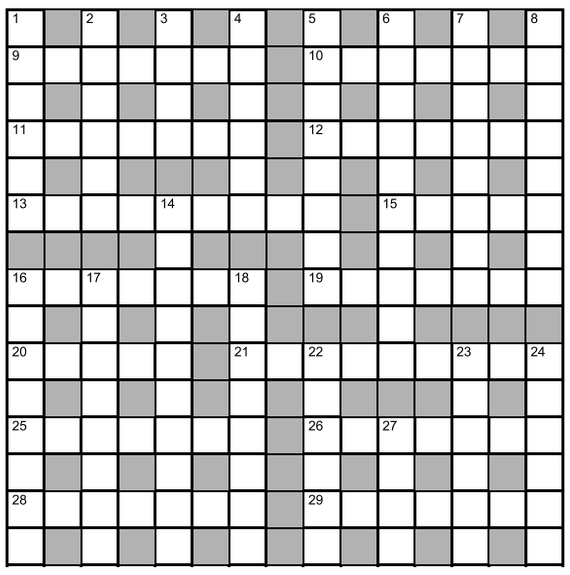
Janat Shah, Director, IIM-Udaipur elaborated on how face-to-face education mattered in higher education, especially in management.

TH CROSSWORD + 13470

(set by Afterdark)

Display keystrokes of genius. Type your answers in our online grids. @ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

SCAN TO PLAY



ACROSS

9 By changing sides, devotion can fetch commission (7)
10 Good call to arrest skinhead with tee and skimpy clothing (1-6)
11 Overwork obese police officer – skips rules often (7)
12 Source of fuel is frequently social issue (3,4)
13 City's tavern's clean, scrubbed, nothing inside (9)
15 Dark girl can get married (5)
16 Agent perhaps is peerless, but footloose and crazy (7)
19 Heartless teacher, one at school, is to divide by three (7)
20 Pancake recipe, one released to cook (5)
21 Editorial about media crushed (9)
25 Mob fury about missing flower (7)
26 Reverse rule, somehow play around with a barrier of free reading (7)
28 City tried to regroup... (7)
29 ... will be able to join farewell with musical composition (7)

DOWN

1 Lead without fear, organise a structure perhaps (6)
2 Marine creature in new store, unknown, gets coverage (6)
3 Small delay getting ore residue (4)
4 Selection of crazy decor and a type of music (6)
5 First person to pass over northern storm was blind (8)
6 Mineral deposit found at POW camp, a small amount (10)
7 A strobile is long figure (4,4)
8 Let's say 21, recently been in the news (3,5)
14 Delivery of old iron fetches excellent returns (10)
16 Angry boy Edward gets sick to begin with and found in hospital (8)
17 Boy, steel could be used for mechanical fasteners (8)
18 Frenchmen had an Australian animal earlier as co-resident perhaps (8)
22 Government at Vatican in the past paid 50% by currency without substance (6)
23 Each in command of vessel's progress... (6)
24 ... stop missing cycle for German money (6)
27 Pull animal across pole (4)

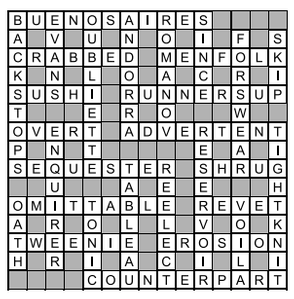
SUDOKU

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

No.SS5337 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 13469



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Immersed in bhakti bhava

Among the Saivite saints, Cheraman Peruman Nayanar stands out as a devotee of Siva and also as a friend of Sundarar. Though born in the line of Chera kings, owing to his past samskara, he is able to view the enjoyments of the world as fleeting and hence is not enamoured of kingship. He gives up his life in the palace to serve the Lord at the sacred temple at Tiruvanchaikalam. Yet, it is God's will that he should take up the mantle of ruling the country. He accepts it and rules with the sole aim of serving the people while remaining in devoted service to Siva, pointed out Sri Mu Murthy in a discourse.

His devotional life is enriched with his interactions with God who graces him. In one instance, the Lord instructs a devotee and poet in Madurai by name Bana Pathirar to hand over a song He has composed to Cheraman Peruman and obtain some wealth. On realising that the Lord Himself had sent him this divine hymn, he is overwhelmed with ineffable ecstasy. What greater fortune could there be, he cries out in gratitude. He offers all the wealth to Bana Pathirar who takes only what is necessary and thanks him and goes back to Madurai to worship Siva.

Through another anecdote Siva brings about the friendship between him and Sundarar, both unique in their devotion. The Lord used to acknowledge Cheraman Peruman's daily worship with His cosmic dance so that the devotee would hear the tinkling music of His anklets. But when once the king did not hear the divine sound of the anklets, he decided to kill himself. Then the Lord explains that the delay was due to His being engrossed in listening to another devotee Sundarar who had come to Thillai to sing pathigams in His praise. Thus the two devotees become friends.

INTERVIEW | VIJAY GOKHALE

'Between the two Olympics, China has seen a huge shift in every sense'

'China is going into the 2022 Olympics with a greater sense of anxiety and with a sense that things may not be going as they would wish it to'

ANANTH KRISHNAN

Fourteen years after Beijing hosted the Olympics, the Chinese capital will, on February 4, launch the Winter Olympic Games in a grand opening ceremony. From 2008 to 2022, China has seen a huge shift in its domestic politics as well as in relations with the world, says **Vijay Gokhale**, *a former Foreign Secretary and Ambassador to China. Excerpts.*

Looking back to 2008, what legacy did the Beijing Olympics leave?

■ The period between the two Olympics has seen a very fundamental shift in China in every sense. In 2008, when China held the Beijing Olympics, it reached the apogee of global respect. It had grown for 25 straight years with double-digit growth. It had majorly contributed to global trade and business. It had expanded diplomatic influence across the world. The sense within China was that the 2008 Olympic Games were as a coming of age. The global financial crisis only confirmed to them that this was not simply a passing phenomenon. If you now cut to 2022, China is going into these Olympics with a greater sense of anxiety and with a sense that things may not be going as they would wish it to, both in terms of the domestic situation, because of the economic problems that are there, and internationally. People have put a question mark on whether China's economic growth will continue to power global growth, and also whether China's diplomatic and international behaviour helps in maintaining peace and security, or actually worsens the situation in the region.

We tend to look at 2012, when Xi Jinping became the General Secretary, as another turning point in politics.

■ From 2012 to 2022, Xi Jinping has consolidated power like no leader after Mao Zedong. Today, he is, as one article said, the chairman of everything. We are in a situation where a central authoritarian figure is back in the centre of everything in China, not just its politics, but its society, military, international relations, and so on.

If you read the resolution on history which the Communist Party adopted in June 1980 after the end of the Cultural Revolution, one of the central elements of that resolution was that there had been a dangerous concentration of authority in the hands of one individual, Mao.

The new set of rules emphasised two things. Firstly, there will be collective responsibility. The second critical decision that was taken was the cult of personality would be specifically forbidden. This, therefore, ensured that whatever was to the credit of the party went to the party, not to the credit of an individual. What has happened essentially in 2016 when the new political rules for the party members was introduced, is that both these critical elements of party political life have been either expressly removed, or so significantly diluted as to be rendered meaningless. So there has been a very fundamental shift in the basic behaviour within the party since 2012.

People have put a question mark on whether China's economic growth will continue to power global growth

What changes do you see in how China looks at its place in the world?

■ China perhaps saw this inflection point approaching around the time of the Beijing Olympics or just after that. The global financial crisis gave China the sense that the inflection point was there. To my sense, COVID-19 has confirmed that view as far as the Chinese are concerned, not necessarily because they perceive themselves to be doing so well, but because they perceive others to have done so badly, particularly the U.S. and its Western allies.

The phrase that President Xi and other members of the party have been using for at least the past three or four years has been that this is a once-in-a-century situation, which has both great challenges and opportunities. It is this grand sort of dream which is driving China's foreign policy. That includes the whole idea of creating an alternative universe in terms of the Belt and Road, payment gateways, governing the Internet, alternative global positioning systems, alternative multilateral lending institutions, the "Made in China 2025" strategy which means China will lead in new industries like artificial intelligence, Internet of Things, or 5G.

Do you think the shift in India away from looking at China as a bg economic opportunity is permanent?

■ For many years now, it has become clearer and clearer that the primary areas of Chinese interest in the Indian economy were selling to the Indian market, which is China's exports, and providing the wherewithal for building projects in India, or project exports.

Despite a positive climate that prevailed from roughly 2005 to 2017, very little direct Chinese investment came into India. Conversely, Indian companies have found it very difficult to break into the Chinese market.

For the Indian side, the huge trade deficit is not simply an economic issue or a commercial matter, it is a political problem.

I do not mean to say that trade figures will precipitously drop, because the fact of the matter is that China supplies many of the intermediate and capital goods that India needs.

What you won't see is significant amounts of Chinese investment, partnerships in terms of technology sharing or joint manufacturing, a closer relationship between the renminbi and the rupee, easier financial and banking channels, all those indicators which suggest that the two economies are converging.

I don't expect to see this in the coming 5 to 10 years. When India and China in 2008 used the famous phrase that there is enough space in the Asia-Pacific for both India and China to grow together, we perhaps meant different things.

Post-2020, any possibility of collaboration between the two countries has been set back even further, because as the Government of India has correctly said, we cannot on the one hand talk of cooperation and partnership where it suits China, but on the other hand, have a problem or confrontation in areas where it doesn't suit China to collaborate.

What shift do you see in China's approach to territorial disputes?

■ If you look at the South China Sea issue, from the point when they offered to negotiate a code of conduct sometime in 2001 or 2002, it has taken them more than 20 years simply to come up with just a framework. As of now, there is no code of conduct.

The only thing that has changed is the facts on the ground. And those changes have been made only by one of the parties to the dispute, which is the People's Republic of China. The lesson we can draw from this is that they have entered into negotiations as a means of buying time in order to change the facts on the ground. And having changed the facts on the ground, they are now in a position to dictate terms simply because these facts cannot be reversed.

They have then brought in a border law which legalises this by saying there is no dispute and this is a matter of sovereignty. There are lessons for us to draw from this.

Full interview at https://bit.ly/GokhaleInterview

U.S., NATO offer trust-building steps to Russia, say leaked files

However, West reiterates that Ukraine has right to apply to join its alliance

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BRUSSELS

Washington and its NATO allies have offered Moscow arms control and trust-building measures to defuse the threat of a new Russian offensive against Ukraine, according to documents published by *El Pais* on Wednesday.

The proposals, set out in letters by NATO and the United States last month in response to Russian demands, remain firm on insisting that Ukraine and any other sovereign country has a right to apply to join the alliance.

But the reported U.S. response – posted to the Spanish daily's website – suggests "reciprocal commitments by both the United States and Russia to refrain from deploying offensive ground-launched missile systems and permanent forces with a combat mission in the territory of Ukraine".

Both the U.S. and NATO documents urge Russia to restore diplomatic ties with the alliance and to renew and renegotiate nuclear missile control treaties with the United States.

Moscow is urged to re-engage with the NATO-Russia council, a diplomatic body "offering dialogue and partnership in place of conflict and distrust."

A NATO official refused to confirm the text, saying: "We never comment on alleged leaks."

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Moscow was aware of the report but added: "We didn't publish anything, and I don't want to comment on this."

"Further Russian increases in force posture against Ukraine will force the United States and Allies to strengthen our defensive posture," the document warned.

Flexing artillery: Russian T-72B3 tanks during military drills at the Golovenki training ground near Moscow. ▪ AP

U.S. deploys additional troops to Eastern Europe

WASHINGTON

U.S. President Joe Biden ordered the deployment of several thousand more troops to bolster NATO forces in eastern Europe. Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said 1,000 U.S. soldiers now in Germany would deploy to Romania, and another 2,000 in the U.S. would be sent to Germany and Poland. AFP

U.S. sends military aid to UAE after Houthi attacks

Warship, fighter jets part of package

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
DUBAI

The United States will send a warship and fighter jets to help defend the United Arab Emirates, officials said on Wednesday, after a series of missile attacks by Yemeni rebels left three dead in the wealthy Gulf state.

The deployment, to "assist the UAE against the current threat", follows a phone call between Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin and Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, the U.S. embassy in the UAE said.

The UAE, part of the Saudi-led coalition fighting Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels and a major financial hub, suffered its third missile attack in consecutive weeks on Monday.

As part of the new arrangements, the *USS Cole* guided missile destroyer will partner with the UAE Navy and make a port call in Abu Dhabi, while the U.S. will also deploy fifth-generation warplanes.

Other actions include "continuing to provide early warning intelligence (and) collaborating on air defence", the embassy said.

Mr. Austin and the crown prince "discussed the recent Houthi attacks against the UAE that caused civilian casualties and also threatened U.S. and Emirati armed forces stationed at Al Dhafra air base," the embassy added.

'Clear signal'

The U.S., a staunch Saudi and UAE ally, intends the deployment to be "a clear signal that the United States stands with the UAE", the embassy said.

President Joe Biden withdrew U.S. support for the Saudi-led intervention in Yemen after taking office early last year, reversing his predecessor's policy of providing logistical assistance.

However, the U.S. State Department announced in November the approval of the sale of $650 million worth of air-to-air missiles to Saudi Arabia.

A $23 billion U.S. arms package to the UAE, including F-35 fighter jets, has yet to be finalised, with the Emiratis threatening to scrap the deal over stringent conditions.

The rebel attacks have increased Gulf tensions at a time when international talks over Iran's nuclear programme are stumbling, and have helped push oil prices to seven-year highs.

CNN chief resigns over undisclosed relationship

It came out during an investigation

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

CNN president Jeff Zucker abruptly resigned on Wednesday for failing to disclose a romantic relationship with a colleague at the U.S. cable television channel.

As head of the 24-hour Cable News Network since 2013, Mr. Zucker was one of the most powerful media executives in the United States.

"I certainly wish my tenure here had ended differently," he said in a message to the network's employees.

Mr. Zucker has been a frequent target of the ire of former president Donald Trump, who immediately issued a statement celebrating his departure.

In his message to staff, Mr. Zucker said that as part of an investigation into a CNN anchor, he was "asked about a consensual relationship with my closest colleague, someone I have worked with for more than 20 years."

"I acknowledged the relationship evolved in recent years," he said.

"I was required to disclose it when it began but I didn't. I was wrong," Mr. Zucker added.

CNN identified the colleague as executive vice president and chief marketing officer Allison Gollust, who said she would remain at the Atlanta-based network founded in 1980 by media mogul Ted Turner.

Jeff Zucker

"Jeff and I have been close friends and professional partners for over 20 years," Ms. Gollust said in a statement published by CNN. "Recently, our relationship changed during COVID," she said.

"I regret that we didn't disclose it at the right time," she added.

"I'm incredibly proud of my time at CNN and look forward to continuing the great work we do every day," Ms. Gollust said.

Mr. Zucker and Ms. Gollust are both divorced, according to *The New York Times*.

India's EXIM Bank, Sri Lanka sign $500-mn loan agreement

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

The Export Import Bank (EXIM) of India and the Government of Sri Lanka on Wednesday signed a $500-million Line of Credit agreement aimed at helping Sri Lanka cope with its fuel shortages, amid one of the worst economic meltdowns facing the island nation.

New Delhi's support for fuel imports – by Sri Lanka from India – through the Line of Credit, is in response to Colombo's "urgent requirement", according to a statement from the Indian High Commission in Colombo. "This critical support comes in the wake of a virtual meeting between the External Affairs Minister of India S. Jaishankar and Sri Lanka's Minister of Finance Basil Rajapaksa, held on January 15," said the official statement released on Wednesday.

Days after the meeting, India made the announcement confirming the emergency loan.

Official sources indicated that the Line of Credit spans a year, and comes at a "nominal" interest rate, of under 2%. The Sri Lankan government is expected to invite bids from Indian suppliers soon to finalise its import. Amid Sri Lanka's persisting dollar crisis, the country's ability to import fuel has been severely affected, leading to frequent shortages, as well as power failures. On January 13, India extended a $400 million currency swap to Sri Lanka.

At least 40 killed in DR Congo machete attack

BUNIA

At least 40 people were killed when machete-wielding militiamen attacked a site for displaced people in eastern DR Congo on Wednesday. Suspected attackers were from a notorious armed group called CODECO. AFP

DELHI JAL BOARD DELHI SARKAR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (T)/A.C.E.(M)-4
LUCKNOW ROAD, TIMAR PUR, DELHI-110054.
Short NIT. No.74(2021-22) E.E.(T)/A.C.E(M)-4.
"STOP CORONA: *Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene"

S. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Date of release of tender in e-procurement solution	Earnest Money	Tender fee (Non-refundable)	Last date/time of receipt of tender through e-procurement solution
1.	Providing laying of water line network at Swaroop Vihar Extension in AC-02 under ACE(M)-04. (Re-invite). I.D. 2022_DJB_215836_4	69,57,028/-	02.02.2022 12 P.M. onward	1,39,200/-	1000/-	Technical bid will be received 14.02.2022, 3:00 PM & opening of Financial bid after completion of technical bid & confirmation of EMD from Bank.

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

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER) **(S.K. SINGH)**
Advt. No. J.S.V. 1075 (2021-22) **EXECUTIVE ENGINEER-T(M)-4**

DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF N.C.T. OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE DY. SE (WB)-II
c/o ACE,HAIDERPUR, NEW DELHI-110088
Email: eewb2dib@gmail.com
SHORT NIT NO.4/ DY.SE (WB)-II(2021 -22)
"STOP CORONA, WEAR FACE MASK, FOLLOW PHYSICAL DISTANCING, MAINTAIN HAND HYGIENE"

S. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Contract Value(ECV)/ Amount put to tender	Earnest Money(EMD)	Tender Fee	Date of Release of tender in E-Procurement Solution & Tender ID No.	Last Date / Time of receipt of tender E-Procurement Solution
01	Providing & laying 450 mm dia pipe for supply of 03 MGD treated effulent from Yammuna Vihar STP line to Garhi Mandu Forest under ACE[E&M)I	Rs. 1,74,57,963/-	Rs. 3,50,000/-	Rs. 1500/-	01.02.2022 2022_DJB_215827_1	22.02.2022 At 03.05 PM

Further details in this regard can be seen at https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in
ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)
Advt. No. J.S.V. 1074 (2021-22) **Dy.S.E.(WB)-II**

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike
Office of the Executive Engineer, Road Infrastructure, Yelahanka Division, N.R.Square, Bangalore - 560002.
No: EE/RI/YNK/TEND/07/2021-22 Date: 02-02-2022
SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT) KW-4
(Only through e-procurement portal)

The Executive Engineer Road Infrastructure-Yelahanka Division, BBMP invites tenders from eligible Contractors registered in Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara palike or equivalent registration with CPWD/KPWD/Railways/MES/National Highway or any State Government organizations for the construction of works detailed in the table below.

Sl. No.	Name of the work	Approx. Amount put to tender (Rs. in lakhs)	EMD (Rs. in lakhs)
1.	Widening of Jakkur main Road by acquiring land from Jakkur flying Training School including restoration and asphalting of BWSSB Road cutting upto Yelahanka Zone boundary area of RI Yelahanka Division.	291.24	4.38

1) Tender Documents can be downloaded from the e-procurement portal of the Govt. of Karnataka from **05-02-2022. 2)** Last date for receipt of Queries on: **11-02-2022 upto 3.00 p.m. 3)** Pre bid meeting will be held on **11-02-2022 at 4.00 p.m.** in the **Office of the Chief Engineer (Road Infrastructure). 4)** Tenders must be submitted online through e-procurement portal on or **before 5.30 p.m.** on **19-02-2022. 5)** Technical Bids will be Opened on: **21-02-2022 at 4.30 p.m.** Further particulars can be obtained from the above office during working hours on working days and **Website: http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/-, Executive Engineer,
Road Infrastructure, Yelahanka Division, BBMP.

HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19? CALL APTHAMITRA ON 14410
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

KERALA MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD
(DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE, GOVT. OF KERALA)
Head Office : Thycaud, Thiruvananthapuram-14,
(Telephone No. 0471-2945600, FAX No. 0471-2945647),
E-mail : oncocare@kmscl.kerala.gov.in,
website : www.kmscl.kerala.gov.in, CIN No. U24233KL2007SGC021616
No.KMSCL/OD/ACD/516/2021 Date : 01.02.2022
E-TENDER NOTICE

Online bids are invited from manufacturers/direct importers / loan licensees on behalf of Department of Health, Govt of Kerala for the procurement of Anti Cancer Drugs for the year 2022-23.

Sl. No.	Tender No. and Date	Category	No. of items
1.	KMSCL/OD/ACD/RC/2022/001 dtd. 02.02.2022	Anti Cancer Drugs	176

The last date and time of online uploading of tenders will be 21.02.2022, 5.00 pm. The date and time of opening of Technical bid will be 25.02.2022 11.00 am. Tenders shall be downloaded and submitted online through the e-tender portal **www.etenders.kerala.gov.in.**
(Sd/-) MANAGING DIRECTOR (Tender Inviting Authority)

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, PHULBANI (R&B) CIRCLE, PHULBANI
E-mail : sernbphulbani@gmail.com
1st Corrigendum to Invitation For Bids (IFB)/ Tender Call Notice Vide Bid Identification No. CCE-(R&B)-PLB-12/2021-22 Vide No.1676 dtd. 22.12.2021
No-121 // Dated 25.01.2022

1) The date of sale and receipt of Bids, date of clarification of bids, last date of submission of bids, date of opening of the bids are hereby extended for the three nos of works vide Sl.No. 03, Sl.No. 07 & Sl. No. 08 of Bid Identification No.CCE-(R&B)-PLB-12/2021-22 as mentioned below.

Reference to Sl No of Bid Identification No. CCE-(R&B)-PLB-12/2021-22	Name of the Work
03	Construction of H.L Bridge over Salunki River at 3/150 Km of SKPM Road
07	Construction of District Excise office Building at Phulbani
08	Construction of 4 Nos "E" type Quarters stilt+2 (one block) for district sub registrar office at Phulbani in Kandhamal, District for the year 2019-20

(i) Date and Time of sale and receipt of Bids :-From 10.00 AM of dtd. 16.02.2022 to 5.00 PM of dtd. 03.03.2022.
(ii) Last date of seeking clarification of Bid :- 5.00PM of dtd. 02.02.2022
(iii) Last Date for Submission of Bid :- 5.00PM of dtd. 03.03.2022.
(iv) Date of Opening of the Bid :- 11.00 AM of 04.03.2022.
2) The name of work in Sl 02 of the above said Bid Identification No. CCE-(R&B)-PLB-12/2021-22 may be read as 'Construction of HL Bridge over Chinchod Nallah at Ch. 31/770 km on Manamunda-Kantamal-Ghantapada-Sindhiguda Road (SH-41) in the district of Boudh."
3) The Addendum/ Corrigendum, if any, will be hosted in the website htpp://tendersodisha.gov.in
All other terms & conditions stipulated in the Original tender call notice vide the above Bid Identification No. remains unchanged.

B-1014 : **Chief Construction Engineer, Phulbani (R&B) Circle, Phulbani.**
OIPR-34129/11/0023/2122

MARKET WATCH

	02-02-2022	% CHANGE
Sensex	59,558	1.18
US Dollar	74.83	-0.01
Gold	47,837	-0.01
Brent oil	89.10	–

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	745.20	6.45
Asian Paints	3197.70	1.45
Axis Bank	804.10	22.20
Bajaj Auto	3535.00	0.55
Bajaj Finserv	16706.00	802.15
Bajaj Finance	7247.45	232.85
Bharti Airtel	725.05	2.00
BPCL	382.10	3.25
Britannia Ind	3621.05	-35.55
Cipla	951.80	5.40
Coal India	163.85	0.80
Divis Lab	4219.65	111.30
Dr Reddys Lab	4415.35	105.90
Eicher Motors	2669.75	47.55
Grasim Ind	1778.10	6.75
HCL Tech	1170.95	38.15
HDFC	2612.95	47.60
HDFC Bank	1531.20	34.20
HDFC Life	644.15	20.25
Hero MotoCorp	2702.40	-24.35
Hindalco	513.95	2.95
Hind Unilever	2327.90	22.25
ICICI Bank	813.75	3.45
IndusInd Bank	975.35	53.05
Infosys	1787.10	15.05
Indian OilCorp	124.45	2.70
ITC	232.15	4.40
JSW Steel	659.85	5.55
Kotak Bank	1942.60	60.30
L&T	1982.70	-7.80
M&M	869.35	-0.35
Maruti Suzuki	8515.25	-44.15
Nestle India Ltd.	18500.65	-171.05
NTPC	141.15	0.00
ONGC	171.30	0.35
PowerGrid Corp	214.00	1.05
Reliance Ind	2383.55	4.85
SBI Life	1220.10	5.15
State Bank	539.80	7.50
Shree Cement	25265.45	-224.20
Sun Pharma	890.65	-1.10
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	742.45	6.35
Tata Motors	506.40	2.10
Tata Steel	1167.50	0.15
TCS	3856.20	55.55
Tech Mahindra	1482.95	-22.80
Titan	2464.00	32.20
UltraTech Cement	7441.00	-75.25
UPL	785.95	0.95
Wipro	588.00	11.35

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on February 02

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	74.64	74.96
Euro	84.33	84.69
British Pound	101.08	101.52
Japanese Yen (100)	65.27	65.55
Chinese Yuan	11.73	11.79
Swiss Franc	81.15	81.51
Singapore Dollar	55.38	55.63
Canadian Dollar	58.86	59.11
Malaysian Ringitt	17.83	17.98
Australian Dollar	53.32	53.55

Source:Indian Bank

Budget moots tweaks to GST law to tighten input tax claims

Suppliers' failure to remit taxes could result in credits being blocked

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Amendments to the GST law mooted in the Finance Bill could stretch businesses' cash flows and lay the onus on taxpayers to accurately report input tax while filing returns, as the Bill seeks to scrap the provisional input tax credit (ITC) option.

The changes proposed in the Central GST Act sections relating to input tax credits aim to restrict such credits unless suppliers have remitted their share of taxes. While the provisional input tax credits are being scrapped, specific restrictions will apply for availing all input tax credits.

For instance, input tax credits from newly registered taxpayers may be restricted for a prescribed period, as would credits from any existing taxpayer that had fallen short on paying their dues. Most of the tweaks, aimed at plugging tax leakage and deterring businesses from wrongfully availing ITC, were approved by the GST Council last year.

Tax practitioners, however, caution that any failure to accurately report input tax credits could lead to demand notices from authorities, even though firms are not in a position to ensure their suppliers pay taxes on time.

In a bind: 'Excess ITC could lead to demand notices, while suboptimal ITC could hit firms' cash flows.' ▪ B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

'Added pressure'

"Doing away with the provisional ITC concept puts added pressure on businesses to accurately report ITC each month," said Archit Gupta, founder and CEO of tax portal Clear. "Excess ITC could lead to demand notices and penalties, while suboptimal ITC could hit cash flows."

Khaitan & Co. partner Abhisek A. Rastogi pointed out that the system of two-way communication between the supplier and recipient to ensure matching of respective returns is also being omitted.

Greater capital expenditure is the highlight of the Budget

'FM has focussed on sustaining growth momentum'

NIRMAL JAIN

This Budget has made some very effective announcements to accelerate growth as we come out of a prolonged pandemic which has weighed on growth significantly.

We have seen GDP growth rate at above 9% and need to sustain that momentum. Then, it will result in higher income for everyone, higher consumption leading to higher earnings growth as well. The higher-than-expected capital expenditure (capex) is the highlight of the Budget. Also, there is no bad news as such, which is a positive. Here are some takeaways:

At any point, a Finance Minister will have a trade-off between maintaining higher economic growth and worrying about inflation. Bond yields, though inching up, are in a comfortable range

COMMENT

Capex and deficits

For FY22, the revised estimate for capex stood at ₹6 trillion, but excluding the one-time Air India charge, it would have been closer to ₹5.5 trillion. Against that, the capex is slated to rise almost 35% to ₹7.5 trillion in FY23. This is the major theme of the Budget.

In terms of deficits, it is not just the fiscal deficit that is being cut from 6.9% in FY22 to 6.4% in FY23. This will be supported by revenue deficit tapering from 5.1% budgeted for in FY22 to 3.8% in FY23. The Centre wants to borrow less to fund revenue spending, which is a good signal.

Primary deficit (excluding interest) was 20 basis points (bps) higher than budget estimates for FY22 at 3.3%, but is estimated to dip to 2.8% in FY23. The path appears to be towards a gradual taper of deficits.

It is not that central fiscal deficit is being replaced with State fiscal deficits. The consolidated deficit is expected to come down to 10.4% in FY23 from 10.9% in FY22. In addition, States have leeway to expand their deficit to 4% of GSDP compared with 3% stipulated by the Finance Commission. States also get ₹1 trillion as interest-free, 50-year loans. In a nutshell, there will be a lot more onus of deficit creation in the hands of the States.

Despite the projected reduction in fiscal deficit to 6.4%, borrowings are going to be higher. In fact, from ₹12.1 trillion in FY22, borrowings are expected to rise to ₹14.95 trillion in FY23. This was one reason why bond yields on the 10-year benchmark rallied to above 6.8% post the Budget announcement. Pressure on long-term yields will stay and it must be ensured that not too much devolves on the Reserve Bank.

While the gross market borrowing is higher than expectations, there is a trade off. We got a higher GDP print of 9.2%. So, maintaining the momentum has a positive impact on jobs and cascading impact on many other sectors. At any point, a Finance Minister will have a trade-off between maintaining higher economic growth and worrying about inflation. The current bond yields, though inching up, are in a comfortable range. If we go back to the earlier crisis of 2008 or the taper tantrum of 2011, bond yields were hovering much higher at about 8%.

Muted disinvestments

Unlike the last two years when disinvestment revenues were the theme of the Budget, FY23 has underplayed this theme altogether. For example, against the ₹1,75,000 crore estimate for disinvestment in FY22, the revised estimate is ₹78,000 crore and has been further scaled down to ₹65,000 crore for FY23.

What can be inferred is that the Centre may push through a much smaller LIC IPO this year and BPCL may be just about the only big highlight in FY23.

(The writer is founder and chairman, IIFL Group)

Expect States to fully tap ₹1-lakh cr. loan corpus: FM

'States can pitch own priority projects for interest-free loan'

VIKAS DHOOT
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the Centre is open to considering States' own priority projects to avail of funds from the ₹1,00,000 crore interest-free, 50-year loan, even if they don't strictly fall under the focus areas specified in the latest Union Budget.

"We'll accept any project but more so, if they are all within the broad framework of PM Gati Shakti that seeks to make sure that every project will have optimum utilisation of the context," she said to a query from *The Hindu*. "If I want an airport in my constituency, are there industries or residents around it, is there some economic activity going on," she said, indicating that there must be some economic rationale and synergy for such projects to be considered.

Nirmala Sitharaman

As per the Budget, the loans could be availed of for projects related to the PM Gati Shakti programme, digitising the economy, building rural roads and reforms relating to urban transit, building laws and town planning.

The Minister exuded confidence that States would use the entire ₹1-lakh crore corpus. "States have very good capacity to execute such projects. The ₹10,000 crore we had offered with similar conditions in this year, we raised it to ₹15,000 crore as the response was so good," she said.

'DPIIT to move Cabinet for LIC FDI tweak'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) will soon approach the Union Cabinet to seek approval on changes in the FDI policy to facilitate disinvestment of the country's largest insurer LIC, a top official said on Wednesday.

DPIIT Secretary Anurag Jain said an inter-ministerial consultation on the matter is at its last stage.

According to the current policy, 74% foreign investment is permitted under the automatic route in the insurance sector.

However, these rules do not apply to LIC.

IN BRIEF

UPASI flags lower fund allocation for Tea Board

COIMBATORE

The United Planters Association of Southern India's (UPASI) president M.P. Cherian has expressed concern over the 'drastic decline' in the allocation of funds to the Tea Board in the Budget. The Union Budget had proposed an allocation of ₹131.92 crore for the Tea Board in 2022-2023, down from ₹353.65 crore (revised allocation) for the current fiscal year.

Chola Investment Q3 net profit rises 28%

CHENNAI

Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Co. Ltd. (CIFCL) posted a 28% rise in standalone net profit for the third quarter ended December to ₹524 crore on pent-up demand and good monsoon. Revenue from operations was flat at ₹2,530 crore. Disbursements grew 32% to ₹10,430 crore, the firm said in a statement. The board approved an interim dividend of ₹1.30 per share.

Tech upgradation fund for textiles on the anvil

COIMBATORE

The Union Textile Ministry has drafted a new Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme, which will replace the existing Amended Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (ATUFS). "We have formulated a new scheme. We want to bring in an element of incentivising the machinery manufacturers too," Textiles Secretary Upendra Prasad Singh said.

IOB profit doubles on cash recovery, cost cuts

CHENNAI

Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) reported a 113% growth in, or doubling of, standalone net profit for the quarter ended December to ₹454 crore due to cash recovery and cost containment. Interest income dipped to ₹4,198 crore from ₹4,244 crore. Net interest margin slid to 2.4% from 2.45%. Gross NPAs declined to 10.4% from 12.19%.

HDFC Q3 net rises 11% on higher core income

'Strong demand for home loans'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Housing Development Finance Corporation Ltd. (HDFC) reported third-quarter net profit rose 11% to ₹3,261 crore from ₹2,926 crore in the year-earlier period on higher core income.

"The demand for home loans and pipeline of loan applications continues to remain strong," said vice-chairman and CEO Keki Mistry. "Growth in home loans was seen in the affordable housing segment and in high-end properties as well," he said.

As on December 31, 2021, assets under management (AUM) stood at ₹6,18,917 crore as against ₹5,52,167 crore in the previous year.

The outstanding amount in respect of individual loans sold was ₹79,748 crore. The growth in the individual loan book, after adding back loans sold in the preceding 12 months was 24%. The growth in the total loan book after adding back loans sold was 17%, the lender said.

Keki Mistry

The collection efficiency for individual loans on a cumulative basis witnessed an improvement to stand at an average of 98.9% during the quarter, HDFC said.

The gross non-performing loans (NPLs) as of December 31, 2021, stood at ₹12,419 crore.

This was equivalent to 2.32% of the portfolio.

Wheels India net rises 72% on exports

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Wheels India Ltd. reported a 72% jump in standalone net profit for the third quarter ended December to ₹20.60 crore.

Revenue from operations grew 57% to ₹1,006 crore, the company said in a statement. Exports rose 66% to ₹267 crore, according to an official.

Export sales accounted for about 26% of overall sales. Segment wise, auto components made up 55% of sales, while 37% came from industrial components. "The company has had the fifth sequential quarter of growth in exports, with good growth in Q3 exports across segments," said Srivats Ram, MD. "We expect growth... in exports to continue. On the domestic front... we expect the CV business to improve in Q4," he said.

BPCL: Govt.'s stake sale may be delayed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Privatisation of India's second-largest oil refiner BPCL may have been pushed back to the next financial year as no bidder visited the company's premises in the last quarter, a senior company official said on Wednesday.

The government is selling its entire 52.98% stake in BPCL for which three expressions of interest, including one from Anil Agarwal-led Vedanta Group, have been received.

Financial bids are yet to be called.

On a call with analysts, BPCL's Director-Finance V.R.K. Gupta said the company continues to update data for bidders and is replying to their queries.

Aluminium sector says coal stocks critically low

Industry seeks 25-30 rakes a day

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

With coal stocks running 'critically low', the aluminium industry has sought urgent government intervention to address the precarious situation and earmark at least 25-30 coal rakes per day for sustainable industry operations.

In a letter dated January 28 to Coal Secretary Anil Kumar Jain, the Aluminium Association of India (AAI) pointed out that the captive power plants of aluminium industry were facing alarmingly depleted coal stocks of only 3-4 days as compared with the prescribed level of 15 days.

Aluminium is a power intensive continuous process industry, which requires uninterrupted and steady power supply, the industry association said.

AAI added that since August 2021, the non-regulated sector was struggling to ensure it received uninterrupted coal supplies.

"There is a backlog of over 6,000 coal rakes as most of the available coal and rakes are being diverted to the power sector as priority supplies," the association added.

Kerala Rail Development Corporation Limited
E Tender

The following E Tenders are invited:-
(1) Tender No.KRDCL/ROB/01/2022 Design & Construction of ROB, approach roads in lieu of LC No.36
(2) Tender No.KRDCL/RUB/02/2022 Design & Construction of RUB, approach roads in lieu of LC No. 12

Tender documents can be downloaded from- **www.ireps.gov.in**
https://ireps.gov.in/epsn/home/viewRlyTenders.do?acctId=1042953&listType=nitLiveOpen
For more details www.keralarail.com

KERALA STATE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM

Tender No. KSSTM/E/70/04 **Date: 28/01/2022**
E-Tender ID: 2021_KSSTM_460875_2
E-Tender Notice (Retender)

E-Tenders under two cover system are invited by the Director, KSSTM, from reputed suppliers for the Supply of 3D Stereoscopic shows for its 3D Theatres.
PAC - Rs.15,00,000/- EMD - Rs. 15,000/-
Last date of submission of E-Tender: 11/02/2022 4 PM
For more details visit Kerala Government E-procurement portal
www.etenders.kerala.gov.in or **www.kstmuseum.com**
Director
(RO/00202/d3/2022/I&PRD)

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Executive Engineer, Project Division, Dasarahalli Zone, BBMP, MEI Layout, Bagalagunte, Hesaraghatta Main Road, Bengaluru - 560 073
No.: BBMP/DZ/EE/PD/TEND/04/2021-22 **Date: 01.02.2022**
SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (CALL-02)
(Only through E-Procurement Portal) Two Cover System
The Executive Engineer (Project Division Dasarahalli Zone), BBMP invites item rate tenders from eligible Contractors / firms registered in Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike or equivalent registration with CPWD / KPWD / Railways / MES / National Highway or any State Government Organizations for the construction works detailed in the table below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Approximate Value of work / Service (Rs. in Lakhs)	EMD (in Rs.)
1	Development of Park at **Ward No. 41** in Dasarahalli Zone. **Tender Document: KW-03**	60.00	1,20,000/-
2	Development of parks in Paschim County and L M Enclave in Dasarahalli Zone. **Tender Document: KW-03**	60.00	1,20,000/-
3	Development of park and Construction of Watchmen room at Siddeshwara Layout Park in Dasarahalli Zone **Ward No. 14. Tender Document: KW-04**	200.00	3,00,000/-
4	Construction of RO Plant, Library building and development of park at pipeline road at Hegganahalli in Dasarahalli Zone **Ward No. 71. Tender Document: KW-04**	200.00	3,00,000/-

Calendar of Events: (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from the e-Procurement Portal. **(2)** Last date for Tender queries: **08.02.2022** upto **3:00 p.m. (3)** Pre bid meeting on **09.02.2022** at **11:30 a.m.** at Office of the Chief Engineer, Dasarahalli Zone, Hesaraghatta Main Road, Bengaluru - 560073. **(4)** Last Date for Receipt of Tender is **15.02.2022** upto **4:00 p.m. (5)** Date of opening of technical bid is **16.02.2022** by **4:30 p.m. (6)** Date of opening of financial bid: after approval of technical bid. Further details may be obtained from the above office during office hours or website **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in**
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Project Division, Dasarahalli Zone, BBMP
ಕೋವಿಡ್-19. ಆತಂಕ ಬೇಡ; ಮುನ್ನೆಚ್ಚರಿಕೆ ಇರಲಿ.
ಮಾಸ್ಕ್ ಧರಿಸಿ | 6 ಅಡಿ ದೈಹಿಕ ಅಂತರ ಪಾಲಿಸಿ | ಕೈಗಳ ಸ್ವಚ್ಛತೆ ಕಾಪಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಿ

No. A.12026/7/2021-Estt.IV
Government of India
Ministry of Jal Shakti
Department of Water Resources,
River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation

Narmada Control Authority (NCA) is a Body Corporate set up by the Central Government in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 6A of the Inter State Water Disputes Act, 1956, for the purpose of securing compliance with the implementation of the decision and direction of the Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal. The Narmada Control Authority has its headquarter at Indore, Madhya Pradesh.

2. Applications are invited from eligible and suitable officers for filling up one post of Member (Power) in Narmada Control Authority, Indore in the Pay Matrix Level-14 (Rs. 144200-218200/-) on deputation (including short-term contract) basis.
3. Details of the post, eligibility conditions etc. are available at **mowr.gov.in**; **dopt.gov.in** and **nca.gov.in**. Applications (**in triplicate**) complete in all respects of suitable and eligible officers and who can be spared immediately in the event of selection may be sent through proper channel to:- The Under Secretary (Estt.IV), Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Room No. 435, Shram Shakti Bhavan, Raft Marg, New Delhi - 110001 and by email at **usbm-mowr@nic.in** & **soe4-mowr@gov.in**, **within a period of four weeks from the date of issue/ publishing of this Advertisement in the Employment News.**
4. **Advance copies of application or application received after the prescribed period or not accompanied with the requisite information/documents are liable to be rejected.**

(Shalini Juneja)
Under Secretary to the Govt. of India

Municipal Council, Bhilwara (Raj.)
क्रमांकः–न.प.भी. / निर्माण / 2021–22 / SP-1 दिनांक :– 29.01.2022
:: Notice Inviting Bid ::
Bid for Municipal Council Bhilwara For **"Construction of Community Hall At Shastri Nagar Bhilwara"** Online Tender **13/2021-22 Date 27.01.2022** invited form interested bidders **Date 02.03.2022 Upto 3.00 P.M.** Other particulars of the bid may be invited on the procurement portal, **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in)** of the state.
NIB CODE :-DLB2122A7072 & UBN CODE :-1. DLB2122WSOB24961
Raj.Samwad/C/21/11223 **Commissioner**

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
Superintending Engineer (Hydrology)
O/o Engineer-in-Chief (General) Irrigation & CAD Department
2nd Floor, Jalasoudha Building, Errumanzil , Hyderabad-500082.
Tender No. NHP/TSSW/NCB/08/A2.1.01/2021-22, Dt.01/02/2022
ABRIDGED E- TENDER NOTICE
Online Tenders are invited through E-Procurement Mode for the following from reputed Firms in India: Description: "Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning, Training, Maintenance, Electrification and Automation with SCADA System (Phase II) at Mid Manair Dam, Sripada Yellampalli Project, Sri Komaram Bheem Project, Satnala Project, of Telangana State under National Hydrology Project. Display and Downloading of Tender Documents Period:03.02.2022 to 04.03.2022, Last Date and Time for Bid Submission:04.03.2022 by 3.00P.M. Detailed Invitation for Bid is available on **https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app**
R.O. No.: 2626-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2021-22 **Sd/- Superintending Engineer (H), O/o Engineer-in-Chief (General)**

Store Division, Civil Engineering Department
NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
ROOM NO. 224, SHAHID BHAGAT SINGH PLACE
Gole Market New Delhi - 110001
e-Procurement of Tender Notice
Tender I.D. No. :- 2022_NDMC_215661_1.
Subject:- Engagement of Concessionaire for Design, Built, Operate Public e-Scooter sharing system in NDMC Area.
EMD:- Rs. 20,00,000/-
Tender Cost:- Rs. 10,000/-
Date of release of tender through e-procurement solution: **31.01.2022**
Date & Time for Pre-bid meeting NDMC Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Palika Kendra, New Delhi: **11.02.2022 at 11.00 A.M**
Last date/time for receipt of tenders through e-procurement solution: **21.02.22 upto 3:00 PM.**
Further details can be seen at https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in
Note:- To participate in e-tender in NDMC, registration with e-tendering system, Govt. of NCT of Delhi is Mandatory.
Executive Engineer (Store)

Seven India squad members test Covid positive

Dhawan, Shreyas, Ruturaj and Saini infected ahead of the ODI sereis against West Indies; Mayank called up as cover

CRICKET

AMOL KARHADKAR & SHAYAN ACHARYA

Seven members of India's squad – four cricketers and three support staff members, including a coaching staff member – in Ahmedabad have been diagnosed COVID-19 positive ahead of Sunday's first ODI versus the West Indies.

Despite the scare, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) insiders insisted the series will "proceed as per schedule" with the selectors deputing replacements.

The BCCI, in an official media release, confirmed that opening batters Shikhar Dhawan and Ruturaj Gaikwad, middle-order batter Shreyas Iyer and pacer Navdeep Saini (standby) returned positive. Also found positive during the mandatory testing conducted during the squad's mandatory three-day quarantine period were fielding coach T. Dilip, masseur Rajeev Kumar and security and liaisoning manager B. Lokesh.

With Dhawan and Ruturaj, the two designated opening batters for the three ODIs besides captain Rohit Sharma, having been ruled out of the ODI series, the national selection panel has asked Mayank Agarwal to join the squad in Ahmedbad.

The BCCI statement confimed that Dhawan, Saini, Dilip and Lokesh's RT-PCR tests conducted on Monday returned positive during the first round of testing, Ruturaj's second sample on Tuesday was positive, while Shreyas and Kumar's third sample on Wednesday returned positive.

With multiple cases having been confirmed, it is understood that yet another RT-PCR test will be conducted to determine whether India can go ahead with its first scheduled training session on Thursday.

Large contingent

"We have a large contingent including the reserves and net bowlers, so the question of the series being rescheduled does not arise," said a BCCI official, preferring anonymity.

While Dhawan's international role has been limited to ODIs, Shreyas was keen on making amends after a topsy-turvy ODI series in South Africa. Ruturaj had suffered long COVID after arriving in UAE ahead of Indian Premier League's 2020 edition. Since then, he has been scoring heaps of runs at every possible opportunity and hoping for his ODI debut in the series.

Unfortunate: Dhawan, Ruturaj and Shreyas will be disappointed at having to sit out the ODIs. ▪ FILE PHOTO

Neeraj Chopra for Laureus award

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LONDON

India's Olympic gold medal-winning javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra was on Wednesday nominated for the prestigious Laureus 'World Breakthrough of the Year' award.

He was clubbed alongside tennis stars Daniil Medvedev and Emma Raducanu among others in the shortlist.

The 23-year-old Chopra, who became only the second Indian to win an individual Olympic gold medal and first in track and field, clinched the yellow metal in Tokyo with a throw of 87.58 metres.

He is now only the third Indian to fetch a Laureus nomination after cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar and wrestler Vinesh Phogat.

The winners will be revealed in April.

Dhull and Rasheed sizzle as India soars to 290

Skipper's sublime ton and his 204-run stand with the latter highlight the innings

U-19 WORLD CUP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
OSBOURN

Skipper Yash Dhull gave a glimpse of his enormous talent with a superbly-crafted hundred, while deputy Shaik Rasheed ideally complemented him with 94 as India scored a mammoth 290 for five against Australia in the second semifinal of the ICC U-19 World Cup here on Wednesday.

Dhull (110 off 110) was able to a complete a fine century but Rasheed (94 off 108) fell short of the mark as they added 204 runs for third wicket.

Third Indian captain

Dhull also became third Indian captain to hit a hundred in the tournament's history after Virat Kohli and Unmukt Chand.

India opted to put runs on the board after wining the toss.

Australian pacers bowled well in the opening Power-Play and the fact that Indian openers Angkrish Raghuvanshi (six off 30) and Harnoor Singh (16 off 30) were also overtly defensive helped them build pressure.

William Salzmann rocked Raghuvanshi's off-stump with a beauty that straightened after pitching.

Harnoor tried to pull a rising ball on leg stump from Tobia Snell only to glove it back to the wicketkeeper, leaving India at 37 for two in the 13th over.

Dhull and Rasheed, then got together to lift the team out of a spot of bother. Playing only their third game of the tournament after missing two due to Covid, Rasheed and Dhull showed maturity beyond their age to build the innings.

Dhull got a lot of runs square and behind the square with deft late-cuts off spinners being one of his pet shots. Rasheed ended up with eight fours and a six.

Boundaries at will

The highly rated Dhull played another sublime knock.

The pitch was on the slower side but he rotated the strike at ease before accelerating to pick boundaries at will, collecting 10 fours and a six in total.

He got to three figures with a two in the 45th over and next ball was a pull shot off Tom Whitney for the second six of the innings.

After Dhull's departure, Rasheed could not get to a deserving hundred after being caught at backward point off Nisbet.

Australia was sloppy in the field through the innings. Rasheed was dropped on 24 and missed an easy run out chance of Dhull who was batting on 74.

With two set batters gone in quick succession, the flow of the innings was slightly disrupted before Nishant Sindhu (12 n.o. off 10), Dinesh Bana (20 n.o. off four) and Rajvardhan Hangagekar (13 off 10) came up with the big shots in the death overs.

Leading from the front: Yash Dhull came up with a scintillating century. ▪ INSTAGRAM/ICC

SCOREBOARD

India: Angkrish Raghuvanshi b Salzmann 6, Harnoor Singh c Snell b Nisbet 16, Shaik Rasheed c Sinfield b Nisbet 94, Yash Dhull run out 110, Rajvardhan Hangargekar b Salzmann 13, Nishant Sindhu (not out) 12, Dinesh Bana (not out) 20, Extras (b-5, w-14): 19; Total (for five wkts. in 50 overs): 290.

Fall of wickets: 1-16, 2-37, 3-241, 4-241, 5-259.

Australia bowling: Tom Whitney 9-0-74-0, Jack Nisbet 9-1-41-2, William Salzmann 10-1-57-2, Jack Sinfield 10-0-53-0, Cooper Connolly 10-0-47-0, Nivethan Radhakrishnan 2-0-13-0.

Toss: India.

Australia 119/6

- Australia was struggling at 119/6 after 30 overs in pursuit of the victory target of 291. Only opener Campbell Kellaway (30) and No. 3 Corey Miller (38) provided some substance against an incisive Indian bowling

England overcomes Afghanistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NORTH SOUND (ANTIGUA)

Fancied England kept its nerve to reach the ICC U-19 World Cup final after prevailing over Afghanistan by 15 runs in an exciting last-four clash here on Tuesday, ending a 24-year wait for the side.

The win has put England in its first U-19 World Cup final since 1998 in South Africa, when it lifted the trophy.

Spinner Rehan Ahmed became the hero for the Young Lions, taking three wickets in the penultimate over at a crucial point when Afghanistan needed just 18 runs from the last 10 balls on Tuesday.

The scores: England 231/6 in 47 overs (George Thomas 50, George Bell 56 n.o., Alex Horton 53 n.o., Naveed Zadran 2/67, Noor Ahmad 2/32) bt Afghanistan 215/9 in 47 overs (Mohammad Ishaq 43, Allah Noor 60, Bilal Ahmad 33, Noor Ahmad 25, Rehan Ahmed 4/41, Thomas Aspinwall /37). Match reduced to 47 overs; target revised as 231 as per DLS method; *England won by 15 runs.*

Bhambri returns to Davis Cup team

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Ramkumar Ramanathan will spearhead the Indian challenge against Denmark in the Davis Cup tennis World Group play-off tie to be played on the grass courts of the Gymkhana Club on March 4 and 5.

The selection committee under the chairmanship of Nandan Bal chose the team on expected lines, bringing back Yuki Bhambri and retaining faith on Prajnesh Gunneswaran for the singles.

The Asian Games gold medallists Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan will form the doubles team for the tie.

It was announced that the team would assemble on February 23 to prepare well for the tie.

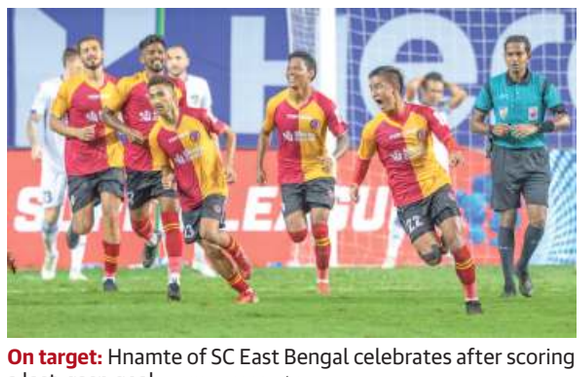
The team:

Ramkumar Ramanathan, Prajnesh Gunneswaran, Yuki Bhambri, Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan; **Reserves**: Saketh Myneni, Niki Poonacha and Digvijay Pratap Singh. **Captain**: Rohit Rajpal; **Coach**: Zeeshan Ali.

Back in the mix: Yuki Bhambri's return would boost India's chances in the World group play-off tie ▪ AFP

Chennaiyin denied by a fighting East Bengal

Latter makes a remarkable comeback



On target: Hnamte of SC East Bengal celebrates after scoring a last-gasp goal. ▪ FOCUS SPORTS/ ISL

ISL 2021-22

SPORTS BUREAU

SC East Bengal mounted a spectacular fight back to hold former champion Chennaiyin FC to a 2-2 draw in an ISL-8 fixture at the Tilak Maidan Stadium on Wednesday.

Trailing by two goals in the first half, East Bengal made a remarkable return after the break where it erased the deficit with two nice goals to steal a point from Chennaiyin FC.

Fantastic start

Chennaiyin FC made a fantastic start by scoring in the second minute. Jerry Lalrinzuala surprised the East Bengal defence with his speed and moved up the left flank to essay a fine cross. Suhail Pasha went for the floater but failed to connect properly. But the Chennaiyin attacker's effort did not go in vain as the ball hit East Bengal defender Hira Mondal's legs and found the back of the net.

Chennaiyin doubled the lead in the 15th minute as the East Bengal defender Mondal committed another mistake by sending a mis-pass that was collected by Ninthoi Meetei.

The Chennaiyin winger accepted the gift and quickly moved into the East Bengal box and finished with a powerful drive that gave the 'keeper Arindam Bhattacharya no chance.

East Bengal clawed back into the action in the final 15 minutes of the opening half. Darren Sidoel showed his class with a stunning free-kick in the 61st minute that helped East Bengal narrow the gap. East Bengal kept pressing for more and found the equaliser in the added time off a fine header from substitute Terina Hnmate.

The result: East Bengal 2 (Sidoel 61, Hnmate 90+2) drew with Chennaiyin FC 2 (Hira Mondal 2-og, Ninthoi 15).

Thursday's match: MC FC vs ATK MB, 7.30 p.m.

Myneni-Mukund pair advances with ease

Gets the better of Divij Sharan and Yuki Bhambri in the first round

TATA OPEN

ANI
PUNE

India's Saketh Myneni and Sasikumar Mukund kick-started their campaign at the 2022 Tata Open Maharashtra with a resounding 6-3, 6-4 win over compatriots Divij Sharan and Yuki Bhambri in the doubles opening round match at the Balewadi Stadium here on Wednesday.

Myneni and Mukund were awarded a main draw entry as an alternative pair after the pair of Denis Novak and Joao Sousa pulled out with the former suffering a thigh injury.

Teaming up for the first time, Myneni and Mukund pair looked in great touch as they pocketed the first set quite comfortably. However, Divij and Bhambri, who had registered a semifinal finish during their maiden appearance at the tournament in 2018, regrouped quickly in the second set to take the early lead, but Myneni and Mukund did not let the momentum slip by securing successive points which put them 5-4 ahead in the second set and they went on to bag the match comfortably in straight sets.

In another doubles opening round match, second-seeded Rohan Bopanna and Ramkumar Ramanathan beat Nicholas Monroe & Jamie Cerretani of the United States 6-3, 3-6, [10-7].

Meanwhile, in the singles second-round match, Portuguese star Sousa pulled of an upset when he rallied to record a stunning win against third-seed Gianluca Mager 4-6, 6-3, 7-6(4) to enter the quarterfinals.

Cruise mode: Mukund and Myneni posted a facile win in the opener. ▪ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The results:

Singles (second round): Kamil Majchrzak (Pol) bt Quentin Halys (Fra) 6-3, 7-6(7); 5-Daniel Altmaier (Ger) bt Radu Albot (Mol) 3-6, 6-4, 6-4; Joao Sousa (Por) bt Gianluca Mager (3), Italy, 4-6, 6-3, 7-6(4); 2-Lorenzo Musetti (Ita) bt Aleksandar Vukic (Aus) 7-6(3), 3-6, 6-3.

Doubles (first round): Jiri Vesely (Cze) & Alexander Erler (Aut) bt Quentin Halys & Hugo Grenier (Fra) 7-6(10), 6-4; Saketh Myneni & Sasikumar Mukund (Ind) bt Divij Sharan & Yuki Bhambri (Ind) 6-3, 6-4; 2-Rohan Bopanna & Ramkumar Ramanathan (Ind) bt Nicholas Monroe & Jamie Cerretani (USA) 6-3, 3-6, [10-7].

Pirates, Paltan post narrow wins

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BENGALURU

Sachin and Mohammadreza Shadloui shone as Patna Pirates narrowly beat UP Yoddha 37-35 in a Pro Kabaddi League Season 8 match here on Wednesday.

Sachin got a Super 10 (12 points) and was ably supported by left corner defender Mohammadreza Shadloui who secured a High 5.

Surender Gill's Super 10 for Yoddha was in vain.

In another match, Puneri Paltan produced another collective performance to beat U Mumba 36-34.

Japan takes on old rival China; the Philippines goes up against Korea

AFC CUP

LAVANYA LAKSHMI NARAYANAN
PUNE

The AFC Women's Asian Cup is finally at its business end. Defending champion Japan takes on celebrated challenger China while first-time World Cup entrant, the Philippines, has a tough task on hand when it goes up against Korea in the other semifinal of WAC 2022 at the Shree Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex in Pune on Thursday.

Winning the tournament this year will make Japan just the third side to manage an Asian Cup title hattrick.

Semifinal line-up

- Korea Republic vs Philippines, 1:30 p.m.
- China vs Japan, 7:30 p.m.

Standing in its way is an old rival – China. The two have clashed four times in the last five semifinals of the competition. With Japan winning three, including the last two.

China, the eight-time winner, last won the title in 2006 and Shui Qingxia's Steel Roses will look to make amends.

Meanwhile, the Philippines will want to keep the celebrations of earning a direct qualification to the 2023 World Cup aside as it takes on Korea which has a superior head-to-head record.

Colin Bell's side won its last two international fixtures against the Philippines, scoring nine unanswered goals.

However, Alen Stajcic's girls are up to the task. Despite coming into the semifinal after a physically tiring 120-minute against Chinese Taipei that they won on penalties, this side is running on momentum and adrenaline.

Bell does not want to take the Philippines for granted despite going into this fixture as the favourite.

National Team of the year nominees

India cricket squads, men's hockey team make shortlist

BYJU'S Classes Presents SPORTSTAR ACES HONOUR THE HEROES #SportstarHeroes In Association with IDFC FIRST Bank

SPORTS BUREAU

Indian men's cricket team: The Indian cricket team put up a number of historic performances, registering key wins home and away.

In 2021: Won Test series vs Australia 2-1, World Test Championships finalist (lost to New Zealand), won the T20I series and Test series against New Zealand at home

Indian women's cricket team: Mithali Raj and Co. impressed in red and pink ball cricket, giving seasoned Test-playing nations a run for their money.

In 2021: Drew the lone Test against England in Bristol, drew the maiden pink-ball Test against Australia in Carrara

Indian men's hockey team: After going without a medal for nine successive Games since its eighth gold in Moscow 1980, the Indian team's podium finish at the Tokyo Olympics was historic.

In 2021: Clinched the bronze at Tokyo, its first Olympic medal since 1980

The Sportstar Aces awards are presented by Byju's Classes with IDFC First Bank as the associate partner. Odisha is the Sports Destination Partner and Union Bank of India the banking partner. ONGC is the associate partner.

Nippon Paint is the Colour Partner and Life Insurance Corporation of India the Insurance Partner.

To vote, visit aces.sportstar.thehindu.com

TV PICKS

Tata Open Maharashtra: SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 1 p.m. onwards
U-19 World Cup: Third place play-off: SS Select 2 (SD & HD), 6.30 p.m.
Pro Kabaddi: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.
ISL: Star Sports 3, 7.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF

Jordan Poole pulls it off for Warriors

SAN ANTONIO

Jordan Poole scored 31 points and sank the winning 3-pointer with 17.9 seconds remaining as the short-handed Golden State Warriors erased a 17-point deficit to stun host San Antonio Spurs 124-120 on Tuesday, giving the Warriors their seventh straight win.

The results: New Orleans 111 bt Detroit 101; Milwaukee 112 bt Washington 98; Toronto 110 bt Miami 106; Chicago 126 bt Orlando 115; Minnesota 130 bt Denver 115; Golden State 124 bt San Antonio 120; Phoenix 121 bt Brooklyn 111. REUTERS

Petersen infected, to miss NZ series

JOHANNESBURG

South Africa batsman Keegan Petersen will miss the two-match Test series in New Zealand after testing positive for COVID-19, South Africa's cricket board (CSA) said on Wednesday. He will be replaced by Zubayr Hamza, who played his last Test over two years ago. REUTERS

Sreejesh won't hang up his boots yet

Goalkeeper has no long-term targets but believes in enjoying his game in the present

HOCKEY

UTHRA GANESAN
NEW DELHI

He's been doing it for two decades now but P.R. Sreejesh's brightest moment in the spotlight came six seconds from the end of time at the Tokyo Olympics last year. Since then, the Indian hockey goalkeeper has been mentoring a new generation of players to take over when he is done.

He, though, seems in no mood to relinquish his spot anytime soon. The 33-year-old will finally get back into action at the Pro League matches against South Africa and France later this month.

"Wearing that blue jersey is not for everyone and the opportunity to represent your country and take it to the podium – that is an excitement you can never get used to or take for granted. I know how hard it was to get my first jersey or bounce back from all the injuries, so I am not going to give up just because of age. As long as I am good enough, I want to continue without setting any long-term targets," Sreejesh said in a virtual interaction with select media on Wednesday.

Crowning moment: Sreejesh celebrates India's bronze-medal winning match over Germany in Tokyo. • PTI

There is a lot more he wants before thinking of calling it quits.

"I was constantly with the core group and in the training camp, staying at the highest level in terms of preparations. The Olympic bronze was an achievement but I now have the chance to change its colour.

"Also the Asian Games are this year and we hope to do better than last time and get to Paris early. We could not make the semifinals at the 2018 World Cup and we have another chance again at home and a medal there will complete my bucket list."

That said, he knows he is now an icon for a whole generation of players wishing to emulate him. And has a few words of wisdom for the Gen Next.

"Don't aim to be like Sreejesh, aim to be better than Sreejesh. Because when you copy someone, you can only reach that level.

"But when you develop your own style and think of getting better than everyone else and be a permanent fixture in the national team, that's when you realise how far you can go. Never give up until you reach your dreams," he advised the youngsters.

He should know. Sreejesh came into the Indian side at a time when things both on and off the field were at rock-bottom and had to learn things the hard way. He now wants to make sure others have it better.

Building the rapport

"The youngsters in the team now, I have to watch my tone with them or they may get upset or take things too seriously as coming from a senior. It will take some time, of course, because with players like Birenda Lakra or Rupinder Pal Singh (both retired after Olympics) in the defence, we had been playing together for more than 10 years.

"We could say anything and not be affected by it and there was a rapport and understanding of each other's game without actually saying anything. That said, there are now defenders who have been playing together for 3-4 years including Harmanpreet Singh, Amit Rohidas and Varun Kumar but it will take some time to develop the same level of comfort," he signed off.

Daryl Mitchell wins ICC's 'Spirit of Cricket' award

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DUBAI

New Zealand's Daryl Mitchell is the recipient of the ICC 'Spirit of Cricket' award for 2021 for his sportsmanlike gesture in the T20 World Cup semifinal against England in Abu Dhabi last November.

The incident occurred on the first ball of the 18th over bowled by Adil Rashid, with the score at 133/4 and James Neesham on strike.

Neesham smashed the ball down the ground and it would have been an easy single.

But Mitchell, at the non-striker's end, refused to take the run, conceding that he had impeded Rashid in a high-pressure chase, with a place in the World Cup final at stake.

Mitchell is the fourth New Zealand player to win the award, following in the footsteps of Daniel Vettori, Brendon McCullum and Kane Williamson.

DELHI ROUND-UP

Mayank, Atharv slam centuries

NEW DELHI

Mayank Dagar and Atharv both scored quickfire centuries and Aditya Jain picked up six wickets as Push Cricket Academy thrashed NSP XI by 308 runs in a league match of 1st DR Sharma memorial tournament.

The scores: PCA 376/5 in 40 overs (Mayank Dagar 161, Atharv 133, Piyush Varsha 3/55) bt NSP XI 68 in 21 overs (Aditya Jain 6/29).

Ishan, Mrigank score half-centuries

Half-centuries by Ishan Pandey and Mrigank Pathak helped Push Dome Cricket Academy beat Ravi Kant Bhat Cricket Academy by six wickets in a league match of the Kragbuzz Under-19 tournament.

The scores: RKBA 242/9 in 40 overs (Asheer Shams 74, Eshaan A 45) lost to PDCA 243/4 in 37.4 overs (Ishan Pandey 72, Mrigank Pathak 60).

UYC Academy enters final

Man-of-the-Match Dhram Mishra picked up a fifer as UYC Academy beat Ravindra Cricket Academy by two wickets to enter the final of the Chandan Singh Rajput Under-17 tournament.

The scores: RCA 119 in 35 overs (Sidhant Joon 62, Dharam Mishra 5/17) lost to UYCA 120/8 in 26 overs (Imran Mansoori 49, Rajneesh Dadar 5/33).

Sapience Academy enters final

Bharat Sharma top-scored with 42 and Shubham Patwal took three wickets as Sapience Cricket Academy beat SPJ Cargo by eight wickets to enter the final of the Lt. Rajbir Singh Pawarprize money tournament.

The scores: SPJ Cargo 143 in 32 overs (Nihal Panji 39, Shubham Patwal 3/22) lost to SCA 145/2 in 33 overs (Bharat Sharma 42, Yash Joon 37).

Parth bowls GCA to big win

Parth Sharma's three wickets for just six runs and two wickets each by Abhishek Rathi and Harshit Chaudhary saw Global Cricket Academy beat Nav Bharti Academy by 96 runs in the 1st Bindi Devi Dhoundiyal tournament.

The scores: GCA 182/8 in 35 overs (Deepanshu Rathi 71, Shubham Saini 4/25) bt NBA 86 in 19 overs (Vansh Nagar 37, Parth Sharma 3/6).

S. Korea books berth

WC QUALIFYING

ASSOCIATED PRESS
DUBAI

South Korea qualified for a 10th successive World Cup after beating Syria 2-0 in the Asian zone qualifying here.

Meanwhile, Colombia will need a miracle to play in the next World Cup after its 1-0 loss to Argentina in South American qualifying.

The results:

Asia: Group A: Syria 0 lost to Korea 2 (Kim Jin-Su 53, Kwon Chang-Hoon 71); Iran 1 (Taremi 44) bt UAE 0; Lebanon 1 (Sabra 45+2) drew with Iraq 1 (Hussein 39).

Group B: Japan 2 (Minamino 31, Ito 50) bt Saudi Arabia; Vietnam 3 (Ho Tan TAi 9, Nguyen Tien Linh 16, Phan Van Duc 76) bt China 1 (Xu Xin 90+7); Oman 2 (Abdullah Fawaz 54, 89-pen) drew with Australia 2 (MacLaren 15-pen, Mooy 79).

South America: Bolivia 2 (Enoumba 37, Moreno 88) lost to Chile 3 (Sanchez 14, 85, Nunez 77).

Uruguay 4 (Betancur 1, De Arrascaeta 23, Cavani 45+1, Suarez 53-pen) bt Venezuela 1 (J. Martinez 65).

Argentina 1 (L. Martinez 29) bt Colombia 0.

Brazil 4 (Raphinha 28, Coutinho 62, Antony 82, Rodrygo 88) bt Paraguay .

Peru 1 (Flores 69) drew with Ecuador 1 (Estrada 2).

Harnoor Kaur in semifinals

SPORTS BUREAU
CHANDIGARH

Top seed Harnoor Kaur Sidhu beat eighth seed Sia Mahajan 6-4, 6-2 to reach the girls semifinals of the AITA Super series under-18 tennis tournament at the CLTA Complex on Wednesday.

The results (quarterfinals):

Boys: Michael Jason David bt Aryan Chauhan 6-1, 6-2; Harsh Fogaat bt Jay Prrakash Pawar 6-2, 6-3; Aryan Arora bt Lakshya Gupta 6-1, 6-1; Jay Kedar Dixit bt Svarmanyu Singh 6-1, 6-2.

Girls: Harnoor Kaur Sidhu bt Sia Mahajan 6-4, 6-2; Tamanna Panwar bt Gursimrat Kaur 1-1 (concd.); Anandi Bhutada bt Isheeta Midha 6-0, 6-2; Riya Kaushik bt Diva Datta 6-1, 6-0.

Aman in quarters

TENNIS

SPORTS BUREAU
KATHMANDU

Top-seeded Aman Dahiya beat Nikil Dosuza 6-2, 6-0 to reach the quarterfinals of the ITF grade-4 junior tennis tournament here in Kathmandu on Wednesday.

In the quarterfinals, top seeded Aman will play seventh seed Yakup Uzunel of Denmark.

Rayan Sajjid, Kriish Tyagi were the other two Indian boys to make the quarterfinals and will play each other.

In the girls section, Tamanna Takoria, Saumrita Verma and Ishi Maheshwari made the last eight, where they will play Korean and Nepalese opponents.

The results (pre-quarterfinals): Boys: Aman Dahiya bt Nikil Dosuza 6-2, 6-0; Rayan Sajjid bt Arya Bhattacharya 6-1, 6-0; Kriish Tyagi bt Aryan Giri (Nep) 6-2, 7-6(4); Hayden Menon (Mas) bt Pranav Korade 6-3, 6-0.

Meethre Barot (USA) bt wyatt Obrien 6-0, 6-1; Min Jae Kim (Kor) bt Ayaan Tezabwala 6-0, 6-4; Pham La Hoang Anh (Vie) bt Saheb Sodhi 6-4, 6-3.

Girls: Tamanna Takoria bt Aisha Gurung (Nep) 6-0, 6-0; Saumrita Verma bt Hanna Telzynska (Pol) 6-3, 6-4.

Yifei Huang (Chn) bt Pavitra Parikh 6-0, 6-0; Monika Stankiewicz (Pol) bt Laxmisri Dandu 6-0 (retd.); Ishi Maheshwari bt Vihana Shresta 6-2, 6-1.

It's Salazaar vs. Bisate in feature

BENGALURU: Salazaar and Bisate may fight out the finish of the Stayers Trial Stakes (2,400m), the main event of the races to be held here on Thursday (Feb. 3). False rails (average width of 9m from 1,600m to the winning post) will be in position.

1 INDRAVATI PLATE (DIV. II), (1,400m), rated 00 to 25, 6-y-o & over, 2-00 p.m..: 1. Palm Reader (9) Naveen Kumar 62.5, 2. Gazebo Talk (6) S. Shareef 59, 3. He's The One (11) Darshan 58.5, 4. Akasi (7) A. Qureshi 58, 5. Elite Agent (1) Sai Kiran 58, 6. Konichiwa (3) Mark 56, 7. Smile Around (2) Ajeet Kumar 56, 8. Ultimate Power (5) S. Saqlian 56, 9. Glorious Days (8) Vinod Shinde 55.5, 10. Iron Fist (4) P. Surya 54 and 11. Fierce Fighter (10) P.P. Dhebe 51.5.

1. HE'S THE ONE, 2. PALM READER, 3. ELITE AGENT

2 SPLENDID ROLE PLATE (1,100m), maiden 3-y-o only (Terms), 2-30: 1. Forty Niner (5) Mark 56, 2. Ooh La La (3) Naveen Kumar 56, 3. Ravishing Form (8) Suraj Narredu 56, 4. Spirit (7) P.P. Dhebe 56, 5. Yukan (4) Akshay K 56, 6. Aguila (1) Kiran Rai 54.5, 7. Philosophy (2) Shane Gray 54.5 and 8. Romantic Heart (6) Sai Kiran 54.5.

1. RAVISHING FORM, 2. YUKAN, 3. PHILOSOPHY

3 INDRAVATI PLATE (DIV. I), (1,400m), rated 00 to 25, 6-y-o & over, 3-00: 1. Aferpi (9) S. John 62.5, 2. Birchwood (1) Naveen Kumar 62.5, 3. Definitive (4) S. Saqlian 62.5, 4. Commandpost (10) Sai Kiran 60, 5. Habanero (7) Tousif Khan 59.5, 6. Mrs Thatcher (5) Shane Gray 59, 7. Zhu Zhu Zest (2) Jagadeesh 59, 8. Adela (11) Likith Appu 58, 9. Black Whizz (3) Dhanu Singh 58, 10. Lifeisamiracle (6) Vishal Bunde 56 and 11. Proudwish (8) P. Surya 53.5.

1. AFERPI, 2. LIFEISAMIRACLE, 3. DEFINITIVE

4 KADAMBI FALLS PLATE (DIV. II), (1,400m), rated 20 to 45, 5-y-o & over, 3-30: 1. Candlelightqueen (3) A. Qureshi 60, 2. Queen Regnant (8) Vishal Bunde 58.5, 3. Nostradamus (2) Mark 58, 4. Ozark (6) Dhanu Singh 57.5, 5. Hope Island (7) Antony 57, 6. Lord Frankel (5) Shane Gray 56.5, 7. Southern Power (12) Nazerul 56, 8. My One And Only (11) Tauseef 55.5, 9. Sensational Grey (1) Darshan 55.5, 10. Gold Gray (9) Ajeet Kumar 55, 11. Welcome Surprise (10) Akshay K 54.5 and 12. Kimetto (4) Sai Kiran 54.

1. HOPE ISLAND, 2. WELCOME SURPRISE, 3. SENSATIONAL GREY

5 HASSAN PLATE (2,000m), rated 40 to 65, 4-00: 1. Antibes (3) S. John 61.5, 2. Green Channel (1) S. Saqlain 61.5, 3. Peluche (2) Antony 60.5 and 4. Grey Channel (4) Dhanu Singh 53.

1. ANTIBES, 2. GREEN CHANNEL

6 STAYERS TRIAL STAKES (2,400m), 4-y-o & over, (Terms), 4-30: 1. Automatic (1) A. Qureshi 59, 2. Salazaar (4) S. John 59, 3. Towering Presence (3) Akshay K 59, 4. Bisate (5) Trevor 57.5 and 5. Speedster (2) Suraj Narredu 57.5.

1. SALAZAAR, 2. BISATE

7 RAICHUR PLATE (1,200m), rated 40 to 65, 5-00: 1. Knight In Hooves (6) Suraj Narredu 62.5, 2. Set To Win (8) Vishal Bunde 60, 3. Harmonia (3) S. Saqlian 57, 4. Alberetta (2) L.A. Rozario 56, 5. Brunhild (4) P.P. Dhebe 56, 6. The Response (5) Ajeet Kumar 52, 7. Katana (1) Akshay K 51 and 8. Thousand Words (7) Arshad 51.

1. KNIGHT IN HOOVES, 2. BRUNHILD, 3. KATANA

8 KADAMBI FALLS PLATE (DIV. I), (1,400m), rated 20 to 45, 5-y-o & over, 5-30: 1. Shining Rock (4) P. Surya 60, 2. Venus Bay (1) Jagadeesh 59, 3. Gypsy (7) Naveen Kumar 58, 4. Striking Memory (5) Md. Habeeb 57.5, 5. Twinkle Feet (12) Arshad 57, 6. In A Breeze (9) Trevor 56.5, 7. See My Heels (3) Darshan 56.5, 8. Aztec Queen (11) Kiran Rai 56, 9. Smithsonian (8) Vishal Bunde 56, 10. Flamingo Road (2) Antony 55.5, 11. Extraordinary (10) Sai Kiran 53.5 and 12. Tyto Alba (6) Ajeet Kumar 53.5.

1. IN A BREEZE, 2. TWINKLE FEET, 3. FLAMINGO ROAD

Days best: **ANTIBES**

Double: **HOPE ISLAND – KNIGHT IN HOOVES**

Jackpot: 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8; Treble (i): 3, 4 & 5; (ii): 6, 7 & 8.

Richa enters semifinals

SPORTS BUREAU
JHAJJAR

Richa Chougule fought her way past Shanu Agarwal 3-6, 6-0, 6-1 in the quarterfinals of the Rs.100,000 AITA women's tennis tournament at the Joygaon Academy on Wednesday.

The results:

Singles (quarterfinals): Mihika Yadav bt Gayathri Angam 6-2, 6-1; Ishwari Matere bt Anahat Pannu 7-5, 6-4; Sudipta Senthilkumar bt Samriti Punyani 6-0, 6-2; Richa Chougule bt Shanu Agarwal 3-6, 6-0, 6-1.

Doubles (semifinals): Sudipta Senthilkumar & Riya Uboveja bt Ishwari Matere & Srinidhi Sridhar 6-0, 6-2; Gayathri Angam & Richa Chougule bt Prathiba Narayan & Pragathi Narayan 0-6, 7-5, [10-3].

Joygaon ready to provide fun to tennis players

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
JHAJJAR

Indian women's tennis is scheduled to be busy with four tournaments at home over the next four weeks. A series of $15,000 ITF events will start with the first one at the Joygaon Academy, that offers 70 activities, in a picturesque setting, steeped in rich heritage of Haryana.

"It will be a memorable experience for the players," assured Vijay Gupta, who has been successfully running the venture till Covid slowed down the action last year.

The Academy, that sports eight clay courts, and has room for a few more, had planned to host two $25,000 ITF women's events last April but it got cancelled at the last minute, owing to the second wave.

"We were ready, and had paid advance for a lot of things. We did lose a lot of money, but we are keen to do a good job. We got the permission for the event from the authorities a few days back and are trying to put everything together in the short time," said Himanshu Malik, a partner in the project, who is more familiar in the tennis circle as a qualified international umpire.

Two to tango: Vijay Gupta and Himanshu Malik at the Joygaon Tennis Academy in Jhajjar. • KAMESH SRINIVASAN

While retired from his accountant job in Hindalco, Himanshu does not try to live up to his quaification of M. Tech in Information Technology.

Team effort

"It is a team effort," said Vijay, quite keen to do something different, rather than mere business.

It is a passion for both Vijay and Himanshu to promote tennis in the best possible way at the 10-acre Academy, even though both have not played the game. The place does have many other games, both indoors and outdoors.

As a picnic venue, the arena does roaring business with as many as 3200 visitors a day at its peak, who get all food and fun at the venue to their heart's content. But the heart is in tennis.

With 30 rooms of good quality, it will be the ideal place for those trying to save on travel time during the tournament.

"I like this place a lot. It has tremendous potential. The players can just stay there and focus on their game," said Suman Kapur, the secretary of the Haryana Tennis Association who has done a phenomenal job of spreading the game in the State.

"We have made arrangements with two hotels in Jhajjar so that players have option for stay. In the future, we may also build a few more floors and have more rooms here itself to cater to higher demand," said Vijay.

The place has been regularly hosting a lot of national level tournaments for men, women and juniors. It is bound to buzz with exciting activities as much as the best of tennis that Indian women have to offer by the end of the week, starting with the qualifying event.

Joygaon does have the potential to provide a big boost to Indian tennis.

THE HINDU

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2022

Text & Context

FOLLOW US:
thehindu.com
facebook.com/thehindu
twitter.com/the_hindu
instagram.com/the_hindu

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Press threatened

6 The number of journalists killed in India in 2021, according to the India Press Freedom Report 2021 by the Rights and Risk and Analysis Group. At least 17 scribes were arrested across States/UTs. Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) reported the highest cases of arrest/detention (5 journalists); followed by Delhi (3); Maharashtra, Manipur and Tripura (2 each); and Assam, Chhattisgarh and Haryana (1 each). Also, at least 24 journalists were allegedly physically attacked, threatened, harassed and obstructed from doing their job by public officials including the police.

Communal riots

1,807 The number of communal riot cases registered in different parts of the country between 2018 and 2020 in which 8,565 people were arrested, according to a reply in the Rajya Sabha. The highest number of communal riot cases were registered in Bihar, followed by Maharashtra and Haryana. While 4,097 people were arrested for riots in 2018, 2,405 people were arrested in 2019 and 2,063 in 2020. Altogether, 200 people were convicted for the riots in 2018, 332 in 2019 and 229 in 2020. PTI

Credit for Sri Lanka

500 In million USD, the amount for which Sri Lanka has signed a credit line with India to import fuel. The island nation sought to stave off rolling power cuts amid a foreign exchange crisis that has hampered purchases of diesel for power plants. The Export-Import Bank of India (EXIM) will provide the credit line for purchasing petroleum products, India's High Commission in Colombo said on Twitter. Sri Lanka is struggling with its worst financial crisis with reserves hitting $3.1 billion in December. REUTERS

Migrant woes

12 The number of migrants who froze to death and were found near Turkey's border with Greece. On Wednesday, the Turkish Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu accused the Greek border guards of pushing the bodies back over the frontier. He tweeted that the 12 were among the 22 migrants pushed back into Turkey. He said they were found near the Ipsala border crossing between Turkey and Greece "without shoes and stripped of their clothes." He didn't provide further details but shared blurred photographs of eight recovered bodies. AP

Landmark match

1000 The Indian men's cricket team will play its 1000th One-Day International when it takes on West Indies in Ahmedabad on Sunday. No other country has played 1000 ODIs in the history of the game. After India, Australia (958), Pakistan (936) and Sri Lanka (870) have played the most ODIs. India has the joint second-best win percentage of 52. Australia and South Africa have win percentages of 61, the highest among all countries. Twenty-six captains have led India in ODIs so far.

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

Stop the spread: Health workers on a door-to-door fever survey in Hyderabad. The campaign aims to identify individuals with COVID-19 symptoms, supply medicine kits and isolate them in order to break the transmission chain in the fight against the Omicron variant • RAMAKRISHNA G

EXPLAINER

The sub-lineages of the Omicron variant

How many different lineages does Omicron have and how are they different from each other?

THE GIST

- The Omicron cluster encompasses not just a single lineage but rather a family of three sister lineages branching from a common parent. These lineages are BA.1, BA.2 and BA.3 (where BA is an alias for B.1.1.529). Of the clusters, BA.1 is the most prevalent Omicron lineage worldwide, accounting for over 97% of Omicron sequences. Lineage BA.2, although less prevalent globally, is becoming the most frequent variant in recent weeks in many regions, particularly in Europe and Asia. The third sub-lineage, BA.3, is rare as of now.
- While there are many mutations that BA.1 and BA.2 have in common, lineage BA.2 has 28 unique mutations as compared to BA.1. This number is also higher than the number of defining mutations in any previously designated VoC, including Delta (lineage B.1.617.2) which has a unique set of 17 mutations. BA.2 was first detected in India in November 2021 and has since become the dominant Omicron lineage in India, increasing from 5% of all Omicron cases in December to over 50% by January 2022.
- A preliminary risk assessment analysis by Statens Serum Institut in Denmark estimates that BA.2 is about 1.5 times more transmissible than BA.1. But since all early work done on Omicron was primarily focused on the BA.1 lineage, additional research will be needed to see how concerning the BA.2 lineage is.

VINOD SCARIA
BANI JOLLY

The story so far: In late November 2021, the World Health Organization designated the lineage B.1.1.529 of SARS-CoV-2 as a Variant of Concern (VoC) and assigned it the Greek alphabet Omicron. This variant was initially uncovered by researchers based on genomes from southern Africa as well as travellers from the region and was characterised by a strikingly large number of mutations, particularly in its spike protein. The Omicron variant has now been detected in over 130 countries. The variant is now present in all seven continents and associated with an uptick of COVID-19 cases in the regions where it has been detected, including infections in fully vaccinated individuals or people who were previously infected with other variants of SARS-CoV-2. Omicron continues to dominate the pandemic in most regions since early 2022, although this wave ofi the virus n many countries have already peaked.

The timely detection and reporting of Omicron was a result of the efforts of researchers from South Africa, Botswana and Hong Kong who shared the initial genome sequences of the variant on GISAID, a database in which researchers from all over the world deposit sequencing data of SARS-CoV-2.

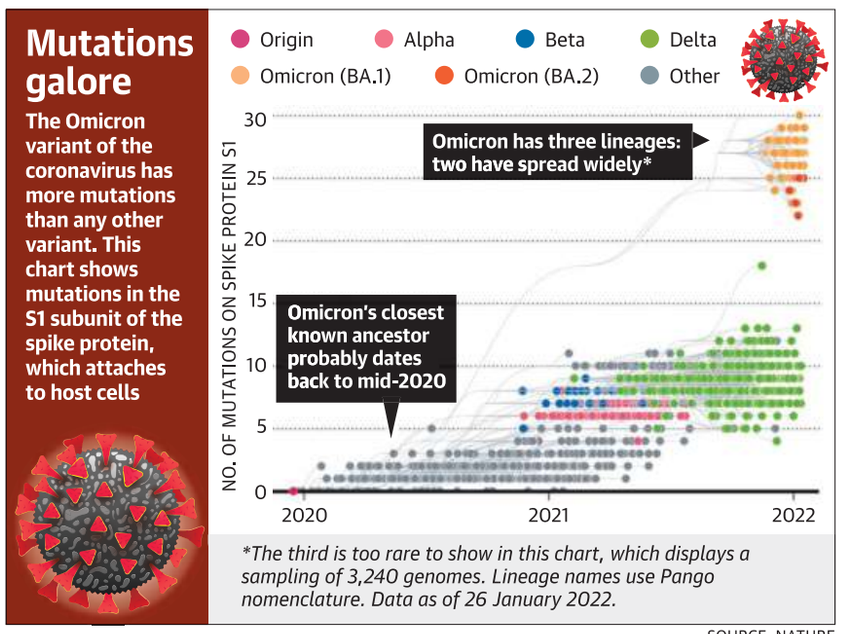
What are lineages?

The SARS-CoV-2 virus evolves by accumulation of genetic mutations. These form the basis of the continued evolution of the virus and are produced during the process of infection and replication of the virus in cells. Clusters of viruses with similar genomic mutations and a common origin are called a lineage or clade of the virus, and the naming of the lineages follows an open system contributed by researchers who form the PANGO network.

What are the sub-lineages of Omicron?

While the initial designation of the lineage was based on just seven genomes, the designation of the lineage as a VoC by the WHO has seen an accelerated pace of screening and sequencing. As a consequence, a larger number of sequences are representative of Omicron. As more genomes became available, researchers noted that not all sequences designated as Omicron had the full set of mutations that were initially reported for the variant. It was also observed that the Omicron cluster encompasses not just a single lineage but rather a family of three sister lineages branching from a common parent. These clusters were subsequently named as lineages BA.1, BA.2 and BA.3 (where BA is an alias for B.1.1.529). The VoC Omicron thus comprises all three sub-lineages, although each of them differs significantly from one another and contains common as well as unique mutations as compared to another.

Of the clusters, BA.1 is the most prevalent Omicron lineage worldwide, accounting for over 97% of Omicron sequences. Lineage BA.2, although less prevalent globally, is becoming the more dominant variant in recent weeks in many regions, particularly in Europe and Asia. In Asia, BA.1 lineage is found in 85% of the total Omicron sequences while BA.2 makes up for 15% of them. The third sub-lineage, BA.3, is rare as of now, accounting for only a few hundred known cases globally and has not yet been reported from Asia.



SOURCE: NATURE

What is the BA.2 lineage and how is it different?

As the number of COVID-19 cases is declining across many parts of the world, the lineage BA.2 is observed to be increasing in proportion in many countries and competing for dominance with the previously prevalent BA.1 lineage. The BA.2 lineage has so far been detected in over 50 countries.

While there are many mutations that BA.1 and BA.2 have in common, lineage BA.2 has 28 unique mutations as compared to BA.1 which makes it indicatively different from its sister lineage BA.1. This number is also higher than the number of defining mutations in any previously designated VoC, including Delta (lineage B.1.617.2) which is defined by a unique set of 17 mutations.

Databases which collect evidence on the functionality of mutations from published literature are key to understanding the functions of mutations as they become evident from genome sequences. One such database, ESC (https://clingen.igib.res.in/esc/), is maintained at the CSIR Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology and systematically collects evidence for interpretation of genomes on immune escape mutations.

In terms of spike protein mutations, BA.2 has approximately eight unique mutations as compared to BA.1, some of which are known to be associated with immune escape. However, BA.2 has been predicted to have lesser immune escape potential than BA.1, since it lacks the spike protein mutations R346K and G446S which are majorly associated with immune escape. Furthermore, mutations in the receptor-binding domain of the spike protein, the key part of the virus that allows it to latch on to the host's cells, are largely shared by BA.1 and BA.2.

It is important to note that BA.1 has a mutation in the gene which encodes for the spike protein which causes one of the primers used in some RT-PCR diagnostic kits to fail (also known as the Spike Gene Target Failure (SGTF) or spike gene dropout). SGTF was used extensively across the world as a proxy for Omicron and enabled researchers to estimate the rapid spread of BA.1. However, BA.2 does not harbour this mutation in the spike protein and therefore does not cause a spike gene dropout. Its prevalence today is therefore largely estimated through genome sequencing.

In contrast to spike protein mutations, there is a larger difference in mutations between BA.1 and BA.2 in the gene ORF1ab, with the lineage BA.2 harbouring nine unique mutations as compared to BA.1 in the gene. ORF1ab gene codes for non-structural proteins in the virus that are responsible for controlling replication, proof-reading and inhibiting innate immunity of the host, possibly influencing transmissibility and disease severity.

Why is BA.2 being discussed?

The BA.2 lineage is seen to be increasing in many countries in Asia including India and in Europe, which is an early indication that the lineage is more transmissible than its sister lineage BA.1.

Despite the decrease in COVID-19 cases in many regions in recent weeks, BA.2 has been seen to be competing with BA.1 and has become the prominent lineage in some countries including Denmark, where cases continue to rise. The BA.1 lineage was detected in Denmark in November 2021 while BA.2 was first detected a few weeks later in December. By the end of January 2022, BA.2 has outcompeted BA.1 in Denmark to become the dominant lineage in the country, and its prevalence is seen to be increasing in several other countries including India, the United Kingdom, Singapore, the Philippines and South Africa.

In India, BA.2 was first detected late in November 2021, two weeks after the detection of its sister lineage BA.1. BA.2 has since become the dominant Omicron lineage in India, increasing from 5% of all Omicron cases in December to over 50% by January 2022. In the United Kingdom, an increase in the number of cases linked to BA.2 has been seen since the first week of January 2022. In South Africa, where the Omicron variant was first detected, BA.2 is seen to be growing in prevalence in the recently sequenced samples, although the Omicron wave in South Africa continues to go down.

Is the BA.2 lineage more transmissible?

A preliminary risk assessment analysis by Statens Serum Institut in Denmark estimates that BA.2 is about 1.5 times more transmissible than BA.1. Another study conducted in Danish households and deposited in a preprint server before formal peer review, suggests that household transmission is higher among contacts of BA.2-infected individuals as compared to BA.1 indicating that BA.2 is intrinsically more transmissible than BA.1. Whether this is driven by immune escape is still an open question. A preliminary combined report for all vaccines by the U.K. Health Security Agency shows that vaccine effectiveness against symptomatic COVID-19 was similar for the BA.2 and BA.1 lineages, although the report is based on a small amount of data and further research will be required to perceive vaccine efficacy.

Since all the early work done on Omicron was primarily focused on the BA.1 lineage, additional research will be needed to see how concerned we should be about the BA.2 lineage. While there are increasing indications to show that BA.2 is more effectively transmitted than BA.1, there is limited evidence yet in terms of how different BA.2 is in terms of disease severity. Very early data from countries like Denmark and India does not suggest a substantial difference in disease severity between BA.1 and BA.2.

What next?

As the SARS-CoV-2 continues to be transmitted causing infections in a significantly large number of people, it is apparent that it will continue to accumulate mutations at a heightened pace. Being the currently dominant lineage, it is expected that several more sub lineages of the Omicron variant are likely to come up in different regions of the world as the virus explores its evolutionary landscape and is similar to what was observed for Delta. In the context of the current Omicron wave, it is reassuring that vaccines and boosters continue to be effective in preventing severe disease. Whether BA.2 can cause reinfections in those previously infected with BA.1 and continue unabated is still an open question, for lack of evidence. Additional research efforts revolving around the BA.2 lineage in the upcoming weeks would help ascertain facts and address these pressing questions.

Meanwhile, in the periods of uncertainty, non-pharmacological interventions including good quality masks, ventilation and social distancing have become more important than ever in our fight against COVID-19.

The authors are researchers at the CSIR Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (CSIR-IGIB) in Delhi. All opinions expressed are personal

KEYWORD

Ethnocentrism

The tendency to view one's own group as ideal and all other groups with reference to this ideal could lead to prejudice, dislike, dominance, conflict, instability of democratic institutions, and even war

THE GIST

■ Ethnocentrism broadly refers to ethnic self-centredness and self-importance. This attitude could lead an individual to believe that their own culture or way of life is the correct way of living. It could also result in hostility towards other cultures. It was initially used in anthropology but is now used in many other disciplines.

■ Early anthropologists argued that ethnocentrism curtailed an individual's ability to understand other groups and to trust them. This feeling of superiority could lead to prejudice and active discrimination. However, later theorists argued that ethnocentrism might simply be *preference* for in-groups over out-groups. In other words, you can be indifferent towards perceived out-groups or even like them, but less than you like your perceived in-group. The term has assumed different definitions over the years.

■ All the expressions of ethnocentrism could be easily attributed to nationalism, but while ethnocentrism is at the level of an ethnic group, nationalism is at the level of a national group.

RADHIKA SANTHANAM

Ethnocentrism broadly refers to ethnic self-centredness and self-importance. This attitude could lead an individual to believe that their own culture or way of life is the correct way of living. It could also result in hostility towards other cultures. Ethnocentrism is therefore the tendency to view one's own group, the 'in-group', as the archetype and all other groups, the 'out-groups', with reference to this ideal. The in-group's boundaries are defined by one or more observable characteristics such as language, accent, physical features or religion, indicating common descent. While initially used in anthropology, the term is now used widely in sociology, psychology, political science, economics and markets, among other disciplines.

Changing definitions

Scientific interest in the term ethnocentrism started in the late 19th and early 20th century. Charles Darwin argued that competition with other groups makes people more cooperative with members of their own group, which further influences group prosperity (Boris Bizumic, 2012). Herbert Spencer argued that societies in general are characterised by internal amity (towards members of one's group) and external enmity (towards everyone else).

Neither of them used the term ethnocentrism, however. Developing their ideas, it was the anthropologist William Sumner who is first said to have coined the term in 1906 in his book *Folkways* and also used the concepts 'in-group' and 'out-group'. However, it was the geologist and anthropologist William John McGee who is said to have first used the term in print. For McGee, ethnocentrism was a particular way of thinking similar to egocentrism, but characteristic of ethnic groups. Robert A. Levine, an anthropologist, and Donald T. Campbell, a social psychologist, argued that ethnocentrism is a set of 23 characteristics, nine of which are positive attitudes towards a perceived in-group (such as perceptions about virtue and morals) and 14 of which are negative attitudes towards a perceived out-group (such as distrust, suspicion and blame). Early anthropologists argued that this feeling of superiority about the in-group curtailed an individual's ability to understand the practices and values of other groups and to trust them. This feeling, they said, could lead to prejudice, dislike, dominance, ethnic conflict, instability of democratic institutions, and even war. Ethnocentrism can also affect consumer choices and voting.

However, later theorists argued that ethnocentrism might simply be *preference* for in-groups over out-groups. They said that the segregation of in-groups and out-groups should not necessarily be attributed to bias. In other words, they argued that you can be indifferent towards perceived out-groups or even like them, but less than you like your perceived in-group. Or you may dislike an out-group, but that attitude might not necessarily translate into some sort of discriminatory behaviour in a given situation. The ways of defining ethnocentrism has thus kept changing and there is no definite consensus on the meaning of the term even today.

There are many examples of ethnocentric behaviour. Let's try to understand this concept with a simple example that some of us may be familiar with or may have experienced. Ravi in India prefers to eat food with his hands. Ravi invites his American friend, Robert, to attend his sister's wedding in India. When Robert arrives at the wedding, he is horrified to see everyone eating with their hands instead of using cutlery, as they do mostly in the U.S. Robert makes a rude remark about this unfamiliar practice, which makes Ravi angry. Robert's attitude may be conscious or unconscious but his inability to accept this way of eating food as another culture's practice and his tendency to view it as primitive while seeing his own culture as superior or advanced is ethnocentric.

Ethnocentrism is also quite similar to nationalism. All the expressions of ethnocentrism, such as feelings of superiority and even hostility towards out-groups, could be easily attributed to nationalism, but while ethnocentrism is at the level of an ethnic group, nationalism is at the level of a national group. Nevertheless, it is also important to note that nationalism also assumes certain factors that are not necessary for ethnocentrism. National groups are defined by the belongingness to a group that inhabits a national state or aspires to form a national state whereas ethnic groups do not require national states to be called ethnic groups, and they may lack a shared public culture or even territory (Smith, 2001). Ethnocentric feelings and attitudes such as preference for a familiar culture and group superiority have been exploited by nationalism.

A study from India

We can also understand ethnocentrism with a study from India. In a paper published in 1974 in the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology,* Donald M. Taylor and Vaishna Jaggi tried to understand ethnocentrism and causal relations in the south Indian context. Thirty Hindus were asked to attribute the behaviour of their in-group (Hindus) and out-group (in this case, Muslims) performing socially desirable or undesirable acts to internal or external causes. The subjects in the study were presented with a series of one-paragraph descriptions of an actor behaving in a social context. They were asked to imagine that they were in that situation and the actor was directing the behaviour at them. Each situation depicted one of four situations involving a Hindu or Muslim behaving towards them in a desirable or undesirable way. The situations included a shopkeeper being generous to the subject or cheating the subject and a teacher praising or scolding the subject.

For each paragraph, the subject was provided with four or five possible reasons for the behaviour. One of these reflected internal attributions (Hindu shopkeepers are generous or Hindus are rude) and the remaining reflected external attributions (the actor was compelled by social rules to behave as he did or there was a misunderstanding between the actor and the perceiver). The study found that Hindus were more favourable to their in-group. They were more likely to make internal attributions for socially desirable behaviour performed by Hindus than for socially undesirable behaviour. Thus, they said Hindu shopkeepers are generous or Hindu teachers praise students. Conversely, undesirable behaviour performed by the same were not seen as reflections of internal behaviour but caused by external factors. The subjects reversed their internal attributions for Muslim actors. Thus, they made internal attributions for socially undesirable behaviour (cheating was seen to reflect the internal characteristic of the actor) and external attributions for socially desirable behaviour. The study showed how ethnocentrism is evidenced not only in the form of generalised attitudes but also in the form of attributions for specific behaviour.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

"Good evening, sir,"

"Good evening."

"Sir, today I bought a new transistor. I disposed off the old one."

"Congratulation! I hope you got a good price for your old transistor. By the way, *you dispose of something*. You don't dispose off something or dispose something off. Examples:

I disposed of my car.

He disposed of his old books.

So dispose of 'dispose off'. 'Dispose off' is extensively used in our country but that doesn't make it correct. I hope you understand."

"Yes, sir. Sir, I want to do my M.A. through correspondence."

"M.A in English? "

No, sir. M.A. in Economics."

"Good luck. I am sure you will do well. Incidentally, you do your M.A. *by* correspondence rather than *through* correspondence. 'By' here means 'by means of'. Examples:

English by radio, English by correspondence.

'By' refers to the physcial means of transmission.

He left by air.

I got the book by post.

'Through' is used to describe artistic media like drama, dancing and music.

You will be transported to a different world altogether through his music.

'Through' has other meanings also. I am talking about the use of 'by' and 'through' in the context of your statement.

"Sir, is there any difference between 'idle' and 'lazy'?

Yes. An idle person is one who will not do anything useful. He is not lazy. In fact, he may be busy with trifles. A student may be busy on the sportsfield but he may not study. He is scolded for idling away his time. A lazy man will not exert himself physically. An idle man may not do anything that you may consider useful but he is not really lazy. Careful writers and speakers maintain the distinction between the two. But most people use them indiscriminately."

"Sir, next month I am going to Guntur to attend a conference. I am looking forward to it."

"Where will you stay there?"

'I don't know, sir. The organisers are making arrangements for my boarding and lodging."

"That'a very good. By the way, it is 'board and lodging' and not 'boarding and lodging'. Example:

I pay ₹300 for board and lodging."

"Sir, everywhere I find only 'boarding and lodging'. It is strange. English is a difficult language."

"A Frenchman called Engfish a crazy language when he heard someone say, 'Mr. X. who is a sitting member will run for office in the next election'."

"Sir, when I travel by bus and when I want to get off at some place, I generally shout 'hold on'. 'Hold on' means 'continue'. Of course, this is one of the meanings of 'hold on'. So shouldn't I say 'hold up' rather than 'hold on' in this context, sir?"

"No, in this context 'hold up' is not used at all. 'Hold on' is a colloquial expression meaning 'stop', 'wait'. So 'hold on' to hold on and don't switch to 'hold up'. In this context 'hold up' will be inappropriate.

Well, I must stop now. Otherwise you might say 'hold on!'"

"Thank you sir. Goodbye."

"Goodbye."

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

THE DAILY QUIZ

Rafael Nadal became the first men's tennis player to win 21 Grand Slam singles titles surpassing his rivals Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic, who have won 20 each. How much do you know about the 'Big Three'?

1 Only two men in history have won the Olympic gold in both the singles and doubles events. One among them is Chilean Nicolas Massu who won both the titles in the 2004 Athens edition of the Games. Name the other and the year in which he accomplished the feat.

2 Roger Federer won his first Wimbledon title in 2003, which was his fifth appearance. In three of his previous appearances he did not progress past the first round. However, in one of them he reached the quarter final. En-route he defeated a tournament favourite. Who did he beat and in which year?

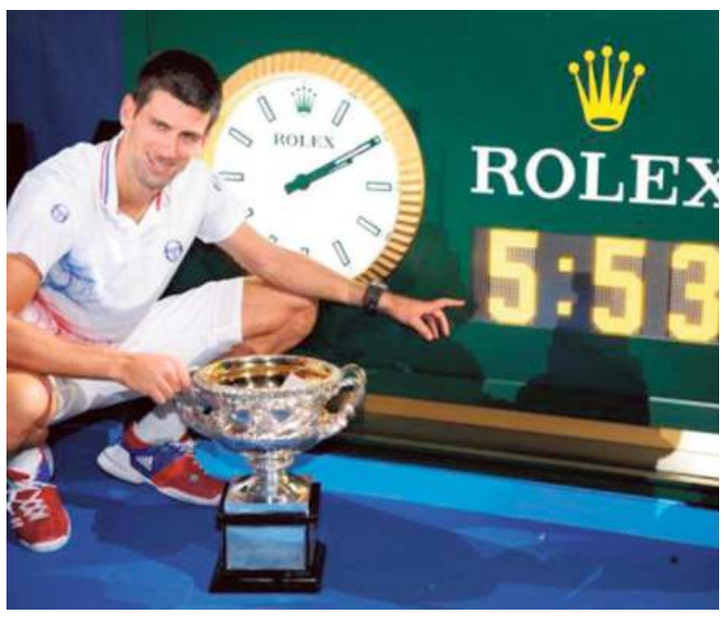
3 Novak Djokovic holds the record for the most weeks as world number 1. For how many weeks has he held the top rank as on January 30, 2022?

4 Federer has won __ number of titles in his singles career and is only second to Jimmy Connors' 109 in the Open Era. Fill in the blank.

5 Rafael Nadal has played 108 matches in the French Open. He has won 105 of them and lost three. Only two players have ever defeated him. Novak Djokovic beat him in 2015 and in 2021. Who is the other player who beat him and in what year?

6 A calendar slam is when a player wins all the four Grand Slams in a single year. A golden slam is when a player wins all the four tournaments and the Olympic gold in a single year. Steffi Graff is the only player, among both men and women, to win a golden slam while Rod Laver is the last men's player to win a calendar slam. Djokovic was on course to win both last year but lost in the semi-final at the Olympics and in the U.S. Open final. Name the player/s who beat him.

Compiled by: Sumant Sen



◄ Name the event, year and what is so special about this match? ▪ ATP, OLYMPICS.COM

Please send in your answers to the **dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in**

Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. Yashwanth Sinha, 2. Indira Gandhi, 3. 2017, Arun Jaitley, 4. Moraji Desai, 5. The word Budget comes from the french word 'Bougette', which means leather briefcase. Finance Ministers have always appeared with a leather briefcase for the annual exercise. In 2019, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman ditched the briefcase and opted for the 'Bahi Khata' to carry the Budget papers, 6. The "halwa ceremony" organised by the Finance Ministry. It indicates the start of the "lock in" period for officials associated with the Budget.

Early Birds: Kailash Masiwal| Kavitha Pavithran| Divyadarshini V.| Durga Anil Muddana| Rushikesh Telange