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BUSINESS AS USUAL
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PLA SOLDIER PICKED AS TORCHBEARER, GAMES OPEN TODAY

India announces diplomatic boycott of Beijing Winter Olympics over Galwan row

Regrettable of China to politicise: MEA, months after BRICS support; Prasar Bharati says no live broadcast

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

CALLING BEIJING'S move to pick a Chinese soldier involved in the Galwan incident as an Olympic torchbearer "regrettable", India Thursday said that its envoy will not attend the opening or closing ceremonies of the Winter Olympics beginning Friday in Beijing.

This, in effect, means that New Delhi will boycott the Olympics at the diplomatic level although it will send an athlete for the event.

The Galwan clashes in mid-June 2020 had resulted in the death of 20 Indian soldiers, including a Colonel, while China had last year admitted to losing at least four of its troops, making it the bloodiest encounter between the two nations in over four decades.

Responding to questions on the reports of a Chinese soldier from the Galwan clashes being chosen as the torchbearer for the games, Ministry of External Affairs official spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said: "It is indeed regrettable that the Chinese side has chosen to politicize an event like the Olympics… the Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of India in Beijing will not be attending the opening or the closing ceremony of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics."

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REPORT: CHINA TOLL IN GALWAN HIGHER
PAGE 11

Border disputes stretching our resources: Army chief

KRISHN KAUSHIK
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

Speaks of 'collusive' threat from China, Pak

REFERRING TO the "collusive" threat that India faces from China and Pakistan, Army chief General M M Naravane said Thursday that "disputed borders with nuclear neighbours, coupled with state-sponsored proxy war, stretches our security apparatus and resources".

Speaking at the Pragyan Conclave — organised by the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), it was also attended by chiefs of the IAF and Navy — General Naravane, without naming any country, said India's "adversaries shall continue with

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Govt getting ready to sell IDBI Bank, may keep some stake: Top official

First such case of bank being sold through open bidding process

AASHISH ARYAN & SUNNY VERMA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

THE CENTRE will come out with an expression of interest (EOI) for the sale of IDBI Bank by the end of March but may not offload its entire stake in the bank in one go, Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey said.

The government will also file the Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP), or the primary prospectus, of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) with the market regulator next week, and expects to list it on stock exchanges by the end of the financial year.

LIC, which currently holds management stake in IDBI Bank, has 49.24 per cent shareholding, while the Central government holds another 45.48 per cent stake in the bank. The non-promoter shareholding in the bank currently stands at 5.29 per cent.

TUHIN KANTA PANDEY
DIPAM SECRETARY

"We had detailed consultations with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and have worked out the process. There are licences involved and we do not want any uncertainty after the financial bids are placed. We plan to sell LIC's and the government's stake together and the LIC's management control will be passed on. But not the entire (stake) may go," Pandey told *The Indian Express*.

The sale of IDBI Bank will be the first such case of "voluntary discovery" of the buyer through

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

AN EXPRESS INVESTIGATION

Ken-Betwa link to new Goa airport to Odisha mine: Six mega projects ignore green commitments they made

National parks mandated but not declared, trucks laden with coal choke villages

JAY MAZOOMDAAR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

ONE OF them is in the strategic border state of Arunachal, the proposed largest hydel plant in India; the other is on the state's border with Assam, currently the largest hydel project under construction. Then there's the proposed new international airport in Goa; a mine in Odisha run by the world's largest coal producer; the country's first private mega thermal plant in Chhattisgarh — and, finally, the flagship river-linking project in Madhya Pradesh.

These are six mega projects across key sectors, cleared between 2004 and 2020. In each, stringent conditions to compensate for the project's high environmental impact have been sidestepped, ignored or, in some cases, met only on paper, an investigation of their records by *The Indian Express* has revealed.

The result: vast national parks and sanctuaries were mandated but never declared; saplings were distributed to just about anyone to make up for the loss of a natural forest; and coal-laden trucks ply through villages, spreading toxic dust as promised alternatives were never put in place.

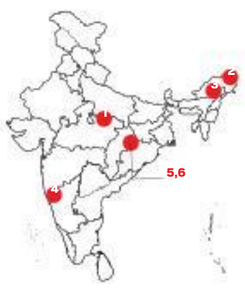
Ken-Betwa River Link, Madhya Pradesh

In December 2021, the Cabinet set an 8-year deadline for completing the Rs 44,605- crore

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Read detailed reports on the six projects at indianexpress.com

UNCONDITIONAL CLEARANCE



Ken river inside Panna in MP. *Tashi Tobgyal*

1. KEN-BETWA LINK
Got Cabinet nod with 8-yr deadline for implementation. SC yet to decide on wildlife clearance; final forest clearance pending as MP yet to meet key pre-conditions, such as adding 60 sq km of revenue land to Panna Tiger Reserve.

2. DIBANG HYDEL
Rejected twice, got Stage-1 forest clearance in 2015 on condition that right bank of proposed reservoir would be national park. Final forest clearance was issued in 2020 despite non-compliance.

3. SUBANSIRI HYDEL
Granted forest clearance in 2004 on condition that over 900 sq km in catchment would be declared sanctuary. Requirement cut to 500 sq km, later to 168 sq km sanctuary and 332 sq km conservation reserve. Only 127 sq km notified so far.

4. MOPA AIRPORT
In 2020, Goa promised SC 10 trees will be planted for every tree cut although state is nearly 50% short on overall compensatory afforestation. State meeting target by distributing lakhs of saplings.

5 & 6. KULDA COAL MINE, TAMNAR THERMAL
Since 2014, three extensions to coal mine and five temporary concessions to thermal plant on promise of alternative transport arrangement. Coal trucks still make 400 daily trips through villages.

Weak political will, lack of a monitoring system

JAY MAZOOMDAAR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

EXPLAINED

AT THE heart of what has gone wrong with mega projects on the Government's sustainable development roadmap is the absence of an effective compliance mechanism.

One reason, officials admit, is the lack of trained manpower and resource limitations. The Union Environment Ministry has less than 80 officials for field verification under green laws, who are expected to visit thousands of project sites at least once a year. At the same time, between 2014 and 2019 alone, the Ministry granted over 11,500 environment and forest clearances.

In 2006, a report by the Organisation for Economic

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Roadshows of SP-RLD's Akhilesh Yadav and Jayant Chaudhary and Congress's Priyanka Gandhi Vadra cross paths in Bulandshahr on Thursday. Later, Akhilesh tweeted the photograph with the caption: "*Ek salaam, tehzeeb ke naam*". Priyanka responded with a video, tweeting: "*Hamari bhi aapko Ram Ram*". *ANI*

First sign of trouble in SP-led camp, upset ally 'returns' its share of seats

LALMANI VERMA
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 3

DECISION 2022

WITH A week left for the first phase of elections in Uttar Pradesh, the first cracks appeared in the Opposition front with one of the partners of the Samajwadi Party-led alliance "returning" the seats that were part of its share.

The Apna Dal (Kamerawadi), a splinter group of the Apna Dal and a rival of the NDA ally Apna Dal (Sonelal), was to contest 18 seats as part of its alliance with the SP, of which it announced a list of seven seats on January 29.

But trouble began when the SP on Wednesday announced its leader Amarnath Maurya as the candidate from Allahabad West, one of the seats on the Apna Dal (K)'s list. The same day, the SP announced Apna Dal (K) leader Pallavi Patel as the candidate from Sirathu in Kaushambi district without clarifying if she would contest on her party's symbol or that of the SP. Her candidature had created unrest in SP's Kaushambi unit.

On Thursday, upset at the SP fielding a candidate from Allahabad West, the Apna Dal (K) decided to "return" the seats offered to it by the SP. Besides Rohaniya and Pindara (Varanasi), Mariyahu (Jaunpur), Marihan (Mirzapur), Ghoraval

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Shots fired at Owaisi vehicle in UP poll convoy; two arrested

Will brief Speaker, write to EC, says AIMIM chief & MP

AMIL BHATNAGAR & MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

LOK SABHA MP and AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi had a close call Thursday when shots were fired at a vehicle he was travelling in while returning to Delhi from Meerut after campaigning for the Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh. Police said two persons have been arrested for their alleged involvement in the incident.

Owaisi later said the bullets punctured a tyre and he had to switch vehicles. He said he would meet the Lok Sabha Speaker and write to the Election Commission of India.

According to police, four shots were fired at the vehicle. There was no injury to any person in the incident which took place around 5.30 pm at Chhajarsi toll plaza near Pilkhuwa in Hapur district.

Clockwise from above left: Owaisi; CCTV footage of a man with a gun; Sachin Sharma is among two held

Sachin Sharma, a resident of Badalpur in Gautam Buddh Nagar, was arrested from the spot and police said an unlicensed pistol had been recovered. A white Alto car too has been

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

DECISION 2022

37 SEATS DIFFICULT FOR AMARINDER P6

EXPRESS NETWORK

HC STAYS HARYANA LAW ON 75% QUOTA FOR LOCALS IN PVT SECTOR JOBS PAGE 8

Govt moves to block MP query on fall in India democracy index rank

ANISHA DUTTA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

The question was asked by TMC's Shanta Chhetri

THE GOVERNMENT has written to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat to disallow an MP's provisionally accepted question (PAQ) in the Upper House on the 'Position of India in Democracy Index', seeking the reason why India slid to the 53rd position in the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

The question, scheduled for a response on February 10, had been asked by TMC MP Shanta Chhetri.

She wanted the Minister of External Affairs to cite the reasons for India's slide to the 53rd position in the EIU Democracy Index, whether the government was aware that it reflected India in poor light, and whether the government had taken steps to improve India's ranking.

In a letter to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat Wednesday, the Ministry of External Affairs was said to have pointed out that the same question had been

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

WORLD

BIDEN: U.S. RAID IN SYRIA KILLED TOP ISLAMIC STATE LEADER

PAK: 7 SOLDIERS, 13 MILITANTS KILLED IN ATTACKS ON SECURITY POSTS
PAGE 14

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

In Rajasthan, dacoit vs MLA: 'Face me if you are *mard ka bachcha*'

DEEP MUKHERJEE
JAIPUR, FEBRUARY 3

HE IS among the last of Chambal's dreaded dacoits, facing over a hundred cases including murder. Now, Jagan Gurjar is the target of a police manhunt across three states after he openly issued threats on video to a Congress MLA in Rajasthan's Dholpur district, daring the legislator to face him without his security.

Not to be outdone, the MLA from Bari, Girraj Singh Malinga, issued a counter-challenge, telling Gurjar to specify a time and turn up at his home if he is a "*mard ka bacchha*".

At the centre of this very public chest-beating is Gurjar's claim that Malinga had turned against him after a deal to kill a political rival went sour. The dacoit also alleged that the MLA, a Rajput, was working against the interests of the Gujjar community.

"All this began around January 24, when videos of Gurjar, who is in his late 40s, challenging MLA Malinga were shared widely on social media," said Ashutosh Charan, SHO of the Basai Dang police station in Dholpur.

This is hardly Gurjar's first brush with infamy. Charan said that in 2008, the dacoit had threatened to blow up the residence of former chief minister Vasundhara Raje in Dholpur — before surrendering in 2009 at a rally being addressed by Congress leader Sachin Pilot. Pilot is from the Gujjar community.

After the latest episode, at least 150 Rajasthan police personnel, split into 8-10 teams, are searching for the AK-47-toting dacoit — who is out on bail — in districts along the Chambal river in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh as well as in Uttar Pradesh. There is also a reward of Rs 50,000 for information on him, said the SHO.

Girraj Singh Malinga; Jagan Gurjar in one of his videos

In the videos circulating on social media, Gurjar is purportedly seen abusing and threatening Malinga. Gurjar alleges in the video that Malinga had asked him to kill a person he refers to as "Jaswant *vidhayak* (Jaswant MLA)", which he did not do.

The MLA has denied the dacoit's allegations.

In another video, Gurjar challenges Malinga to remove his security for two hours and face him.

Former BJP MLA from Bari, Jaswant Gurjar, says he is the "Jaswant vidhayak" referred to by Gurjar. "Jagan is heard saying in the video that he would be given protection and that the cases against him would be dropped if he kills me," he told reporters in Dholpur.

The ex-MLA referred to the showdown between Gurjar and Malinga as a "battle of two *bahubalis* (musclemen)". He also accused the incumbent MLA of once being friends with the dacoit.

In his retaliatory videos circulating on social media, Malinga is heard saying: "I haven't taken any police protection, I am just waiting for him. He should come to my house and face me if he is a *mard ka bacchha*."

Malinga told *The Indian Express*: "All the allegations levelled by Gurjar in the video are false and baseless. I have nothing to do with the dacoit. The accusations of ex-MLA Jaswant Gurjar are also false and he himself is involved in wrongdoing. All this is political drama. I also recently met the Chief Minister and informed him about the situation. He spoke with officials and directed them to take action. I have not taken any police protection. I still stand by my challenge."

The Bari SHO said Gurjar has been active as a dacoit since 1994. "His two brothers are also bandits and are spending life sentences in jail. He has 121 cases registered against him related to offences including murder, loot, attempt to murder and extortion," said Charan.

The SHO added that a fresh case was registered against Gurjar after his videos surfaced, for which he is currently wanted.

"Our teams are searching for

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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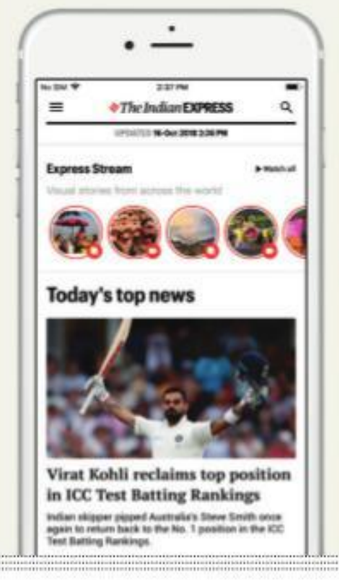

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WEB EXCLUSIVE

A HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT TO CRIMINALISE MARITAL RAPE ACROSS THE WORLD

Marital rape is a relatively new concept in legal terms but while most of the Western world has criminalised the offence, the Indian Government urges Courts to withhold the concept that consent is inbuilt into marriage. The first country to criminalise marital rape was the Soviet Union in 1922

ENTERTAINMENT

BHOOTHAKAALAM

Stunning Malayalam horror film an antidote to the toxic Conjuring franchise

FULL COVERAGE

BeUnic

This e-com site for the LGBTQ+ group brings queer entrepreneurs under one roof

EXPRESS AUDIO

Budget 2022: The technology focus

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

In this episode, Ashish Aryan joins Snigdha Sharma to discuss how much value the latest Budget places on technology. From 5G and Kisan drones to the booster for startups, it seems the government remains focused on the tech goals

GOA ELECTIONS

Cong candidates to file 'won't switch' affidavits in Rahul presence

MAYURA JANWALKAR
PANAJI, FEBRUARY 3

AFTER TAKING a pledge of loyalty in a temple, church and a mosque, the Congress's 37 election candidates will file sworn affidavits in the presence of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi stating that they will not switch parties after being elected on Congress tickets. Rahul will arrive in Goa for a day long visit on Friday.

On January 22, the Congress candidates had taken in pledge in the Mahalaxmi temple in Panaji, the Bambolim Cross and a mosque in Betim during which they took an oath, with Goa as witness, that they will stay loyal to the Congress party for the next five years if elected.

Chairman of the Media Cell of the Goa Pradesh Congress Committee Amarnath Panjikar said while the pledge was earlier administered by priests, on Friday it will be put down in black and white in an affidavit drafted by lawyers. This, Panjikar said, will then be circulated among voters in 37 constituencies that the Congress has fielded its candidates in. "We had assured earlier that we will file affidavits and we are going to do it tomorrow," he said.

On Thursday, 39 candidates of the AAP also filed affidavits swearing that they will not defect or accept bribes.

Rahul is scheduled to have a meeting with the Congress's candidates at the International Centre in Dona Paula, Panaji. He is also scheduled to campaign door-to-door in Mormugao assembly constituency in South Goa.

Draw plan to help students make up for Covid learning loss: Centre to states

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

THE CENTRE has urged the states and Union Territories to draw up work plans and budget for the next academic year by expanding the scale of proposed financial assistance to students and teachers, and "reimagine" the teaching-learning process keeping the Covid realities in mind.

In its 'learning recovery plan', the Centre has suggested that every student up to secondary level be provided Rs 500 in the beginning of the next academic session. Currently, under the NIPUN Bharat component of Samagra Shiksha, the assistance covers children up to Class V.

The plan also includes assistance of Rs 10,000 each for tablets for 25 lakh teachers at the primary level. The Samagra Shiksha scheme, which encompasses all major policies and programmes in school education, is funded by the Centre and states under a 60:40 ratio.

The Ministry of Education did not respond on whether the proposed financial interventions will also be shared between the Centre and the states in the same ratio.

FROM PAGE ONE

IDBI Bank

an open bidding process; in similar cases, banks have been sold to buyers only under distress situations.

"So far RBI has been doing it in a distress situation using their powers. But here, it will be a voluntary discovery of a buyer through an open bidding process. Such a thing has not taken place so far. This is the first instance," Pandey said.

The entire stake, however, may not be offloaded at one go as the new bidder will have to infuse fresh equity into IDBI Bank, he said, adding that the bidder may choose not to pay off the government and LIC's shareholding.

Asked whether the government would sell at least 51 per cent stake, Pandey said that it did not matter as the voting shares in case of banks were capped.

"In case of banks, the voting shares are capped at 26 per cent. So even if we have 51 (per cent stake), the voting is capped. That's by law. We will be doing roadshows and coming out with an EoI. Typically, it takes nine months to one year for an M&A (merger and acquisition) if we start an EoI. If we launch an EoI by the end of this year, we should be completing the transaction by the end of next year," Pandey said.

The initial public offering (IPO) of LIC will, however, be completed soon and the government will file the DRHP next week, Pandey said, adding that they hope to complete it before the financial year ends.

"That's the hope. Our embedded value is done. IRDAI (Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority) will soon clear it. Rest of the DRHP is ready. To a lot of extent, we have been actually running it with SEBI because of the size and all that," he said.

With an embedded value of "more than Rs 5 lakh crore", the market valuation of LIC is likely to be in the range of Rs 15-20 lakh crore. That would place LIC in the league of companies such as Reliance Industries and TCS, which have market valuations of Rs 16 lakh crore and Rs 14 lakh crore, respectively. At present, these two are the top companies by market capitalisation in the Indian market.

Apart from the sale of IDBI Bank, and the IPO of LIC, the government is also hopeful of the sale of BPCL, he said.

"The point is that it is a large transaction and we need multiple bids. We have multiple investors. They should be ready for financial bids. We are persuading them for that. In between, it has been caught up in energy transition issues. There has been a lot of discussion of refining, what is the future, de-carbonisation etc," Pandey said.

"The due diligence stage has been extended. But the bidders have got to be ready. We would have liked it to be concluded in this financial year, but it will stretch," Pandey added.

Index rank

disallowed by the Ministry of Law & Justice during the monsoon session in July last year.

The MEA, it is learnt, said it had requested the Ministry of Law & Justice to accept the question but the latter, while accepting the question, wrote to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat to disallow it.

Last year, the government tried to engage with the EIU, headquartered in London, after the Democracy Index categorised India as a "flawed democracy".

This was stated in a letter from the Law ministry to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat on July 15, seeking to disallow the same question saying it was sensitive in nature.

The Law ministry also said that EIU's methodology on the rankings were not shared with the ministry after it reached out. It noted that the rankings were arrived at without consulting government agencies.

According to Rajya Sabha rules, the admissibility of notice given by members in respect of questions in Rajya Sabha is governed by Rules 47-50 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Council of States (Rajya Sabha).

The Law ministry had referred to the rule: "(XV) it shall not ask for information on trivial matters; (XVIII) it shall not raise matters under the control of bodies or persons not primarily responsible to the Government of India."

India announces diplomatic boycott of Beijing Winter Olympics over Galwan row

Asked about complaints of torture of the Arunachal boy by the Chinese Army who was recently returned after being in PLA's captivity, the MEA spokesperson said that the issue "has been taken up with the Chinese side". He added that the case "was handled through military channels and I would refer it to the Ministry of Defence and other elements."

A day after Miram Taron (17), who was purportedly abducted by the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) on January 18, was reunited with his family at Zido village, his father Opang Taron had said, "My son was kicked several times by Chinese soldiers. They also gave electric shock to him twice."

Indian Charge d'Affaires Acquino Vimal is the senior-most diplomat in Beijing right now, after Ambassador Vikram Misri left and joined as Deputy National Security Advisor in Delhi. The next ambassador, Pradeep Rawat, is yet to join the post.

Minutes after MEA spokesperson's statement, the chief of public broadcaster Prasar Bharti, CEO Shashi Shekhar Vempati, said that it "will not telecast live the Opening and Closing ceremonies of the Winter Olympics being held in Beijing".

India's decision to boycott the games comes months after it adopted the BRICS joint statement in September last year, where it said, "We express our support to China to host the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games."

But the issue of the torch-bearer and the Arunachal boy raised the pitch, sources said.

"There was an invitation for our envoy Vimal to attend the opening ceremony due tomorrow but the Chinese moves which were reported were seen as a provocation which made our diplomatic presence completely untenable," a senior government official told The Indian Express. The decision was taken overnight as reports and pictures of the Chinese soldier as torchbearer went viral on social media.

The official sought to underline that unlike some Western countries, which have boycotted the games over China's human rights record, India's reason is "different."

The US, UK and Canada have declared a diplomatic boycott of the Games, along with Australia, Lithuania, Kosovo, Belgium, Denmark and Estonia. Although they will all send athletes to compete, no ministers or officials will attend. The US has said this was because of China's "human rights abuses and atrocities in Xinjiang" against the province's Muslim population. "It's shameful that Beijing chose a torchbearer for the Olympics 2022 who's part of the military command that attacked India in 2020," said Senator Jim Risch, a Republican ranking member of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Pakistan PM Imran Khan, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman are scheduled to attend the opening ceremony.

Also, a lone Indian sportsperson, a skier from Jammu and Kashmir, will participate.

China's use of imagery and symbolism related to the Galwan clashes has irked Delhi.

Last February, China, for the first time, officially announced that four PLA personnel, including a battalion commander, died in clashes with Indian troops in the Galwan Valley, and another officer, of the rank of a Colonel, was "seriously injured in the skirmish".

The video showed an honour guard carrying the coffins of Chinese soldiers killed in the Galwan clashes. A Chinese journalist posted a video on Twitter claiming it was of the Galwan Valley fight. In September last year, while celebrating its Martyrs' Day, the Chinese Western Theatre Command released a video of its soldiers reportedly along the Galwan River, stating that they had given their lives to defend the country. And, in January this year, Chinese handles associated with state-owned media shared a video of PLA troops unfurling China's national flag in the Galwan Valley.

— WITH ENS

Border disputes stretching our resources: Army chief

their efforts, to achieve their strategic aims, short of conflict, by use of grey zone activities in the political, military and economic domains, and do so in a collusive manner".

He said events "in 2020 have been testimony to the diversity of security threats in all domains, and this has brought the spotlight towards non-contact and grey zone warfare".

"The ceasefire on the Line of Control continues to hold, because we have negotiated from a position of strength," he said, and "developments on our northern borders have also adequately underscored the requirement of ready and capable forces with an optimal component of boots on ground, backed by modern technology, to preserve our sovereignty and integrity".

"We are already witnessing trailers of future conflicts. They are being enacted daily on the information battlefield, in networks and cyber space. They are also being played along our yet unsettled and active borders. It is for us to visualise the battlefield contours of tomorrow based on these trailers," he said.

On the theme of the event – the contours of future wars and counter-measures -- General Naravane said the "creation of the Defence Space Agency, Defence Cyber Agency and the Armed Forces Special Operations Division are steps to synergise resources and expertise, and build integrated capabilities in these domains".

He said restructuring, rebalancing and reorienting of Indian forces have already been initiated and "we are further consolidating, from our operational experiences to these changes, and this shall remain a work-in-progress".

"There are ongoing hostilities between states in the cyber, information, sub-conventional and hybrid domains, without a formal pronouncement of war" and "the aim remains to incapacitate the adversary, disintegrate his sources of power and render the command and control systems ineffective, so as to make physical forces redundant," he said.

Some nations, he said, are "challenging the globally accepted norms, and the rules-based order" which has "manifested in various forms of creeping aggression and opportunist actions to alter the status quo, keeping the threshold below all-out war".

IAF chief Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari said deterrence "would play a significant role in preserving strategic autonomy" and the "four cardinal principles of sound intelligence, credibility of our force structures, perception management and timely application of combat power would be key to successful deterrence".

"China's doctrine of 'winning informatised local wars' enshrines the centrality of information as an instrument of prosecuting and winning contemporary wars. The Chinese concept of 'unrestricted warfare' combines elements of information operations, cyberspace operations, irregular warfare, lawfare and foreign relations, carried out in peace time as well as during conflict. This paradigm shift requires a change in our thought process," he said.

Navy chief Admiral R Hari Kumar highlighted the "contemporary geopolitical climate and, more specifically, the return of great power competition." He said "this competition is leading to jostling between nations on a day-to-day basis, across regions and domains. Such competition, if unchecked or unregulated, is likely to lead to conflict. We are all aware that at the operational and tactical level, this competition is already manifesting in the form of grey zone warfare, hybrid warfare, salami slicing, etc."

He underscored the importance of the appointment of a National Maritime Security Coordinator (NMSC) "aimed at breaking silos, and supporting cross organisational linkages". He said "given our security situation, the probability of a full-blown conflict can never be ruled out".

MLA vs dacoit

him in the districts on the banks of the Chambal river in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. The places include Morena, Gwalior and Shivpuri in MP. Teams are also looking for him in Agra in UP along with Bharatpur, Sawai Madhopur and Karauli districts in Rajasthan. We are also taking the help of the UP and MP police. There are not many dacoits left in Chambal. He (Gurjar) is among the last ones," Dholpur SP Shivraj Meena told *The Indian Express* on Thursday.

Meena added that the police have found no substance in Gurjar's allegations against the MLA.

The search, meanwhile, has thrown up little success so far.

Charan said: "It is not yet exactly known where he is moving. The topography is very difficult with ravines and hillocks adjoining the Chambal river. Even from a distance of 100 metres one won't be able to see if someone is hiding nearby."

Political will

Co-operation and Development (OECD) blamed the "absence of strong political will" for significant funding limitations faced by all environmental institutions in India. Little has changed since.

Instead of strengthening the monitoring mechanism and applying effective punitive tools, successive governments have relied on amnesty (post-facto clearance), incentives (subsidies) or self-certification that helped cut non-compliance, if at all, mostly on paper.

As the rejection rate for forest clearance drops below one per cent and the Government decides to incentivise states for faster environmental clearance, this lack of political will gets reinforced by the lack of compliance even in mega projects.

More so, when the flagship projects were either rejected or questioned over their viability by various expert panels of the Government before their clearance in strategic interest was rationalised with substantial compensatory measures.

Consider the Ken-Betwa link project. Ever since it was proposed in the mid-90s, KBLP has been considered unviable by several experts for its immense environmental cost. In fact, the project was rejected in 2011, only to be revived with a techno-economic clearance in 2016.

In 2017, its forest clearance was made conditional on compensating for the diversion of 60.17 sq km forest land by adding an equal extent of revenue land to Panna tiger reserve. Though it is not in the Environment ministry's power to modify a condition put by its expert panels, the Ministry of Jal Shakti and Madhya Pradesh government have been seeking relaxations repeatedly since 2018.

Or take the mega hydel projects in Arunachal Pradesh. For 17 years, both the Environment ministry and the state have been ignoring the most crucial condition imposed by the Supreme Court in 2004 for clearing the 2,000-MW Subansiri project.

If that is a case of purported oversight, the Ministry issued the final forest clearance to the twice-rejected 3,000-MW Dibang multipurpose project despite being made aware that Arunachal had not complied with the key precondition of declaring the catchment forests as a national park.

Similarly, multiple exceptions were made in granting clearances to Kulda coal mine in Orissa and Tamnar thermal plant in Chhattisgarh in "the national interest" even though the ministry and its expert panels were aware that the developers -- Mahanadi Coalfields Limited and Jindal Power Limited -- continued to transport coal through village roads.

And Goa, a state nearly 50 per cent behind in compensatory afforestation, was allowed an outlandish 10-for-1 plantation target on paper for the proposed international airport.

"Justifiable or not, projects in strategic sectors and areas will have their environmental cost," said M C Mehta, environmentalist and Supreme Court lawyer. "But promising green remedies that neither the regulators or the developers are serious about goes against the Constitutional obligation towards the precautionary principles of sustainable development as well as public trust. This also sends the message that they have scant respect for legal commitments, including court orders."

Sign of trouble

(Sonbhadra), Pratapgarh Sadar (Pratagarh) and Allahabad West (Prayagraj) -- the seven seats it announced earlier -- the Apna Dal (K) said it would give up Sirathu as well. While Sirathu, Pratapgarh Sadar and Allahabad West go to polls in the fifth phase on February 27, the others vote in the seventh phase on March 7.

"We do not want any dispute and confusion in the alliance. So, we have returned all the seats that the SP gave to Apna Dal to contest in the alliance. Let the SP first give seats to those who need them first. If any seat is left undisputed, let them give it to us," Apna Dal (K) national general secretary Pankaj Niranjan told The Indian Express.

He, however, said the party would continue to be in alliance with the SP. "Even if the Apna Dal does not contest on a single seat, we will campaign for Akhilesh Yadav for the cause of the backward classes," Niranjan said.

Niranjan said he had conveyed his party's decision to SP leader Udaiveer Singh, who is authorised to coordinate between the two parties. "We are awaiting the response from the SP side," said Niranjan.

While Udaiveer Singh was not available for comment, SP spokesperson Rajendra Chudhary said he was not aware of the Apna Dal (K)'s decision. "I am not aware of it but the alliance is certainly on," he said.

An SP leader said on condition of anonymity, "The party president must remove such confusion. Otherwise, it will lead to the kind of chaos that happened in 2017 when SP and Congress (in alliance then) fielded candidates on the same seats in certain districts."

An alliance leader said, "As Akhilesh is busy canvassing with RLD leaders in western UP for the first two phases of elections, he has assigned other leaders to coordinate with allies. But the final decision has to be taken by Akhilesh. The lack of communication between leaders is resulting in a delay in announcement of seats. For example, the SBSP has so far announced candidates on only five seats (it has sought over two dozen seats). The BJP has already announced candidates on most seats even in the sixth and seventh phases."

The Apna Dal (K) claims influence among Kurmi (OBC) voters across the state and also among Muslims in eastern and Central UP, especially in seats falling in Varanasi, Prayagraj and Mirzapur divisions, with its hold overlapping with that of its rival faction, Apna Dal (Sonelal).

Krishna Patel heads the Apna Dal (Kamerawadi) while her daughter Anupriya Patel, Union minister in the NDA government at the Centre, is president of the Apna Dal (Sonelal) faction.

Meanwhile, there are rumblings in the Janwadi Socialist Party (JSP), another party that's part of the SP-led alliance. Sources said the JSP had given a list of 12 seats from where its candidates were to contest on the SP symbol. "The seats we sought are going to polls in the sixth and seventh phases. But as of now, no candidate from my party has been announced yet and that is creating dissatisfaction among our workers. An announcement is expected only when the SP national president (Akhilesh Yadav) returns to Lucknow on Friday," said Sanjay Singh Chauhan, president of the JSP that draws its strength from members of the Bind and Kashyap communities who are present in sizeable numbers in over a dozen districts of eastern UP such as Ballia, Jaunpur and Prayagraj, among others.

Besides these two allies, the SP has forged partnerships with the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), Suheldeo Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP) and the Mahan Dal.

Owaisi

seized. Sharma's alleged accomplice, identified as Shubham of Saharanpur, had fled from the spot but was arrested later.

Officials said Sharma, who was still being questioned, told police that he was angry with Owaisi over his speeches.

Sharma's Facebook account shows him posing for photographs with BJP functionaries. He had even shared a video of Yati Narsinghanand, arrested recently for his hate speech in Haridwar. In one of his posts, Sharma had expressed solidarity with Ram Bhakt Gopal who opened fire at anti-CAA protesters in Delhi in 2020.

Prashant Kumar, ADG (Law and Order), said: "Police took swift action after it was informed that the MP's convoy had been fired upon. Video footage of the area was scanned and suspects were taken into custody. The accused Sachin was identified and arrested. A pistol was also recovered. From the videos, it is clear that Sachin is involved in the incident."

Owaisi uploaded a photograph of the vehicle on social media -- two holes created by bullets were visible.

He told reporters: "We were on our way to Delhi from Kithore (Assembly constituency). When we reached the Pilkhuwa toll gate… we were in four vehicles… we slowed down near the toll (plaza) since there are barricades there… there was a loud sound. Then there was another sound. My friend who was driving the car said we were being attacked. He raced the car ahead… It was quick thinking… then there was another sound."

"So, I think three-four rounds were fired. There are two holes on the left side of the car and one mark on the left mud guard…a tyre got punctured. There is a flyover ahead. We stopped the car there and I shifted to another vehicle. I think they were following us," he said.

"A Fortuner vehicle was behind my car in which our ex-mayor Majid was travelling… the driver of that car rammed it into one of the shooters. He was wearing a red hoodie… and he fell down. A person who was wearing a white jacket then fired at the Fortuner."

"I have spoken to the Additional SP. He said the arms which were used have been found… and a shooter has been caught. I would like to request the Election Commission to order an independent probe into this incident. Who are these people, who was behind this and why this attack took place… and who hatched the conspiracy… all these things should come to light. It is very important," he said.

"Parliament session is on. I will meet the Speaker and tell him what happened. I am writing to the Election Commission as well," Owaisi said.

He had said his party would contest 100 of the 403 seats at stake in UP.

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E-Procurement Notice (National Competitive Bidding)
e-Tender No.: IRCON/3018/DFCCIL-CTP-12/e-Tender/RUBs/Roof covering/SS-1,2&3/08-414 Date: 04.02.2022
e-Tender in Two Stage bid System are invited from bidders meeting qualifying requirement for the work **"Construction & Providing of Roofing with Structural steel & Corrugated GI sheets on approaches of Road under Bridges at Level Crossings (18 Nos.) between DFC Ch: 113+360 and Ch: 25+725 between Saphale (Palghar) and Valsad in connection with construction of WDFC CTP 12 Project, Phase-II of Vaitarna - Sachin section".**

Estimated Cost (Including all taxes & GST)	Rs. 20,61,46,036.00
Last date and Time of Bid Submission	18.02.2021 up to 15:00 Hours

For Further details, Visit website at **https://www.etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app**. Corrigendum if any would be hosted only on the web site.
Project Director, IRCON
1/7/2, Vaishnav Nagari, Nr. Ayappa Temple, Atul-Parnera Road, Parnera, Distt. Valsad, Gujarat-396007,
Email: sitesh.kumars@ircon.org

At 14.4 degrees, capital sees coldest day in Feb in 19 yrs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

AT 14.4 degrees Celsius, the city recorded the lowest maximum temperature in February in the past 19 years. The maximum temperature recorded Thursday was 8 degrees below normal for this time of the year, and was a steep fall from 22.4 degrees Celsius at the Safdarjung weather observatory Wednesday.

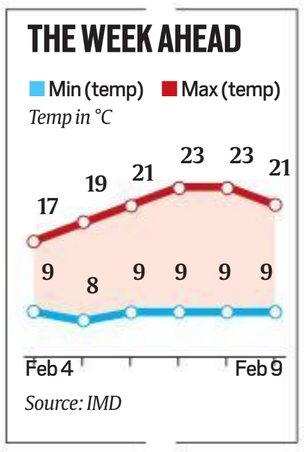
The western disturbance, which brought rainfall to Delhi-NCR Thursday, caused the dip in temperature with the associated cloud cover and strong winds that reached 30 to 40 kmph during the day. This made Thursday the coldest day in February since February of 2003 when the maximum temperature recorded was 14.3 degrees Celsius. The lowest maximum temperature recorded in February in the past 71 years is 12.3 degrees Celsius on February 1, 1970.

Under the influence of the western disturbance, the Safdarjung weather station recorded around 0.6 mm of rainfall in the early hours of Thursday. The western disturbance, a storm that originates in the Mediterranean Region and is driven by the westerlies, lies over North Pakistan and the neighbourhood. Moisture from the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal is likely to continue to feed the western disturbance over the next 24 hours, the India Meteorological Department said in an update on Thursday evening. Cloudy skies and very light rainfall remain on the forecast for Friday.

Friday's maximum temperature is likely to be 17 degrees Celsius and the minimum is likely to settle at 9 degrees Celsius. The maximum temperature is likely to increase to about 23 degrees Celsius by February 7, the IMD's 7-day forecast indicates.

The minimum temperature recorded in the early hours of Thursday was 11 degrees Celsius. Moderate fog is on the forecast for February 5 and 6. Fog is considered 'moderate' when visibility is between 200 m and 499 m.

Moderate fog is on the forecast for February 5 and 6. *Tashi Tobgyal*



AAP hits out at SDMC for proposing fee on EV charging stations; it says plan shelved

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

AAP LEADER and MCD in-charge Durgesh Pathak Thursday alleged that the BJP-ruled South MCD was "looting crores of rupees" on the pretext of licences for EV charging stations, "despite PM Narendra Modi having ended the need for licences".

The party was reacting to reports that the Corporation was planning to introduce a new policy to charge a licence fee to allow private entities to set up e-vehicle charging stations. The Delhi government has a policy in place that encourages businesses and establishments to set up stations at reasonable rates with no licence fee at all.

The AAP leader said if such a policy is brought in, it would undermine the work being done to promote the sale of electric vehicles: "The biggest proponent of modern tech solutions against pollution was the introduction of e-vehicles... The procedure to set up EV charging stations is supposed to be free of bureaucratic hurdles and licences. The PM himself wants to promote it on a large scale. But the BJP and its leaders are acting as a huge boulder in the path of progress against the word of their leader."

The proposal, meanwhile, seems to have been put on the backburner for now. SDMC standing chairperson B K Oberoi said a proposal like that was thought of but later withdrawn: "We are not doing anything on EV, let the Delhi government plan whatever they want."

Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor also called AAP's allegations "baseless" and said there was no such proposal before the corporation.

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RERA REGISTRATION NO.: RC/REP/HARERA/GGM/426/158/2020/42 (www.haryanarera.gov.in)

RE-DRAW OF FLATS

General public is hereby informed that Re-draw of flats under Haryana Affordable Housing Policy 2013 of **SignatureGlobal Superbia, Sector - 95,** being developed by **M/s Sternal Buildcon Private Limited** shall be conduct on **11/02/2022 at 11:30 AM** onwards at **The Pllazio Hotel, Plot No. 292-296, Sector - 29, HUDA City Centre, Gurugram.**

With the help of live streaming/telecast of re-draw proceeding on youtube live. Due to ongoing situation of Covid-19 pandemic, restriction were imposed by Ministry of Home Affairs, over public gathering in order to prevent spreading of corona virus disease.

As per MHA/ DTCP Haryana Guidelines re-draw shall be conducted with maximum strength of 50 persons including re-draw committee and staff at site, remaining applicants shall participate in re-draw online after login into below provided link on YouTube live.

YouTube Link - https://www.youtube.com/user/SignatureGlobal

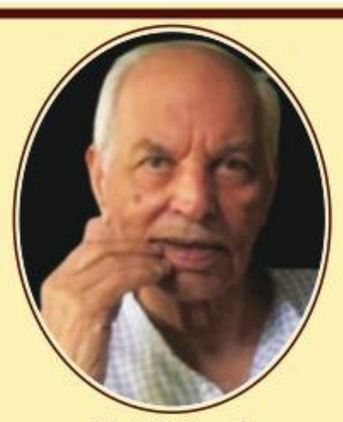
Note: If any applicant wants to check his/her name in the list he/she may contact to STP Office, Gurugram as well as the office of colonizer before re-draw of lots.

STERNAL BUILDCON PRIVATE LIMITED | CIN: U70109DL2009PTC195052 | LICENCE NO.: 21 OF 2020 DATED 13.08.2020
Regd. Off.: 13th Floor, Dr. Gopal Das Bhawan, 28 Barakhamba Road, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001
Corp. Off.: Ground Floor, Tower A, Signature Tower, South City -1, Gurugram, Haryana-122001
Email: customercare@signatureglobal.in, Ph.: 0124-4908200, 9311144624

Public at large suffered: SPP wraps up bail arguments in riots case

New Delhi: Wrapping up its arguments against the bail pleas of seven persons in a UAPA case connected to the Northeast Delhi riots, the prosecution told a Delhi court that while none of the alleged conspirators had suffered, the public at large did.

"Who has really suffered? None of the conspirators have suffered. It is the public at large who has suffered," Special public prosecutor Amit Prasad submitted, citing the 53 deaths, injuries to 108 policemen, the loss of public and private property and disruption of essential services during the violence. **ENS**



R. K. Soni

It is with deep sorrow that we inform you of the passing of our beloved father, father-in-law and grandfather, Mr. R.K.Soni,on the 27th of January,2022.
He was happiest when playing with numbers, uplifting his own and being equal to anything that life threw at him.
We request you to keep him in your prayers.

Cora and Narender (Tony) Suri
Rhea Suri, Satyen Suri

TATA

TATA STEEL LIMITED
Registered Office: Bombay House, 24, Homi Mody Street,
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Tel.: +91 22 6665 8282
Email: cosec@tatasteel.com Website: www.tatasteel.com
CIN: L27100MH1907PLC000260

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given pursuant to circular no. SEBI/HO/MIRSD/DOS3/CIR/P/2018/139 dated November 6, 2018, issued by the Securities and Exchange Board of India, that the Company has received the following requests to transfer equity shares from the names of the shareholder(s) ("Transferor") to the name(s) of the proposed transferee(s) ("Transferee").

The details of the proposed transfers are:

SN	Folio no	Name of the Transferor(s)	No of equity shares of ₹10 each	Distinctive numbers	Name of the Transferee(s)
1	S1B0026294	Bharatbhai Naginbhai Patel Urmilaben Bharatbhai Patel	120	7298861-7298910 160082911-160082960 160082961-160082970 327047971-327047975 234129384-234129388	Mihir M Shah
2	S1T0043262	Templeton Developing Markets Trust	100	152491161-152491210 206315061-206315110	Satnam Singh Kundi

Any person who has any objection in respect of the proposed transfer of equity shares referred to above, shall intimate in writing to the Company Secretary at the Registered Office of Company and/or to the Registrar & Transfer Agent, TSR Darashaw Consultants Private Limited, within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice and if no objection is received by the Company within the stipulated period then the Company shall proceed with the transfer of the said equity shares in favour of the above-mentioned transferee(s), without any further intimation.The information is also being made available on the website of the Company at www.tatasteel.com.

For **Tata Steel Limited**
Sd/-
Parvatheesam Kanchinadham
Company Secretary &
Chief Legal Officer (Corporate & Compliance)

February 3, 2022
Mumbai

TATA STEEL

INDIAN SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY

APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS

Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff Members

Teaching Faculty Members:
Applications are invited from suitable candidates for the post of Assistant/Associate Professor on regular basis for teaching the **following courses of the Undergraduate Degree Programmes** namely B.B.A. in Hospitality Management and B.A. (Hons.) Culinary Arts:
Strategic Management, Business Analytics, Corporate Finance, Marketing, Human Resource Management, Research Methodology, Information Technology, Numerical Skills, Law & Ethics, Culinary Management, Culinary Theory & Application, Food & Beverage, Hospitality Management, Economics, Accounting, Disaster Management, Environmental Science, Service Operations, Data Analytics, Service Design, Entrepreneurship.

Non-Teaching Members:
Coordinator – Undergraduate Programmes (02)
Asst. Manager – IQAC (01)
Asst. Manager/Executive – Academic Affairs (01)
Asst. Manager/Executive – Administration (02)

Qualifications, Experience and Pay Scale as per UGC/Gurugram University Govt. guidelines. Candidates with PhD will be preffered. Eligible candidates may apply along with **CV / Bio Data and copies of the qualification** documents on
careers@ish.edu.in

Last date to submit the application: Monday, February 21, 2022.

Indian School of Hospitality, Gurgaon
(Approved by Govt. of Haryana, Affiliated with Gurugram University, Gurugram, Haryana)
Block C, Vatika INXT City Centre, Sector 83,
Gurgaon - 122004, Haryana (India).
Contact No. 0124-4165555 Website: www.ish.edu.in

ADVERTORIAL

Shaping the Future of Cancer Care in India

Experts agree that during the pandemic, there was collateral damage when it came to treatment of other diseases, particularly cancer.

TECHNOLOGY is transforming the landscape of cancer care, far more than we can imagine. The conversation is now about delivering precise, personalised care to patients across India, beyond the metros.

Experts agree that during the pandemic, there was collateral damage when it came to treatment of other diseases, particularly cancer. For instance, a patient suffering from a lump in the breast or a mouth ulcer delayed a hospital visit due to fear of contracting Covid or other logistics, hurting their chances of early diagnosis, which is critical for cancer treatment. However, the silver lining is that connecting with doctors online has now become the norm, with large hospital networks navigating "virtual tumour boards", where specialists can discuss complex cases, thus offering a high level of care. Just like we made the transition from landlines to smartphones, technology is also poised to make high-end medical care available to people in Tier-2 & 3 cities.

We are making strides in achieving the dream of universal health coverage to provide care to both the rich and non-affluent, for whom affording long-drawn cancer treatment is an uphill task. Large hospital networks, such as HCG with nearly 25 centres across India, have enabled care for about 53 crores of the population. Precision care, too, goes a long way in meeting this challenge. While there are a limited number of specialists, digital aids and virtual tumour boards (VTBs) can make access possible, with the help of institutions like Tata Memorial Hospital.

The impact is revolutionary. People do not have to travel long-distances and incur additional costs of treatment. Places like Ranchi, Cuttack, Nasik have PET scans and high-end linear accelerators today, which were not available a decade ago. There has been tremendous development globally and India is not far behind. Providing 350 million of urban India with high-quality cancer care in itself is an achievement.

wipro GE

Technology is definitely leading the change when it comes to the future of cancer care, in the major areas of diagnosis, surgery and radiation oncology. PET CT scanners, too, have become far superior over the last two decades. For instance, taking us from analog to digital imaging, like in the case of a mammography. Thanks to access to high-quality data, we now also have image-guided surgery, the robotic Davinci technique, etc, which are all part of the new generation of surgery. So, it's not just diagnosis, but the entire spectrum that has benefited from technology.

Nuclear medicine and molecular imaging are no longer just futuristic terms but a reality for cancer care today. It is tremendous news for patients and their families as the technological precision makes it easier to catch a malignancy and a tumour which seemed inoperable, may now appear operable, thanks to better imaging technology. Digital screening techniques, across the board, have also significantly reduced the exposure to radiation.

Moreover, as everyone knows, cancer is not just one single disease but actually a hundred, affecting different organs and tissues. This calls for precise, personalised treatment protocols as well, which is now possible thanks to companies like GE Healthcare, which launched the PET CT-scanner Discovery IQ, PET MRI making technology accessible pan-India. While ensuring better clinical outcomes, this makes healthcare affordable as well, as firstly, patients no longer have to travel to the bigger metros in search of a PET CT scanner, as in the earlier decades. Besides, with access to a team of experts virtually, they need not worry about getting a second opinion, reducing anxiety as well for patients and their families.

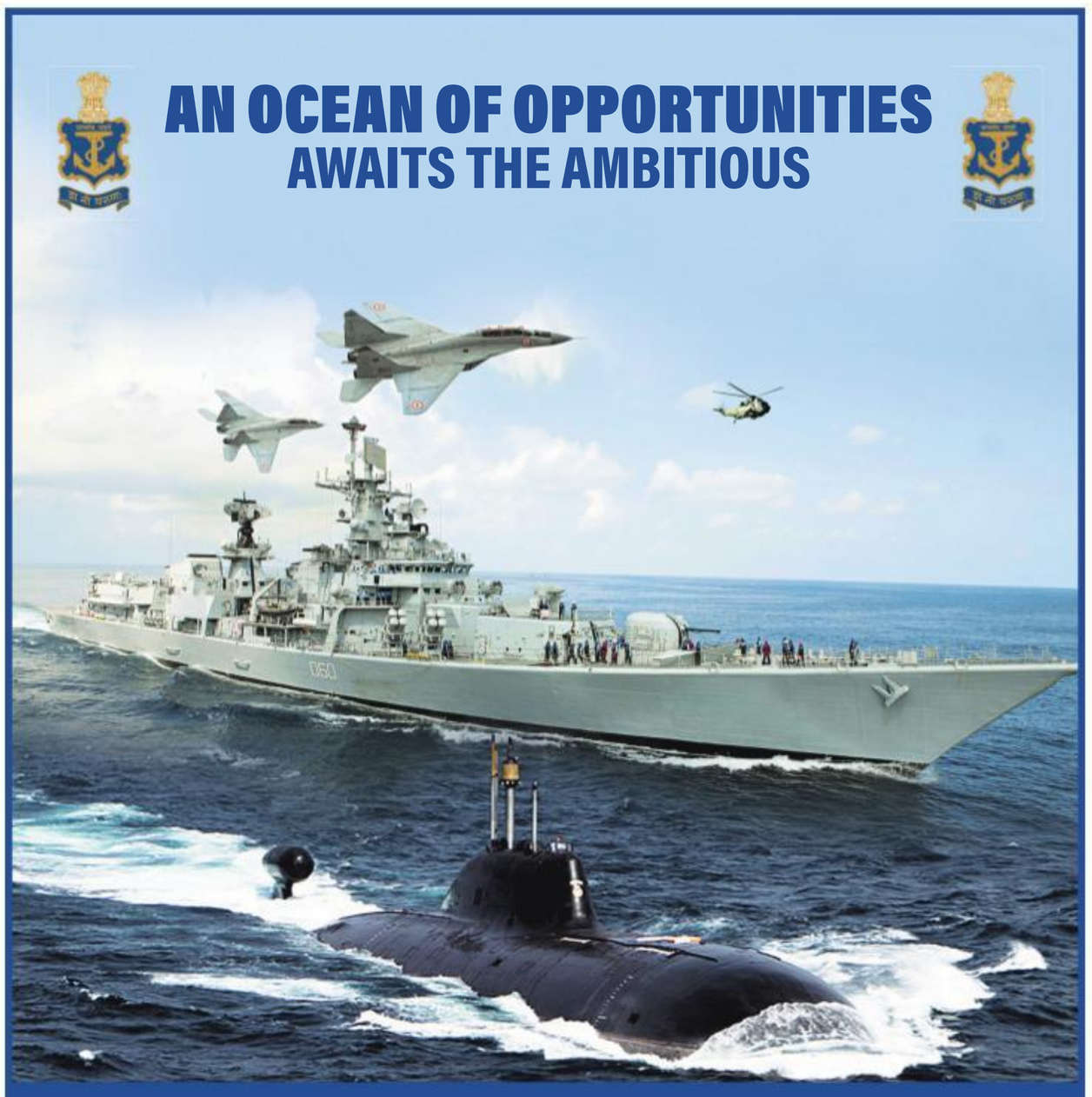
When we talk of the future of cancer care, theranostics (derived from therapeutics+diagnostics) plays a key role in delivering personalised medicine, simultaneously combining diagnosis and therapy. It uses imaging to identify if certain tumour receptors are present in cancer cells, followed by precision radiation treatment, without affecting the surrounding healthy cells.

Technology helps build efficiency, bring down costs and make care accessible and affordable. The future is already here, with hospitals prepared to address the responsibility of regular follow-ups, home care and blood tests, alongside smart features that help to provide virtual care. Patients need to visit a hospital only for actual care.

When it comes to cancer management, collaborations are an integral part of finding solutions. GE believes in the power of partnership and has structured the Edison accelerator program with start-ups to bring best solutions to providers.

Thus, with so many bright minds taking on the cancer challenge, the prognosis has never been better. The future of cancer care is set to be more patient-focussed, accessible and affordable in years to come.

(Source: Webinar titled 'Shaping the Future of Cancer Care', part of the campaign Cancer Care Matters in association with GE Healthcare. The panelists included Dr. Venkatesh Rangarajan, Head, Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging, Tata Memorial Hospital; Dr. BS Ajaikumar, Chairman and CEO, HealthCare Global; and Karan Verma, Head, Digital and Care Area, GE Healthcare, South Asia.)



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Indian Navy invites online applications from unmarried male candidates, to join as Permanent Commission Officers under 10+2 (B.Tech) Cadet Entry.

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Executive & Technical Branch	30		

Entry is open from 27 Jan 22.
The last date for submission of online application is 08 Feb 22.

For eligibility criteria and details, visit www.joinindiannavy.gov.in and Employment News dated 29 Jan 22.

Scan this QR Code to apply online

davp 10701/13/0018/2122

CORONAVIRUS IN THE CAPITAL

VACCINATIONS IN LAST 24 HOURS	OMICRON CASES
55,232	549

PATIENTS IN HOSPITAL: 1,234

OXYGEN SUPPORT	327
VENTILATOR SUPPORT	102

DELHI: TOTAL CASES 18,38,647

	Total	Vacant
HOSPITAL BEDS	15,426	14,162
ICU BEDS	4,462	3,958

	Cases	Recoveries	Deaths	Tests
Feb 2	3,028	4,679	27	63,982
Feb 3	2,668	3,895	13	61,992
Total	13,630*	17,99,085	25,932	3,50,81,270

*Total active cases in Delhi

NOIDA	Feb 2	Feb 3
Cases	312	345
Deaths	1	1

GURGAON	Feb 2	Feb 3
Cases	970	896
Deaths	4	3

2 DIE CLEANING SAFETY TANK IN FARIDABAD

'He had never entered a safety tank... died saving his friend': Kin of one of the victims

PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA
FARIDABAD, FEBRUARY 3

"HE HAD never entered a safety tank before. He did daily wage work in shuttering and construction. Yesterday was his day off, so he went with his friend Balbeer for a job to possibly earn some extra money. He went inside the tank and died saving his friend," said Pradeep Singh's brother, Prabhat Singh, as he stood desolate outside the mortuary at the civil hospital in Faridabad Thursday.

Pradeep (38) and Balbeer (48) died after allegedly inhaling poisonous gas while removing sludge from a safety tank of a food shop at Sector 14 market in Faridabad on Wednesday.

Their co-worker Mohan (22) said Balbeer had taken up work of cleaning the safety tank of a kitchen, which is usually done using a pipe and a rope tied to a tractor: "One does not have to enter the tank to clean it."

He alleged that after removing sludge and some water with a pipe, the employer forced Balbeer to enter the 10-foot deep tank to clear remaining waste from the bottom. "The employer said he needed someone to enter to properly clean the sludge, and Balbeer was coerced into entering… There was no protective equipment and the tank's opening was small for a ladder to fit. He was lowered into the tank with our help," he said.

Mohan said around 3.30 pm, the employer handed him a wiper for cleaning and when he used it, the gas built up: "Within a few minutes, Balbeer felt drowsy and fainted. He shouted for help before he lost consciousness."

Hearing his cries, Pradeep entered to help Balbeer, but he also fainted. "The employer then asked me to remove them from the tank, but I refused to enter. He then tried to snatch my phone and deleted some contacts, so I don't report the incident. I ran away as I was scared of the gas," alleged Mohan.

Neighbours said the two were pulled out by lowering a wooden stick and tying a noose made from a rope around it. "I covered my face with a cloth and lowered the stick to pull them out. It took half an hour. Everyone was scared to enter the tank," claimed Rahul Budhana, a neighbour.

Relatives of the victims said Pradeep and Balbeer lived near each other in Padam Colony, Tigaon road in Faridabad.

Originally from Tappal in Aligarh, Balbeer had been living in Faridabad for over a decade. His brother-in-law Babli said Balbeer took on any work which paid a daily wage of around Rs 500-600: "He worked as a labourer and at construction sites. For the past few years, he was cleaning private safety tanks and often picked up labour work to supplement income. He has left behind his wife and five children, three daughters and two sons. He was the only earning member in his family."

Jagvir Singh Chauhan, a relative of Pradeep, said he earned Rs 500-700 a day in daily wage work. "Pradeep was the sole breadwinner. He has a wife, a son, and a daughter. We hope some compensation is provided to the families and children. The culprit should be arrested for forcing the victims to do such dangerous tasks without any consideration for their safety," he said.

Police said on the complaint of the victims' family, they have lodged an FIR against the shop owner who had hired the victims under IPC Section 304 (II) (culpable homicide not amounting to murder), Section 9 of The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, and relevant sections of the SC/ST Act at Central police station.

Bhagat Singh, in-charge, police post Sector 14, said the accused person is absconding: "The complainants alleged that the accused forced the victims to enter the narrow safety tank without any gear and despite knowing there was potential danger due to gas, causing their death. We have initiated a probe. The bodies were handed over to their respective families after the autopsy on Thursday evening."

Pradeep Singh (38); (right) Relatives and neighbours of the victim outside the civil hospital in Faridabad

Women account for 8% of drivers but 1% of accidents: Data

GAYATHRI MANI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

WHILE WOMEN drivers account for 8% of those driving in the national capital, they are responsible for only 1% of fatal accidents in the city, data released by the transport department showed.

A total of 4,720 accidents were reported in Delhi in 2021, leading to 1,239 fatalities and 4,273 injuries. The largest proportion of deaths occurred among male adults aged between 20 and 39 years and 90% of those injured were men, the report analysis prepared by the lead agency of the Road Safety Branch, Transport Department, read. Among women, road traffic fatality risk was highest over the age of 60.

The detailed report, which also includes an analysis of accident-prone stretches, will help the government look at issues of design and safety of vulnerable groups. *The Indian Express* had reported on Tuesday that the government will identify and fix most accident-prone stretches.

"Through the detailed analyses of accidents, we are identifying high-risk locations and areas to implement strategic interventions and thus help save thousands of lives. Studies and road redesign efforts taken in the past have proven that crashes are preventable and such evidence-based reports will help us take conducive steps to reduce accidents," Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot said.

Ashish Kundra, Principal Secretary and Transport Commissioner, spoke about the protection of vulnerable groups, such as pedestrians and motorcyclists. According to the report, 89% of deaths in accidents are among pedestrians, motorcyclists, and cyclists. "It is evident that pedestrians and motorcyclists are more at risk. We have started identifying high-risk locations and are committed to taking remedial steps and reducing deaths and accidents at these spots," he said.

Experts said that many accidents are directly related to poor road design and engineering.

"The major reason for accidents is lack of concrete engineering measures in place. In the last few years, the traffic police have stepped up enforcement measures like installing CCTV cameras and RLDVs. These measures give some relief at localised levels, but it may not help in bringing down fatalities. Agencies like PWD, DDA and others should work on the ground to improve road engineering and faulty designs in both black spots and existing roads. A comprehensive road safety audit of all black spots and existing roads is the need of the hour," S Velmurugan, chief scientist at the Central Road Research Institute of India, said.

BRIEFLY

Shahdara victim's sister assaulted: 2 arrested

New Delhi: Nearly two weeks after the sister of the Shahdara gangrape and assault victim filed a complaint against her neighbours, police have arrested two persons. R Sathiyasundaram, DCP (Shahdara), said, "We've made the first arrests in the case that was lodged on a complaint by the victim's younger sister." The victim's sister had alleged that she too was being sexually harassed and thrashed by the accused. Despite filing a complaint on January 19, she claimed no action was taken. In her complaint, she had written: "I was attacked and beaten up on January 19... We had an auto that they burnt down. I used to work at a shop... but (they) broke in and didn't let me work. When I stay home, their women come and thrash me. When I step out, they... harass me..."

Police chief interacts with public on Twitter Spaces

New Delhi: Delhi Police chief Rakesh Asthana joined a Twitter Spaces event hosted by media persons and interacted with the public on women safety, drug menace, police brutality and several other topics Thursday. Officials said this is the first time that a Delhi Police chief interacted with the public virtually. **ENS**

NEW PLAYGROUND

Children play on top of a decommissioned fighter plane installed at Raj Nagar Extension in Ghaziabad. *Abhinav Saha*

Assailants go on shooting spree to find target before killing him

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

A GROUP of 10-12 men went on a shooting spree in East Delhi in search of their target, a 24-year-old man, before they found him in Laxmi Nagar and allegedly shot him dead on Wednesday. An hour before they killed the victim, police said the accused allegedly fired at a family in Shakarpur.

Police said they have identified the main accused, but no arrests have been made yet.

DCP (East) Priyanka Kashyap said, "The victim, Mayank Chauhan, received two-three bullet injuries. He was rushed to the hospital by his friend, but died. We registered two cases against the shooters and have sent multiple teams to nab them."

According to police sources, Chauhan and the accused knew each other and recently got into a fight. The victim's family also alleged that the accused were targeting Chauhan over a petty issue. His father Sanjeev said, "He was at his friend's house when he got a call from someone and was asked to stand outside. They (the group) attacked him and tried to pull him into their car, but he managed to escape. They followed him and fired three bullets that hit him in the back. They have been harassing my son for almost a year."

According to police, they first received a PCR call around 11 pm on Wednesday at Shakarpur police station. The caller alleged that a group of 10-12 men fired near a school and damaged cars and bikes in the area. At 11.10 pm, another local called and informed police about the same.

Aryan, a student who lives in the area, said the accused fired at his family: "... we were right outside our house when we saw a group of men running towards us. They started firing. We were shocked and rushed inside. They were trying to shoot my father and fired two rounds. They then entered through the main gate and fired five rounds. They also damaged our scooter and car... One of them later said they had the wrong target and left."

Even as police registered a case and sent teams to locate the accused, the men reached Laxmi Nagar. Police received a second PCR call from Laxmi Nagar at 12.06 am Thursday; they suspect the same group fired around five times near a gurdwara which led to Chauhan's death.

Jamia V-C meets PM, discusses medical college, convocation

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi Wednesday met Jamia Millia Islamia Vice-Chancellor Najma Akhtar at his residence to discuss a range of issues. Among them, the PM expressed his support for setting up a medical college at the university and showed his willingness to attend the next convocation as chief guest.

This was the second time in two years that Modi met Akhtar.

"Like the earlier meeting, the Prime Minister again showed his support for setting up a medical college at the university and hoped it would be started during Prof Akhtar's tenure as the Vice-Chancellor," Jamia PRO Ahmed Azeem said in a statement.

"Prof Akhtar said the PM once again showed his willingness to attend the convocation as the chief guest. He was expected to attend the convocation in the centenary year but due to the pandemic it could not be organised," he added.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Akhtar said Modi had remembered that she had spoken of building a medical college two years back as well: "I expressed my wish that it should start during my tenure and he supported the same. Earlier, we had also demanded a hospital, but since it is difficult to get funds, and because we also realised we can tie up with an existing hospital, we are now only keen on a medical college."

'Set your house in order': HC raps East MCD on salary delay to docs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

PULLING UP the East MCD for not paying salaries to doctors and other frontline workers in its hospitals, the Delhi High Court Thursday termed it "shocking" and said the corporation needs to set its house in order. "We cannot set your house in order. You will have to do it. We cannot be running the EDMC. Were you a private enterprise, we would have asked you to be wound up. If you can't manage your resources, then shut shop," the division bench of Justice Vipin Sanghi and Justice Jasmeet Singh told the EDMC.

The court further told the EDMC that it has employed people who have families to take care of and asked if only doctors have not been paid their salaries. "Two months is shocking," said the court, while referring to the non-payment of salaries for November and December.

Advocate Manu Chaturvedi, representing the EDMC, told the court that most employees, including engineers and other officers, have been paid salaries only till October 2021. He also submitted that sanitation workers have been paid till December 2021. He further said the corporation has been augmenting its revenue and reducing expenses.

The Delhi government told the court that the third and final instalment of funds has been released to the MCDs and if anything is remaining, the same will be released in the next few days. "As far as this year is concerned, there is no reason why salaries should not be paid," submitted senior advocate Rahul Mehra, representing the government.

The submissions were made during the hearing of a case related to the financial crunch being faced by civic bodies, and the issue of unpaid salaries of staff.

Meanwhile, the East MCD Thursday issued an circular to resident doctors threatening to terminate their services for participating in a strike on salary delay.

On Tuesday, several resident doctors, nurses, and paramedical staff at Swami Dayanand Hospital went on strike. East MCD Commissioner Vikas Anand said he has appealed to doctors to return to work: "They would be given their salaries for February and March on time. Due arrears will be paid in May as per availability of funds."

AAP MCD in-charge Durgesh Pathak said the BJP's act of firing doctors who tirelessly saved lives during the pandemic is "inhumane". The EDMC later said no action has been taken so far.

'Rs 1 cr relief only for kin of frontline workers who died on dedicated Covid duty'

EXPRESS NEW SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

OPPOSING THE petitions filed by the families of two policemen who died of Covid, the Delhi government Thursday told the High Court that the kin of only those frontline workers who died while on 'dedicated Covid duty' are entitled to the Rs 1 crore ex-gratia relief announced by the state.

The submissions were made during the hearing of the petitions filed by the wives of constable Amit Kumar, who was a fingerprint expert with the Crime Branch, and ASI Shesh Mani Pandey, who died while performing field duty in Northwest District. He was also a collator with the police department.

The government had earlier announced that Rs 1 crore will be paid to families of doctors, nurses, paramedical staff, security staff, sanitation staff or other government officials, including police personnel, who were deployed for Covid duty by it and died of the virus while on duty.

Advocate Santosh Kumar Tripathi, the government standing counsel, before Justice V Kameswar Rao, submitted that normal duties of routine course during the pandemic and 'dedicated Covid duties' are different. On dedicated duties, he cited examples of deployment of personnel at hospitals, oxygen plants and crematoriums. "Dedicated Covid duty assignment is the important ingredient to consider all these claims," he said.

The counsel submitted that every other person who died of Covid cannot be given the ex-gratia payment of Rs 1 crore.

'WOULD HAVE AFFECTED SMALL, MICRO INDUSTRIES'

Haryana industry bodies welcome court stay on 75% reservation law

PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA
GURGAON, FEBRUARY 3

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS Thursday welcomed the Punjab and Haryana High Court's stay on the Haryana government's law that sought to reserve 75% jobs in the private sector for those from the state.

The Haryana State Employment of Local Candidate Act, 2020, a poll promise of the Jannayak Janta Party, stipulates that firms with 10 or more employees must reserve 75% of all jobs which offer a salary of less than Rs 30,000 a month to those having a domicile (resident certificate) of Haryana. The state government has made certain exemptions – lowering the upper limit of gross monthly salary from Rs 50,000 to Rs 30,000 while IT units and start-ups set up after January 15, 2022, will be exempt for two years from hiring local candidates under the law.

Amid apprehensions over the law's implementation, which industry bodies said would severely impact manufacturing and IT sectors, deter investment, and may force companies to relocate from the state in the long run, several industry associations from Gurgaon, Faridabad and Rewari had approached the court for relief.

Manmohan Gaind, general secretary, Manesar Industries Welfare Association (MIWA), hailed the HC stay as a "great move", adding that the law, if implemented, would adversely impact small and micro-scale enterprises and result in an exodus of industries from Gurgaon. "Several industry associations had filed a petition challenging the law. The government is trying to bring in reservations in the private sector through this, which infringes on our rights which are protected in the Constitution of India. It infringes on the constitutional right of freedom to migrate for work," said Gaind.

He said the skill set required for industries was not readily available: "The government should work on providing basic training to the youth so people are employable, rather than forcing these laws for vote-bank politics. If there is a cascading effect and other states bring in such laws, what will happen to the Union of India? On one hand, governments talk of 'one nation one market' and on the other hand, they are trying to destabilise the private sector through such policies."

Industry bodies said the law would severely impact manufacturing and IT sectors. *Archive*

President of the Gurgaon Industrial Association (GIA), J N Mangla, said they hoped the law would eventually be withdrawn. "After consultations with industries in the state, we had decided to challenge the validity of the law in court since it is unconstitutional, and its implementation violates our fundamental rights. We were the first to file the petition. The court has given some relief for the time being and we hope the law is withdrawn eventually. There should be no imposition and people should be allowed to work in any state. We are of the view that there should be no reservation in jobs in the private sector," he said.

According to the Haryana government, all industries have to register on a job portal of the labour department in the next three months before hiring fresh candidates. The Act required that employers have to submit quarterly reports on the portal, with details of local candidates employed to ensure compliance.

B R Bhatia, president, Faridabad Industries Association, said, "Since the law was announced, we decided to challenge it as it was not acceptable to us. Many employers and industries in the state had stopped hiring for some time since the law was notified. It is not possible to get skilled manpower only from one state and the law would severely impact productivity."

Gurgaon Udyog Association president Parveen Yadav said the HC order had come as a big relief, especially for employers: "Several companies had put their plans regarding recruitment and expansion on hold due to the uncertainty and were waiting for court proceedings. A lot of resources and manpower was being devoted to understanding new regulations and compliance. The order will give some confidence to industries."

Industry leaders said they believe the government will go to the Supreme Court now. "We hope the law is scrapped. It goes against the spirit of federalism in India. If all the states bring in such policies, no one would be able to migrate for work," said Pappujit Singh Sarna, Chairman, IMT Industries Association Faridabad.

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Lifestyle Modification for Kidney Cancer Management

Dr Manish Singhal
Senior Consultant Medical Oncology, Apollo Cancer Hospital, Delhi

Few of the risk factor for kidney cancer are related to life style habits and addiction like smoking and chronic alcoholism. Hence definitely a life style modification will help in preventing the incidence of kidney cancer also it will help in management of kidney cancer.

Quit Smoking

Smoking introduces toxic chemicals into the body. The kidney has to filter most of these toxins out of the blood. This not only increases the chance of cancer, but can decrease the efficiency of kidneys. Smoking can also increase the risk of complications from medical procedures and slow tissue healing.

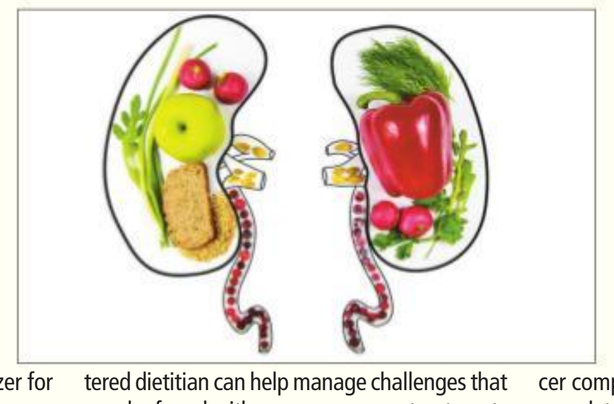
Reduce Your Risk of Infection

Cancer and its treatments suppress the body's immune system. This can increase the risk of infection or increase the severity of common infections like a cold or the flu. To decrease the risk of infection while going through cancer treatment:

- Wash hands thoroughly and often. Hand washing is the most effective method of decreasing the chance of catching colds and flu. Carry hand sanitizer for times when washing is not convenient.
- Try to avoid crowds, especially during cold and flu season.
- Avoid touching eyes, mouth, and nose to after coming in contact with surfaces or objects.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects often.
- Ask your doctor about immunization against the flu and pneumonia.

Make Dietary Changes

Cancer itself and some cancer treatments can reduce appetite. It becomes important to make the most of the calories that are eaten. A registered dietitian can help manage challenges that may be found with cancer or cancer treatments and develop an effective meal plan.



Exercise Regularly

Exercise has many benefits that may help withstand the physical and emotional stresses of cancer and cancer treatment including:

- Promoting overall fitness
- Boosting your energy level
- Improving your immune system
- Boosting your spirits and improving your emotional outlook

While adding exercise, be sure to balance rest and activities to prevent becoming too tired.

Manage Fatigue

Fatigue is the most frequently experienced symptom of cancer and cancer treatments. To help avoid getting overtired, prioritize tasks and focus on the most important ones. If fatigue is affecting quality of life, talk to your doctor.

Comfort Measures

Kidney cancer is especially difficult because it is usually found in advanced stages, making it harder to treat. Some people choose treatments to ease cancer complications or choose to stop treatment completely. Depending on your circumstances, it may be realistic to begin end-of-life planning.

Considerations may include:

- Choosing home or hospice care
  Financial decisions
- Advance directives—includes legal issues like wills, hospital orders for your care, and power of attorney for medical care and finances
- Insurance coverage

If you need guidance, talk to a member of your healthcare team. You can be referred to a trained professional to guide you through the process.

Prevention of Kidney Cancer

Dr Sumant Gupta
Senior Consultant- Medical Oncology & BMT, HOD- Sarvodaya Cancer Institute, Faridabad

THE incidence of kidney cancer rises globally with the highest rates in developed countries. This demonstrates the impact of advanced diagnostic imaging but also rising prevalence of modifiable risk factors such as smoking, obesity and hypertension.

Based on current evidence smoking tobacco, obesity and hypertension remain established risk factors for kidney cancer. Handling the risk factors is very important for prevention of kidney cancer.

Quit Smoking

Smokers develop kidney cancer twice the rate of non-smokers. It is believed to cause about 30% of kidney cancers in men and about 25% in women.

Maintain a healthy body weight

People who are obese have an increased risk for many cancer types, including kidney cancer. Learn your body mass index (BMI) with a BMI calculator. A BMI of 25 to 29 indicates overweight; 30 or more is obese. Work to maintain a healthy weight. If you're overweight or obese, reduce the number of calories you consume each day and try to be physically active most days of the week.

Healthy Eating habits

Fruits, fibre-rich vegetables, coffee and physical activity may have a protective effect against kidney cancer but causal conclusions are not yet supported. Significantly, there is an increasing evidence of inverse association between moderate alcohol consumption. Certain analgesics and consumption of processed meat have been linked to increase development of renal cell carcinoma, although data are limited.

Keep Blood pressure under control

Antihypertensive medications as per doctor's prescription. Regular exercise and limited salt intake can help in maintaining B.P.

See a physician regularly

Routine check-ups with a primary physician can help detect and address risk factors such as high blood pressure, obesity and smoking. In addition, your physician may order an annual urinalysis, a urine test that can detect microscopic traces of blood in your urine — long before you would notice — that could indicate possible kidney cancer. (Blood in the urine has many causes, but you need an accurate diagnosis.)

Find out if you're exposed to certain toxins at work or at home

Some toxins that may increase the risk for kidney cancer include cadmium, asbestos, and trichloroethylene.

Family history:

Upto some extent hereditary factors have established link with kidney cancer hence, if any one of your close family member has kidney cancer, you should inform to your physician during regular routine check-up.

Treatment of Kidney Cancer

Dr Jyoti Wadhwa
Director, Division of Medical Oncology & Haematology, Medanta Cancer Institute , Medanta- The Medicity, Gurugram, Haryana

THERE are several treatment options available once the diagnosis of kidney cancer is confirmed. Kidney cancer is most often treated with surgery, targeted therapy, immunotherapy, or a combination of these treatments. Radiation therapy and chemotherapy are occasionally used.

Surgery: If the cancer has not spread beyond the kidneys, surgery to remove the tumor may be the only treatment needed. Surgery to remove the tumor may mean removing part or all of the kidney, as well as possibly nearby tissue and lymph nodes. Surgeries can be performed by traditionally open abdomen surgery or by using a laparoscopic (keyhole) approach or it could be robotic surgery.

Types of surgery used for kidney cancer include the following procedures:

Radical nephrectomy: Surgery to remove the tumor, the entire kidney, and surrounding tissue is called a radical nephrectomy. If nearby tissue and surrounding lymph nodes are also affected by the disease, a radical nephrectomy and lymph node dissection is performed. During a lymph node dissection, the lymph nodes affected by the cancer are removed. A radical nephrectomy is usually recommended to treat a large tumor when there is not much healthy tissue remaining.

Partial nephrectomy: A partial nephrectomy is the surgical removal of the tumor. This type of surgery preserves kidney function and lowers the risk of developing chronic kidney disease after surgery.

Non-surgical tumor treatments : Sometimes surgery is not recommended because of characteristics of the tumor or the patient's overall health. The following procedures may be recommended:

Radiofrequency ablation: Radiofrequency ablation (RFA) is the use of a needle inserted into the tumor to destroy the cancer with an electrical current.

Cryoablation: Cryoablation, also called cryotherapy or cryosurgery, is the freezing of cancer cells with a metal probe inserted through a small incision. The metal probe is placed into the cancerous tissue.

Therapies using medication

The types of systemic therapies used for kidney cancer include:

Immunotherapy: Immunotherapy is designed to boost the body's natural defenses to fight cancer. It aims to utilise patient's own immune cells to fight cancer. Immunotherapy has been a game changer in kidney cancer treatment.

Chemotherapy: Chemotherapy is the use of drugs to destroy cancer cells, usually by keeping the cancer cells from growing, dividing, and making more cells. Certain types of kidney cancers such as transitional cell carcinoma, also called urothelial carcinoma, and Wilms tumor are much more likely to be successfully treated with chemotherapy.

Targeted therapy: It targets cancer's specific genes, proteins, or the tumor microenvironment that contributes to cancer cell growth and survival. A combination of immunotherapy and targeted therapy has resulted in remarkable improvements in survival rates of kidney cancer. Patients are living longer and enjoying a much better quality of life too.

Radiation therapy: Radiation therapy is the use of high-energy x-rays or other particles to destroy cancer cells. Radiation therapy is not effective as a primary treatment for kidney cancer.

Kidney Cancer – A Curable Cancer with Excellent Long-Term Prognosis in Every Stage

Dr Vineet Govinda Gupta
Senior Consultant- Medical Oncology, Artemis Hospitals, Delhi

KIDNEY cancer is a common cancer in our country. Most patients with kidney cancer are detected when they show complaints like flank pain or blood in urine. This usually triggers tests such as urine testing and ultrasound/CT scan of the abdomen. Kidney cancers are usually detected at this point as tumors involving the normal kidney.

When someone is diagnosed with kidney cancer, there is often an element of panic and terror. Cancer is still believed by many to be a death sentence. However, the prognosis of kidney cancer is usually excellent. Most patients can be cured or lead long healthy lives via surgery, targeted therapy and/or immunotherapy.

The approximate survival of any kidney cancer patient depends mainly on three things: How far the cancer has spread (Also known as "Stage"), what kind of cancer it is (Also known as "subtype") and how aggressive the cancer is (Also known as "Risk Group").

Generally stage is identified by performing a CT or PET scan to check what locations the cancer is present at. Cancer may be confined to Kidneys, spread to local areas in the abdomen, or spread to distant organs like lung, liver, bone and brain. Stage is the most important factor which decides the prognosis of a patient. Cancer subtype refers to the biopsy findings in a patient, since kidney cancer is of different types with different outcome. Risk groups are certain other tests which inform the prognosis of a patient, such as:

1. Blood tests like haemoglobin, calcium, Lactate Dehydrogenase, White cell counts etc
2. Fitness level of the patient
3. Speed at which a cancer is growing or relapsing after surgery

Generally two-thirds of patients have cancer confined to kidney or involving regional areas. These patients have an excellent survival with surgery alone. Targeted therapy or immunotherapy can be given after surgery to further improve outcomes. 5-year survival for these patients is 70-90% and thus, the majority are completely cured.

Around one-third of patients have advanced/metastatic or stage 4 cancer which is spread to multiple organs. Just 10 years ago, these patients were considered to have a very poor prognosis and average survival used to be 1-1.5 years. However, in current times the prognosis of these patients is dramatically improved thanks to novel therapies (targeted therapy and immunotherapy).

Thanks to new treatments, the current expected survival of a patient with stage 4 cancer is now several years. In recent studies, the expected survival of stage 4 kidney cancer has been approximately as below:

- 2-year survival: 70-80%
- 3-year survival: 60-70%
- 5-year survival: 40-50%

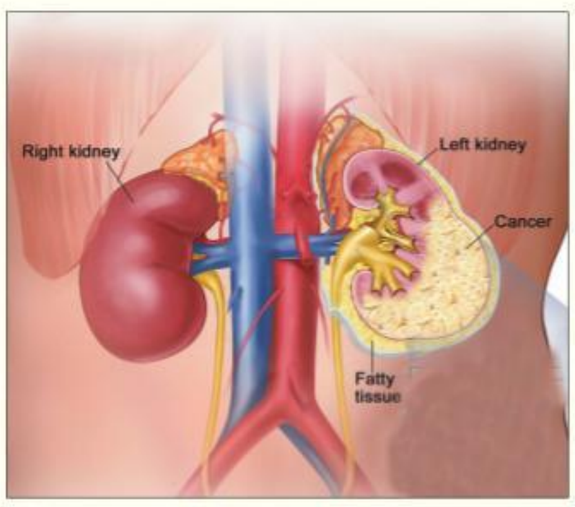
It is important to note that these numbers are increasing every year due to new anticancer treatments and technologies.

Compared to prior eras, these numbers appear almost miraculous to some. However, it is important to note that these are the fruits of intensive international research over almost the last two decades. Targeted therapies are treatments which specifically hit cancer cells where they differ from non-cancer cells. Immunotherapies are treatments which allow the immune system to target and kill cancer cells. Both these technologies are highly potent, more effective than chemotherapy with low side-effects. It is thanks to these advancements that even stage 4 cancer patients can be cured in the current era.

To conclude, any cancer patient, irrespective of stage, should not lose hope and face the challenge with confidence and strength. With proper treatment, excellent outcomes with low side-effects are possible in every kidney cancer patient.

Signs and Symptoms of Renal Cancer

Dr Vibhor Sharma
Senior Consultant- Medical Oncology, Paras Hospital, Gurugram



KIDNEY cancer is a disease of older adults. It is most commonly reported in people over the age of 60 years. It is more common in men than women. Upto 25 to 30% patients of kidney cancer may be asymptomatic. It may be accidentally detected during routine imaging tests like ultrasound. Kidney cancer symptoms don't often appear until the tumour has spread to other organs or until the tumour is large.

The common signs and symptoms of kidney cancer are:

Blood in the urine (Hematuria)

Hematuria, or blood in the urine is the most common symptom. However, it appears in only 40 to 50 percent of people with kidney cancer. The blood in the urine may be gross (if it leads to a perceptible change in colour of urine) or microscopic (if red blood cells can be seen in urine on microscopic examination, but urine appears normal coloured on visual inspection). Even a small amount of blood can cause a colour change such as pink, brownish, cola colour or even red. Gross hematuria is less common than microscopic hematuria. The presence of blood in urine can be intermittent.

Flank Pain or Lower back pain

Back pain is also a symptom of kidney cancer. It may be seen in upto 40% patients. It may be localized to one side of the flank or below the ribs on the back. The pain can range from a dull ache to a sharp stab. Back pain caused due to a cancerous lump may be persistent, while that caused due to a strained muscle may reduce with time. Back pain caused due to kidney cancer may appear in the advanced stages of the disease only.

A mass or lump around your abdomen

A mass or lump in the abdomen, flank, or back can also be a sign of kidney cancer. But kidney lumps are hard to feel, especially in the early stages. That is because the kidneys are located deep in the abdomen. The classic clinical triad of hematuria, flank pain, and a palpable flank mass occurs in only about 10% of cases and often indicates a more advanced stage of the disease.

Anaemia and fatigue

Fatigue is one of the most common symptoms of any type of cancer. Cancer-related fatigue is persistent and interferes with daily activities. Many people with kidney cancer have anaemia, or low red blood cell count. Normally the kidneys signal your body to make red blood cells. Cancer can interfere with that signalling.

Anaemia can also cause worsening fatigue, shortness of breath, dizziness, and pale looking skin.

Loss of appetite

Many cases of kidney cancer suffer from loss of appetite. This is usually seen in the advanced stage of the disease.

Unexpected weight loss

Unexpected weight loss, that is not caused due to exercise or restriction of diet, is the another common symptom of many cancers, including kidney cancer.

Fever: Fever may be a symptom of advanced kidney cancer. Long lasting fever, without signs of infection in the body, may be a signal of cancer.

Hypertension: High blood pressure may also be a sign of kidney cancer.

Swelling of the ankle or legs : Kidney cancer can manifest as painless swelling around the legs or ankle. The suspicion may be higher if the swelling appears on one side only. This happens due to blood clotting in the veins.

Varicocele: Rapid developement of enlarged veins around the testicles, known as varicocele, may be sign of kidney cancer. This may happen due to blood clotting in the veins or backward pressure applied due to a large tumour.

The above mentioned symptoms may be caused by kidney cancer or by other types of cancer, but commonly these are caused by non cancerous conditions. For example, blood in urine may be due to a stone in the urinary system or due to urinary tract infection. However, if you experience any of these signs or symptoms, you should consult your doctor.

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10 Manipur BJP rejects to fight on JD(U) tickets

JIMMY LEIVON
IMPHAL, FEBRUARY 3

A MINOR political outfit in Manipur, the Janata Dal (United) has suddenly come to spotlight in the run-up to the state Assembly elections, More than 10 disgruntled BJP ticket aspirants are on the list of 36 poll candidates the JD(U) released Wednesday. Allies in Bihar as well as at the Centre, both parties are separately contesting the polls in Manipur. Manipur JD (U) president Hangkhanpao Taihul said the party has gained popularity owing toits chief and Bihar CM Nitish Kumar. There is however a strong perception in political circles that being an NDA ally the JD(U) would be the "B-team of the BJP".

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

Akhilesh didn't listen to his father, won't listen to you: Shah to Jayant

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BULANDSHAHR, LONI, FEB 3

CAUTIONING RASHTRIYA Lok Dal (RLD) chief Jayant Chaudhary against tie-up with the Samajwadi Party (SP), Union Home Minister and senior BJP leader Amit Shah on Thursday said SP chief Akhilesh Yadav, who "did not listen to his father or uncle", will break the alliance with the RLD after coming to power.

"Jayant Chaudhary thinks if they win, Akhilesh will listen to him. I don't know what illusion he is under. A person who did not listen to his father or uncle, how will he listen to you? If by mistake, the SP forms the government, Jayant Chaudhary will be made to leave within three days, while Azam Khan will come out of jail," Amit Shah said at a rally of BJP supporters in Bulandshahr district's Anupshahr Assembly seat.

Amit Mehra

Shah at Loni, Thursday.

The BJP had earlier extended an olive branch to Chaudhary, saying its door are still open for him. In reply, Chaudhary had said he was not a coin that would flip. The RLD is the foremost party of Jats in western UP and the BJP fears a backlash from the community over the farm laws. In 2017, all seven assembly seats in Bulandshahr were won by the BJP.

The home minister claimed the mafia have migrated under the Yogi Adityanath government. "Uttar Pradesh and especially west UP is fed up with the mafia. In the entire west UP, is it possible for any mafia to bother women? Criminals are either in jail or in Akhilesh Yadav's candidate list," he claimed.

In another address from Ghaziabad district's Loni assembly seat, Shah said, "Now where is Azam Khan? Where is Ateeq Ahmed...Mukhtar Ansari?" Shah asked the crowd, which responded with "in jail", at the Ramleela Maidan here.

UP Capital contest holds several surprises, changes, new faces

LALMANI VERMA
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 3

THE HEART of Uttar Pradesh's fractious and bitterly contested election is seeing tremors of its own. The BJP and Samajwadi Party have quite a few surprises in their candidate list for the UP capital's nine Assembly seats.

In 2017, like the rest of the state, the BJP had swept Lucknow, winning eight of the seats, leaving the SP with 1. This was a complete contrast from 2012, when the SP had won seven of the nine seats, and the BJP and Congress one each. This time, both the main poll contenders have changed their candidates and fielded new faces.

Rajeshwar Singh with Yogi after filing nomination. *PTI*

■ **Lucknow Central:** In 2017, the BJP's Brajesh Pathak had won by a narrow margin of 5,094 votes. On Tuesday, the party changed the sitting MLA and Cabinet minister for a traders' leader-cum-municipal corporator, Rajnish Gupta.

Lucknow Central has a large Muslim Sunni population, of around one lakh. It also has around 25,000 Shia Muslims, among whom the BJP has support. Apart from these two groups, there are around 25,000 Yadav voters, and a substantial upper caste population.

The SP candidate from Lucknow Central is Ravidas Mehrotra, a Khatri, who won from here in 2012 but lost in 2017.

The BSP has fielded Ashish Kumar Srivastava, a Kayasth, and the Congress actor-turned-activist Sadaf Jafar, who was arrested during the anti-CAA protests in 2019. On Tuesday, Kanhaiya Kumar joined Jafar during her campaign.

■ **Lucknow Cantonment:** Brajesh Pathak has been moved here by the BJP. This is considered a safe seat for the party due to the dominance of Brahmins, Punjabis, Khatri and Pahadis. The BJP dropped sitting MLA Suresh Chandra Tiwari to accommodate Pathak, a fellow Brahmin. Among those rumoured to be in contention for the seat was Aparna Yadav, SP patron Mulayam Singh Yadav's daughter-in-law who recently joined the BJP. In 2017, Aparna had contested from Lucknow Cantonment and lost.

The SP's candidate here is relatively lower profile, a municipal corporator, Raju Gandhi, who is also an upper caste.

■ **Sarojini Nagar:** In this seat where a husband-wife duo belonging to the BJP fought openly, the embarrassed party has dropped both. Last time, Swati Singh had won this seat dominated by Muslims, followed by Dalits, Brahmins, Thakurs, Yadavs and other backward castes. She has been dropped along with estranged husband Dayashankar Singh. Both had started their campaigns hoping for a ticket.

The BJP's replacement for the seat is former Enforcement Directorate joint director Rajeshwar Singh, who took voluntary retirement days ago to take the political plunge.

However, the BJP's Thakur candidate faces a tough task as the SP nominee is Akhilesh Yadav confidant Abhishek Mishra, a Brahmin, who had finished second in Lucknow North in 2017. In 2012, Sarojini Nagar had been won by Brahmin SP candidate Sharda Pratap Shukla.

■ **Lucknow North:** The SP has gone with student leader Pooja Shukla, who is making her political debut. Her choice is surprising as in the BJP corner is heavyweight local leader and sitting BJP MLA Neeraj Bora.

The SP appears to be betting on the 1.25 lakh-odd Muslim voters in the seat. This makes the performance of BSP candidate Mohd Sarvar Malik crucial.

■ **Lucknow West:** SP candidate Arman is giving a challenge here to a new BJP face, Anjani Srivastava, and the BSP's Kayam Raza Khan. Kayasths, Brahmins and Muslims are in large numbers here, with the BJP winning this seat every time since 1989, barring 2012, when the SP had won. The BJP's sitting MLA, Suresh Kumar Srivastava, died of Covid complications. Anjani is of the same caste, Kayasth.

■ **Lucknow East:** The BJP has won this seat for long, including in 2012, when it lost in all other Lucknow constituencies. The party has fielded its sitting MLA and minister Ashutosh Tandon. The SP candidate is Anurag Bhadauriya.

■ **Mohanlalgaj (reserved):** This was the only Lucknow seat the BJP lost in 2017. It has fielded Amaresh Kumar, brother of the party's Malihabad (reserved) MLA, Jaya Devi.

■ **Bakshi ka Talab:** The BJP has replaced sitting MLA Avinash Trivedi, reportedly due to anti-incumbency, with another Brahmin face, Yogesh Shukla.

■ **Malihabad (reserved):** The Rawats are the dominant caste here, followed by Muslims, Vaishyas, Brahmins and Yadavs. The BJP has given ticket to sitting MLA Jaya Devi, who is the wife of Union Minister of State and Mohanlalganj MP Kaushal Kishore. The SP has fielded senior party leader Sushila Saroj.

SP state chief Naresh Uttam said all candidates have been decided by consensus, after consulting party leaders and taking "social equations" into consideration.

BJP state vice-president Dayashankar Singh said: "The winnablity of the candidates and social equations were the criteria." On the denial of a ticket to him from Sarojini Nagar, Singh said the party had selected a "popular person who was honest and acted strictly against criminals during his service in the police force".

BATTLE FOR PUNJAB

Wait nears end, Channi pulls ahead in Cong race for CM face

Announcement likely Sunday, CM winner in survey, say sources

KANCHAN VASDEV
CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 3

ALL INDICATIONS point towards the Congress naming Charanjit Singh Channi as its chief minister face, following a survey where reportedly most of the callers backed him. Rahul Gandhi is scheduled to address a virtual rally on February 6 when, leaders said, the announcement will be made.

Congress workers have been told to make the required arrangements so that the rally could be screened across the state. Sources said Congress general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal had sent out the message to leaders on Wednesday.

Congress sources said over 50 lakh people were contacted and asked about their preference between three choices: Channi, Punjab Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu, or not to name anyone.

The Congress had broken from tradition in announcing that it would name a CM face, during Rahul's last visit to the state on January 27. The Congress leader said they would consult party workers and the people.

Earlier, the Aam Aadmi Party picked its CM candidate for Punjab, Bhagwant Mann, after a tele-survey.

AICC in-charge Harish Chaudhary said they had proposed Rahul's virtual rally, where the CM name is expected, on February 6. "If that does not work, we will organise it on February 8. Either Ludhiana or Bathinda will be chosen as the venue," he said.

While considered a stop-gap arrangement to keep the peace in the chaos that followed Amarinder Singh's exit from Congress, Channi has proved a surprise hit. His popularity, plus the fact he is Punjab's first Dalit CM, which Congress has been celebrating, make it difficult for the party to jettison him now.

Sidhu, who has long been hankering for the post, is unlikely to take the snub well. The Punjab Congress chief, who left for the Vaishno Devi shrine in the midst of the campaign on Wednesday, returned to the state late Thursday evening.

ANI

Jaipal Singh

With Channi to the fore, Sidhu is unlikely to take the snub well.

Congress leaders are known to have been pushing the party to declare Channi as the CM candidate. Sources said that at a recent Zoom meeting, a senior Congress leader told party candidates to project Channi. Even his nomination from two Assembly seats, Chamkaur Sahib and Bhadaur, was a message that the party considered him a formidable leader who could not just win both constituencies but also boost the Congress around.

Cabinet minister Rana Gurjit Singh said they were not sure when the announcement regarding Channi would be made, but it should be done soon. "I want it made tomorrow. We need to declare him. With Channi as CM's face, we'll win 20-25 seats extra."

Incidentally, among those who seem to have conceded the race is over is Principal Strategic Adviser to Sidhu Mohd Mustafa. He is reported to have told people in Malerkotla that Channi will be the CM candidate.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

37 seats proving hard task for Amarinder, struggles to find names

KANCHAN VASDEV
CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 3

THREE MONTHS after he announced his political outfit, former Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh is struggling to find enough candidates for the 37 seats he is contesting in alliance with the BJP.

Singh's Punjab Lok Congress (PLC) has seen at least five leaders, including its general secretary Kamaldeep Singh Saini, opting to contest on the BJP's symbol, and has had to give back three seats allotted to it as it could not find names for them. Most of its candidates are political greenhorns, while some of Amarinder's top aides are no longer with him.

The Punjab Assembly has 117 seats in total.

After leaving the Congress over the chief minister change, Singh had repeatedly claimed that many more leaders would cross over to the PLC from the Congress closer to the elections. However, that has not happened.

VOTING ON FEBRUARY 20

That his partymen would prefer the BJP over the PLC symbol would be particularly galling for Singh, one of Punjab's tallest leaders. While Singh had led the Congress to a sweeping 77 seats in the 2017 elections, these polls are the first time that the BJP is contesting more than 22-23 constituencies in Punjab. Till they broke up in 2020, the BJP had deferred to the Akali Dal as the senior partner in Punjab. This time, at least 71 candidates are fighting on the BJP symbol.

The first blow for Singh, after leaving the Congress on November 2, was the decision of one of his seniormost aides, Rana Gurmit Singh Sodhi, to join the BJP rather than the PLC.

Later, the fledgling party had to return Raja Sansi, Zira and Nawanshahr constituency tickets to the BJP. This followed soon after Satvir Singh Pallijhikki, whom the PLC had given a ticket from Nawanshahr, chose to return to the Congress and take its offer from the seat instead. In Nakohar seat, the PLC had to replace its candidate, hockey Olympian Ajit Pal Singh.

Its candidate from Kotkapura, former BJP leader Dargesh Sharma, decided against contesting on PLC symbol and will be going with his parent party. The other PLC candidates who have opted for the BJP symbol include Prem Mittal, an ex-Akali MLA from Mansa who is fighting from Atamnagar; Jagmohan Sharma, ex-president of the District Congress Committee, Ludhiana, who is fighting from Ludhiana East; and Raj Numberdar, the candidate from Bathinda Urban. All four are urban seats.

With Punjab headed for a five-corner contest, this leaves the PLC and particularly Singh, who might be fighting his last election, in a precarious situation. Singh himself is sitting pretty in his own seat, the family pocket borough Patiala Urban.

Denying a dearth of candidates, Singh told *The Indian Express*: "We have fielded the best possible names and we are sure that we will win. We are the only party to have fielded SCs in two general constituencies."

He added that his candidates contesting on the BJP symbol was a strategic step. "They have opted for the BJP symbol because they are fighting in urban areas and this will get them the votes that would have gone to the BJP. Two BJP candidates in rural-dominated segments, like Om Parkash Babbar from Gidderbaha, have opted for our hockey and ball symbol."

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

I HEREBY DECLARE: 2017 VS 2022, PUNJAB

SITTING MINISTERS

Amrinder Singh Raja Warring (GIDDERBAHA)
2022: ₹14.78 crore
2017: ₹2.8 crore

Rana Gurmit Singh Sodhi (FEROZEPUR CITY)
2022: ₹17 crore
2017: ₹9.58 crore

Manpreet Badal (BATHINDA URBAN)
2022: ₹72.7 crore
2017: ₹40.28 crore

Om Parkash Soni (AMRITSAR CENTRAL)
2022: ₹28.34 crore
2017: ₹18.28 crore

Charanjit Singh Channi (BADHAUR, CHAMKAUR SAHIB)
2022: ₹9.44 crore
2017: ₹14.5 crore

Vijay Inder Singla (SANGRUR)
2022: ₹17.82 crore
2017: ₹16.50 crore

Randeep Singh Nabha (AMLOH)
2022: ₹14.23 cr
2017: ₹13.54 crore

Bharat Bhushan Ashu (LUDHIANA WEST)
2022: ₹9.38 crore
2017: ₹8.07 crore

Sukhbinder Singh Sarkaria (RAJASANSI)
2022: ₹11.2 crore
2017: ₹12.19 crore

Aruna Chaudhary DINANAGAR SC)
2022: ₹7.89 crore
2017: ₹5.15 crore

Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa (FATEHGARH CHURIAN)
2022: ₹6.69 crore
2017: ₹4.73 crore

Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa (DERA BABA NANAK)
2022: ₹5.11 crore
2017: ₹3.57 crore

Sangat Singh Gilzian (URMAR)
2022: ₹4.39 crore
2017: ₹3.47 crore

Gurkirat Singh Kotli (CONTESTING FROM KHANNA)
2022: ₹4.07 crore
2017: ₹2.16 crore

Raj Kumar Verka (AMRITSAR WEST)
2022: ₹3.16 crore
2017: ₹1.57 crore

Pargat Singh (JALANDHAR CANTONMENT)
2022: ₹3.15 crore
2017: ₹2.37 crore

OTHER HEAVYWEIGHTS

Capt Amarinder Singh (FORMER CM AND PLC CANDIDATE FROM PATIALA)
2022: ₹68.72 crore
2017: ₹48.31 crore

Parkash Singh Badal (FIVE-TIME CM, CONTESTING FROM LAMBI)
2022: ₹15.11 crore
2017: ₹14.49 crore

Navjot Singh Sidhu (PPCC PRESIDENT, CONTESTING FROM AMRITSAR EAST)
2022: ₹44.63 crore
2017: ₹45.90 crore

TRACKING COVID IN ELECTION-BOUND STATES

	UTTAR PRADESH	PUNJAB	UTTARAKHAND	GOA	MANIPUR
Deaths	23,277	17,360	7,581	3,717	2,054
Deaths Today	23	40	7	9	1
Cases	5,240	2,154	1,618	618	262
	11,529	3,910	3,893	1,794	461
	Jan 25 – Feb 3	Jan 25 – Feb 3	Jan 25 – Feb 3	Jan 25 – Feb 3	Jan 25 – Feb 3

POLITICS & KINDRED

In Uttarakhand, BJP, Cong give 20 per cent tickets to leaders' kin; 8 first-timers

AVANEESH MISHRA
DEHRADUN, FEBRUARY 3

RELATIVES OF leaders account for 20% of the candidates fielded by the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for the February 14 elections to the 70-member Uttarakhand Assembly. Of a total of 14 such candidates, the BJP has fielded 8, including 4 first-timers, while the Congress has nominated 6, including 4 first-timers.

The Congress has fielded Anupama Rawat, daughter of former chief minister and Congress campaign head Harish Rawat, from Haridwar Rural seat, against sitting BJP MLA Swami Yatishwaranand, who had defeated Harish in the 2017 polls.

From the Lansdowne seat, Congress candidate Anukriti Gusain Rawat, daughter-in-law of ex-minister Harak Singh Rawat, will fight against sitting BJP MLA Daleep Singh Rawat, son of party satrap Bharat Singh Rawat. A senior leader, Harak recently returned to the Congress along with Anukriti after being expelled by the BJP.

The Congress has given ticket to Sumit Hridayesh, son of party veteran late Indira Hridayesh, in the Haldwani seat against the BJP's Jogendrapal Singh Routela. By fielding Sumit, the party is hoping to retain this seat held by his mother three times earlier.

In the Kashipur constituency, the BJP has passed on the mantle from sitting MLA Harbhajan Singh Cheema to his son Trilok Singh Cheema. Harbhajan, who has been winning this seat since the first Uttarakhand Assembly polls in 2002, asked the ticket for his son due to his old age. To take on Trilok, the Congress has fielded Kunwar Narender Chand Singh, the son of senior party leader Karan Chand Singh Baba, who had represented the Nainital-Udhamsingh Nagar parliamentary constituency.

Following the demise of Harbans Kapoor, an eight-time BJP MLA from Dehradun Cantt Assembly seat, recently, the saffron party has fielded his wife Savita Kapoor from the seat. The party hopes to garner "sympathy" votes in this stronghold of Kapoor, a former minister and Speaker, who had also represented the seat in the UP Assembly four times before the creation of Uttarakhand.

Harak Singh Rawat with daughter-in-law Anukriti, the candidate from Lansdowne. *PTI*

Among other first timers in the fray is Kunwarni Devyani, who has been given a BJP ticket in the Khanpur seat from where her husband Kunwar Pranav Singh Champion has been a four-time party MLA. Devyani's father Mahendra Bhati and her father-in-law Narendra Singh had been ex-Uttar Pradesh MLAs.

The list of first-timers also includes the BJP candidate from Chakrata, Ram Sharan Nautiyal, the father of renowned singer Jubin Nautiya, who will take on the Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly, Pritam Singh.

Both the BJP and the Congress have also given tickets to several relatives of politicians, who had fought the elections earlier too. The BJP has nominated sitting Yamkeshwar MLA Ritu Khanduri Bhushan, the daughter of former CM Major General (Retd) Bhuwan Chandra Khanduri, from Kotdwar. It has renominated the sitting MLA and son of ex-CM Vijay Bahuguna, Saurabh Bahuguna, from his Sitarganj seat.

The BJP has also given ticket to ex-minister late Prakash Pant's wife Chandra Pant from Pithoragarh, and ex-MLA late Surendra Singh Jeena's brother Mahesh Jeena from Salt, who had won the seats, respectively, in the 2019 and 2021 bypolls.

Former MLA Sanjeev Arya, who switched to the Congress along with his father Yashpal Arya from the BJP a few months ago, is contesting from Nainital as a Congress nominee.

The wife of veteran leader late Surendra Rakesh, Mamta Rakesh, an MLA from Bhagwanpur, is again contesting from the seat as a Congress candidate.

FROM THE GALLERY

FROM THE CHAIR

RAJYA SABHA

"The debates yesterday were marked by effective assertions of the achievements of the ruling party on one side, and the contestation by the Opposition members on the other side. This is an advantage of smooth functioning of the House. I hope this spirit will continue to prevail for the remaining part of the session and also for the future."

RAJYA SABHA CHAIRMAN M VENKAIAH NAIDU

LOK SABHA

"It is not an insult... You can speak in any language."

SPEAKER OM BIRLA, Speaker Om Birla when Opposition MPs pointed out that the ministers should answer the questions in English in the same language.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"You mistrust the annadaatas, our farmers, who repeatedly told you, don't bring in the farm laws... you mistrust the Jats, the Sikhs."

MAHUA MOITRA, Trinamool Congress MP during the debate on motion of thanks of President's Address.

5 QUESTIONS

TMC LAWMAKER **JAWHAR SIRCAR** SPEAKS TO **AVISHEK G DASTIDAR** ABOUT MP'S FIRST SPEECH IN RAJYA SABHA

You made a connection between the wealth gap and unemployment in your maiden speech in Parliament today…Can you explain that?

When we look at the numbers, we look at the existing inequity in the country, with the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer, and the figures of unemployment... Data shows that the labour participation rate is falling and now stands at 40 per cent. This means that 60 per cent Indians are not benefitting from the labour force and absolute unemployment affects 6 crore Indians. What this shows is that the economic and legal structure of the country is weighted in favour of upper class. I call it 'Make in Capitalism'.

What are the indices that most exhibit the economic deterioration that you have mentioned?

In an answer to a question that I posed yesterday, the Education minister said that the education spending was 4.3 per cent of the GDP. But the economic survey says that this figure is actually much less. Out of the 4.3 per cent, 3.1 per cent is contributed by states which are already cash strapped... If the government really wants to improve education, then at least double your spending and bring it up to 2 per cent.

You also talked about the health sector…

The other sector that shows how the country is doing is that of Health, which is 1.2 per cent of the GDP, despite Covid... ridiculously low.

What is the issue of paucity of IAS officers that you raised??

I said that IAS officers simply don't want to work with you, Mr. Modi. That is because bureaucrats are treated shabbily by this administration.

You appeared to echo what Rahul Gandhi said about a union of states...

I have not read Rahul Gandhi's speech. But the fact remains that this government is trying to homogenise the country. Mr Modi does not seem to understand the nature of India... He has to understand that he can't keep using force, especially in a nation that is pluralistic.. The CBI and ED are used as instruments of political vendetta.

GREETINGS, IN SESSION

FInance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar greet each other, at Parliament during the Budget session, Thursday. *Anil Sharma*

Govt never deliberately delayed appointments of judges: Rijiju

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

THE GOVERNMENT has "never deliberately" delayed the appointments of judges, instead it has carried out "due diligence" to ensure that only those who are fit to hold the posts make the cut, Union minister of law and justice Kiren Rijiju told the Rajya Sabha on Thursday.

Rijiju also said he has been pushing the Supreme Court and High Court collegiums to give preferences to women and those from backward classes while recommending the names for judges' appointments.

"The government, on its own deliberately, never held up any appointment cases. Government has to do due diligence while appointing judges because while appointing the judges we have to ensure that he is fit to be a judge in the court. This is very important. And then, all the cases which then come to us has to follow a process... Some of the names are with the Collegium in the Supreme Court. Some of the names are with government and this is a well-established process... And we don't make any delay on our part just because we don't want to make any kind of judgment on our own, but only to look after the issue of appointing only the qualified judges," Rijiju said.

Chief Justice of India N V Ramana has spoken several times in the past about the need to facilitate the appointment of judges, including clearance to recommendations by the Collegium for HC vacancies, to nullify the persistent challenge of judicial vacancies. The CJI, speaking at an event in December 2021, appreciated the government's efforts in appointing judges in recent months, but also urged the law ministry to clear some of the pending recommendations.

On Thursday, Rijiju was responding to Biju Janata Dal (BJD) lawmaker Prasanna Acharya, whose query was supplementary to a question raised by CPI(M) MP John Brittas on the number of women judges currently appointed to the Supreme Court and the HCs.

There are 83 women judges out of the sanctioned judicial strength of 1,098 in the high courts, Rijiju said. In the Supreme Court, there are four women judges against a total capacity of 34. The minister said three of the four women judges were appointed to the top court after he took over as law minister in July 2021.

"We have been stressing, personally I have been asking the Collegium led by the CJIs of SC and HCs that while recommending names for appointment of judges preferences be given to women, backward classes, SC or STs," he said.

CJI Ramana too, last year, advocated for 50 per cent reservation for women in judiciary.

Need to shed 'Indira is India' idea: Naqvi hits out at Rahul Gandhi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

THE ALLEGATION that the government has created two Indias reflects the "Indira is India and Congress is the country" line of thinking, Union Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi Thursday hit out at Congress MP Rahul Gandhi over his Lok Sabha speech during the debate over the motion of thanks to the President's address.

Naqvi said since taking charge as the Prime Minister in 2014, Narendra Modi has "restored the dignity" of the PMO, which, he alleged, was being remote-controlled during the tenure of the Congress-led UPA governments. He made the remarks while speaking on the motion in the Rajya Sabha.

"It has been said that there are two Indias. It is beyond my understanding as I believe India is one... we need to shed the 'Indira is India and India is Indira' or Congress is country and the country is Congress line of thinking," Naqvi said. "PMO was being run from someplace else and cabinet decisions used to be torn and thrown away," Naqvi added, in an oblique reference to the 2013 incident of Rahul Gandhi publicly rebuking the UPA government over an ordinance to save convicted legislators from disqualification.

CPM WRITES TO CHAIRMAN NAIDU

RS disallows MPs' amendment bids, Opp asks why, how

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

THE DECISION of the Rajya Sabha Secretariat against admitting amendments proposed by MPs to Motion of Thanks to the President's Address on the Pegasus spyware issue has triggered a political controversy, with CPI(M) writing to Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu and expressing displeasure.

While the CPI(M) sought a ruling on it, Congress member Shaktisinh Gohil also questioned the decision.

In his letter to Naidu, CPI(M) leader in Rajya Sabha Elamaram Kareem mentioned that the Secretariat's decision to disallow amendments proposed by him and some other MPs on the Pegasus issue and management of Covid-19 situation by the government "could create an impression among the public that the Rajya Sabha Secretariat deliberately excluded the Amendments, which deal with incidents that could expose the Union Government".

Besides Kareem and his party colleagues John Brittas and V Sivadasan, one of the 10 amendments proposed by Gohil, too, was regarding the alleged misuse of Pegasus. That amendment was also not admitted.

Sources said one of the amendments proposed by Shiv Sena's Priyanka Chaturvedi was on surveillance equipment purchased by the government for alleged misuse against citizens. While Chaturvedi did not specifically name Pegasus, that amendment, too, has not been admitted.

At the end of the debate, the admitted amendments are put to vote. An MP whose amendment has been admitted has the right to seek division of votes after a voice vote. The final list of 80 amendments moved by members were circulated yesterday.

Gohil told *The Indian Express* that many matters that are sub judice are still discussed in Parliament. "For instance, BJP used to raise the issue of 2G spectrum licence allocation in Parliament. That issue was also in the court then," the Congress leader said. "I agree nothing should be said that can influence a case which is in the court, but amendments proposed to the President's Address should be accepted. It was wrong (to disallow them)."

Kareem called it an "unilateral action", and "completely undemocratic and unethical".

He said there was an instruction that only 10 amendments from an MP will be considered on the Motion of Thanks. "I submitted 10 amendments, mentioning many drawbacks of the government which were not mentioned in the President's Address. Unfortunately, only eight amendments among these are included in the list of admitted amendments," he said.

CPI(M) MP Elamaram Kareem

He said the amendments disallowed mention of Pegasus and the Centre's "failure in effectively dealing with the pandemic" and formulating a comprehensive vaccine policy. "It is understood that many other Members are also having the same issue, where amendments on these subjects were disallowed categorically," he said. Kareem said it is " unfortunate and condemnable that such a decision has been taken, violating the basic right of a Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha). These amendments reflect the concerns of people and being their representative, it is our duty to raise these on the floor of the House."

Kareem argued that "nowhere in the list of admitted Amendments can we find the word Pegasus or a sentence regarding the state-sponsored illegal surveillance over the people. Points that could expose the Union Government regarding their failure in management of the pandemic are also excluded".

He maintained that it is for the House to decide whether these amendments are to be considered. "We can debate and discuss these on the floor of the House. It can always be voted, and rejected..."

He said, "I request a ruling from the Chair that in what manner and on what grounds the Secretariat should consider or disallow the set of amendments proposed by a Member."

Interestingly, Lok Sabha has admitted amendments proposed by MPs related to Pegasus. "Only in RS this categorical exclusion has happened," Kareem said.

Opposition targets BJP over economy, Budget, polarisation

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

OPPOSITION PARTIES united in Parliament on Thursday to target the central government on issues across the political spectrum including the wealth gap between the rich and the poor, the Union Budget 2022-23, and polarisation in the country.

Congress Rajya Sabha MP Digvijay Singh said during the Motion of Thanks on the President's address that the Modi government did not keep a single promise it had made before in the 2014 national election. "In the past seven years the wealth gap has increased – the rich have gotten richer and the poor, poorer. One the other hand the unity in diversity has been disrupted," Singh said. He also criticised some of the announcements made during the Union Budget 2022-23 – presented by finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday.

"Why don't you impose a super-rich tax on those whose income multiplied during this Covid period," he asked. "During the UPA, 23 crore people were brought out of poverty. Under the Modi government, 22 crore people have been pushed back into poverty," he said, calling the Budget anti-farmer and anti-poor. On the Haridwar Dharam Sansad meeting in December, where several religious leaders allegedly made hate speeches, the Congress leader questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's silence and said the BJP government was trying to brand one community as "anti-national".

Trinamool Congress MP Jawhar Sircar spoke about government's National Monetisation Plan and the 1.75 lakh crore disinvestment target. He said: "Who has authorised you to sell the family silver? You have not earned it."

Parties such as TRS and BJD – which don't always oppose the BJP in Parliament – too hit out at the government. TRS MP K Keshava Rao said that there has been an increase in hate speeches. "Today our very polity, the idea of India is under threat," he said, adding that the division between the secular Indian and radical nationalists had sharpened to a degree that they may no longer be able to reconcile. "I am speaking not as a politician but as a citizen. The polarisation may pay off for you today, but their minds will be so divided that you will not be able to bring them back together," he said in Rajya Sabha.

BJD's Sasmit Patra alleged that the Centre was favouring BJP states. "Our CM (Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik) has been asking that 6 lakh tribal families be included in the PM Awaas Yojana but for the past three years, the Awas portal has been shut. It only opens for states like Karnataka," Patra said.

Mahua: Govt wants to alter history, it mistrusts present and fears future

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

THE NDA government is "fearful of the future" and it "mistrusts the present", Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra told the Lok Sabha Thursday as she tore into the BJP-led NDA government over issues ranging from the country's pluralistic character to the rejection of tableaux from several states for this year's Republic Day parade.

While President Ram Nath Kovind, in his opening address for the Budget Session of Parliament, spoke about freedom fighters, it was just "lip service", she said.

Participating in the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, Moitra referred to the government's recent announcement of installing a statue of Subhas Chandra Bose beneath the canopy at India Gate and asked if the freedom fighter would have approved of the Haridwar Dharam Sansad, in which hate speeches were allegedly made.

"This government wants to alter history. They are fearful of the future and they mistrust the present. The President, early on in his address, speaks about freedom fighters who secured India's rights but this is just lip service," the Trinamool Congress lawmaker said in Lok Sabha. Stating that the government was "fearful" of a nation that is "comfortable in its own skin", Moitra said that it was time for the people to save the country.

Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra outside Parliament on Thursday. *UNI*

As Moitra continued with her fiery speech, Lok Sabha chair Rama Devi asked the TMC to calm down and speak with "less anger". Moitra said that while the government talks of freedom fighters, but in reality, recalling India's past -- which is one of plurality and secularism -- makes the BJP government insecure.

Critical of the rejection of the Republic Day tableaux of West Bengal, which featured Netaji, Moitra alleged that the government has "reinvented" Vinayak Damodar Savarkar as a freedom fighter.

The TMC-led West Bengal government was among at least three states that expressed disappointed over their state tableaux not being chosen for the Republic Day parade. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, at the time, said that the selection of tableaux was done according to the norms.

Steam over water scheme: Allies BJP, JD(U) face off in Lok Sabha

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3:

THE SEEMINGLY intensifying discord between National Democratic Alliance (NDA) allies BJP and JD(U) played out in Lok Sabha on Thursday when a senior member from each took pot shots at the other over the Jal Jeevan Mission, the Union government's flagship programme.

Members of the two parties, which run a coalition government in Bihar, disagreed over credit for the drinking water scheme implemented in the state.

While BJP's Rajiv Pratap Rudy wanted Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekawat to tell the House why Bihar failed to draw "a single rupee" from Rs 6,600 crore allotted to it, fellow lawmaker Rajiv Ranjan Lalan Singh, who is also JD(U)'s national president, argued that the state had implemented the scheme even before the Centre announced its programme.

Janata Dal (United) and BJP leaders have in the past, too, publicly expressed their differences over the way Central schemes are implemented in Bihar.

During Question Hour, Rudy said, "We have our own government in Bihar, so I would not like to say much. Last year, the Centre allocated Rs 6,600 crore for the scheme, but it (Bihar) has drawn zero. It has not taken a single rupee from the central government. I would like to know what the minister (Shekhawat) did to upset the Bihar government that it is not taking any money."

Stating that water is a State subject, Shekhawat said state governments make the schemes, implement and operate them, as well as maintain them.

"Under PM Modi's scheme, 50 per cent of funds is given by the Centre. Bihar has a scheme — 'Har Ghar Nal' — started earlier, and according to its data, 90 per cent of the state's population has been provided with piped water," he said.

Shekhawat said, "Bihar government has not sought money, nor has it given in writing that it did not require money. If the state demands, the Centre will release money."

Lalan Singh, who had maintained silence during the last session, when the lawmakers from both parties got into an argument over the construction of roads in Bihar, said: "Rudy-ji tried to create some confusion here. In fact, the Bihar government had started the scheme in 2015 and has been running it since then. If he wants to talk about special status to the state, I can reply to that, too."

He added, "The honourable PM has already expressed his happiness over the performance of Bihar in the piped water scheme."

The JD(U) has repeatedly sought special category status for Bihar over the years.

Shekhawat pointed out that in 2015 the Centre had funded the state on drinking water schemes under the National Rural Water Project scheme. He said the state was granted approximately Rs 2,000 crore in the last two years for the programme.

Thursday's face-off between the allies comes two days after senior JD (U) leader and party's parliamentary board president Upendra Kushwaha termed the Union Budget as "disappointing".

Earlier, Bihar Water Resources Minister Sanjay Kumar Jha had disputed the Centre's figures on the Jal Jeevan Mission dashboard, saying only 8.44 lakh tap water connections have been provided in Bihar under the Central scheme for rural households, and not 1.46 crore, as shown on the dashboard.

He contended that the remaining connections were provided under two other schemes, including the state's 'Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal scheme.

EXPLAINED

Note of disharmony

THE LOK Sabha is increasingly becoming a forum for both BJP and JD(U) to take out their differences publicly. The Winter Session also saw MPs from both sides get into a war of words over development works in Bihar. The discomfort BJP MPs are showing is an indication of their unhappiness over CM Nitish Kumar's functioning, and possibly his leadership. They want BJP central leadership to intervene and make changes in Bihar's power-sharing formula.

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL

GREEN CAUSE

NITIN GADKARI, who has earned praise from fellow party men as well as MPs from other parties for the pace in highway construction now appears to be keen on championing green initiatives. The Union minister, who has taken initiatives in production of bio-fuel and organic farming, makes it a point to show to visitors a room heater that runs on ethanol at his residence in the national capital. The fireplace burner, which looks like a gas burner, is kept in the visitors' room. According to Gadkari, it works for 6-7 hours with one litre of bio ethanol. The heater produces no carbon and he argues that it would be necessary to adopt such items as the nation is moving towards zero-emission and cheaper sources of energy.

LANGUAGE BARRIER

UNION MINISTER Jyotiraditya Scindia was at the receiving end of Opposition's anger on Thursday when he refused to switch to English while answering an MP from Tamil Nadu, who asked him a question in English. When DMK's Veluswamy P asked him whether the government would consider giving an airport to Palani to facilitate Hindu pilgrims under the UDAN scheme, Scindia replied in Hindi that it was not connected to the original question about Jewar airport. But Congress MP Shashi Tharoor was not amused. He said the minister can speak both English and Hindi and he should answer in English to an MP from Tamil Nadu. Tharoor said it was an insult to the MP. But Scindia said: "Why would there be a problem if I speak in Hindi? There are translators. It is very strange." DMK's Dayanidhi Maran then reminded Tharoor that "he (Scindia) has joined the BJP".

NO REWRITE, PLEASE

WHEN TRS MP K Keshav Rao reiterated Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao's stand on changing the Constitution as "secularism is under threat" under the present regime, Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge interceded, saying that if the TRS wanted to change the Constitution, then Congress will be the first to oppose it. "We will never accept it," he said. Kharge said amendments could be brought in instead. The Chief Minister had mooted the proposal to rewrite the Constitution at a press conference held in reaction to the Union Budget, where he said it was required to prevent the Centre from usurping states' powers.

PRIVATE SECTOR JOBS

HC stays Haryana law granting 75% quota for locals

VARINDER BHATIA & JAGPREET SINGH SANDHU
CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 3

IN A relief to industry groups in Haryana, the Punjab and Haryana High Court on Wednesday granted an interim stay on a law providing 75 per cent reservation in the private sector for those who have a domicile in the state.

A bench of Justices Ajay Tewari and Pankaj Jain passed the order on a petition filed by the Faridabad Industries Association and other associations from Haryana.

The Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Act, 2020, which came into force on January 15, provides 75 per cent reservation in the private sector to job seekers who are "domiciled in State of Haryana". The law covers private companies, societies, trusts and partnership firms and applies to jobs that offer a maximum gross monthly salary or wages of up to Rs 30,000. Central or state governments, or any organisation owned by these governments are outside the ambit of the Act.

Details of the order were yet to be released by the High Court.

The law had been opposed by industry associations on the ground that it would affect their business and make them less competitive.The Gurgaon Industrial Association, one of the petitioners in the case, had earlier contended that the "sons of the soil" law was an infringement on the constitutional rights of employers. They also argued that private sector jobs are purely based on the employees' skills and analytical bent of mind and that citizens of India have the constitutional right to seek jobs in any part of the country.

Reacting to the court order, Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala tweeted, "We shall continue to fight for employment opportunities of Haryanvi youth #75% reservation."

Providing 75 per cent reservation in private sector jobs for those who have a state domicile was a key poll promise of Dushyant's Jannayak Janta Party (JJP), which is part of the BJP-led government in the state.

JJP secretary general and Dushyant's younger brother Digvijay Chautala said, "Punjab and Haryana High Court has only issued a stay order on this Act and sought a reply from the state government. It is a routine procedure. Moreover, it's not just Haryana; several other states have implemented such laws. We shall implement it in Haryana too and the state government will relentlessly contest in favour of ensuring 75 per cent reservation to the youth of the state."

Reacting to the court's interim stay, Leader of Opposition and former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda said the BJP-JJP government had failed to "defend before the courts its own jumla of providing 75 per cent reservation to local youth".

The law was passed by the Haryana Vidhan Sabha on March 2, 2021. On November 6, it was notified by the State Labour Department and came into effect in the State from January 15, 2022. As part of the law, eligible candidates are required to register themselves on a designated online portal. Companies can make recruitments only through this portal. FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

NOMINATION TODAY

Yogi Adityanath with Anurag Thakur in Lucknow on Thursday. *Vishal Srivastav*

UP CM says no riots, brought down crime rate

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 3

A DAY before filing nomination from Gorakhpur Urban seat, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday presented a "report card" listing "the achievements" of his government in the past five years and said that no communal riots took place during his term.

Adityanath also accused the previous governments of Samajwadi Party and BSP of indulging in favouritism in the name of development.

Presenting the report card at state BJP headquarters here in presence of Deputy CM Dinesh Sharma and Union minister Anurag Thakur, Adityanath cited figures from the National Crime Records Bureau to claim that the crime graph in the state came down in his tenure.

"In the BSP regime (2007-2012), there were 364 incidents of riots. More than 700 riots were recorded in the previous SP regime (2012-17). Since 2017, no riots or terrorist activities have taken place in the state. Yet, the government isn't quiet. We are building an Anti-Terrorism Squad Centre at sensitive places in view of national security," he said, adding that improved law and order has made the state a preferred destination for investors.

Adityanath also accused the previous SP, BSP governments of failing to undertake police reforms and its modernisation and alleged that the two parties wanted to use the police department as their "personal tool".

Stalin praises Rahul House speech 'on behalf of all Tamils'

New Delhi: A day after Rahul Gandhi argued in Lok Sabha that the Centre cannot suppress languages, cultures and histories of states and cited the example of Tamil Nadu, Chief Minister M K Stalin Thursday thanked him for his "rousing speech in Parliament", and for voicing the "long-standing arguments" of Tamils.

The two leaders share a warm relationship, and back in 2018 the DMK chief had first proposed Rahul's name as the Opposition's PM candidate for 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Last year, he had asked Rahul to take the leadership role to unite opposition parties to take on BJP.

On Thursday, Stalin tweeted, "Dear Rahul Gandhi, I thank you on behalf of all Tamils for your rousing speech in Parliament, expressing the idea of Indian Constitution in an emphatic manner. You have voiced the long-standing arguments of Tamils in Parliament, which rest on the unique cultural and political roots that value Self Respect." ENS

Rahul in Raipur: BJP leading India on path of danger, pitting one state against another

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

ACCUSING BJP of spreading hate and making people fight among themselves, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday said the saffron party's ideology is pushing India towards a dangerous path, making "one state fight with another, and (pitting) one religion against another".

Addressing a function on Science College ground in Chhattisgarh capital Raipur, Rahul said BJP's criticism of what the country has achieved in 70 years under successive Congress governments is an insult to its farmers and labourers, and not of his party.

During his visit, Rahul launched the state government's ambitious "Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Bhoomihin Krishi Majdoor Nyay Yojana" scheme, under which landless labourers in rural areas will get financial aid of Rs 6,000 per year in three instalments, and 'Rajiv Yuva Mitan Club Scheme'.

He also attended an event to lay foundation stone of the proposed 'Sevagram' and 'Chhattisgarh Amar Jawan Jyoti' in Naya Raipur.

CM Bhupesh Baghel and Rahul Gandhi in Raipur. *Express*

"Yesterday, I said in Lok Sabha that there are two or three big challenges India faces.... The BJP, and its ideology, is taking our country towards a danger — the biggest threat today is that BJP is dividing the country into two (the rich versus the poor)," he said.

He said, "They (BJP) have spread hate in the country.... The powers outside India look at us and say, India is getting weak."

"The BJP and RSS want only one ideology to rule over all states, all languages and India's history. That can never happen," he said. "For example, people of other states cannot tell what the culture of Chhattisgarh should be and how people should live here..."

Referring to the face-off with PLA in Galwan Valley, Rahul said, "The Chinese army could enter Ladakh because BJP and our Prime Minister said after their (PLA's) entry into our territory that no one had entered. Our work and the work of patriotism is to strengthen the country, its poor; (our work is) to unite the country, not spread hatred." So, "this is not a fight between one party and another — it is a battle of ideology".

Addressing the event, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said, "It is a happy coincidence, as MGNREGA was launched on this day 16 years ago. And today, Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Bhumiheen Krishi Mazdoor Nyay Yojana is being launched in Chhattisgarh."

The first instalment of Rs 2,000 was deposited into accounts of nearly 3.55 lakh landless families on the occasion.

Meanwhile, family members of Baghel met Rahul at a hotel here before he concluded his day-long visit to Raipur. Baghel tweeted pictures of Rahul with his family members and wrote, "there were two occasions and one was our special guest. One (occasion) is our wedding anniversary and the other one is preparation for our son's marriage. Thank You @RahulGandhi ji."

EXPRESS INVESTIGATION (FROM PAGE ONE)

'Piecemeal plantations can't compensate for loss of forests'

project to bring "surplus water" to Bundelkhand for irrigation, drinking water, flood control and hydel power — earlier this week, the Budget earmarked Rs 1,400 crore.

But work cannot start anytime soon: KBLP's wildlife clearance (WLC) is sub-judice; its powerhouse needs a fresh environmental clearance (EC); and it has been trying to sidestep a crucial precondition for forest clearance (FC).

A final FC is issued only on compliance of the conditions set out in the preliminary or Stage-I FC. A key condition of KBLP's Stage-I FC issued in 2017 requires Madhya Pradesh to compensate for diversion of 60.17 sq km forest land by adding an equal parcel of revenue land to the Panna tiger reserve.

Since 2018, the Ministry of Jal Shakti has repeatedly informed the Environment Ministry that Madhya Pradesh could identify only 42.06 sq km of revenue land, and that it may consider "double of the remaining 18.11 sq km ie 36.22 sq km degraded forestland" to meet the 60.17 sq km commitment.

Bhopal Singh, director general, National Water Development Agency (NWDA) under the Jal Shakti Ministry, told *The Indian Express* that the proposal was "still under consideration".

Other key FC pre-conditions, such as declaring three sanctuaries as Panna's satellite cores, re-counting trees to be cut, revising the project's cost-benefit analyses to justify its viability, are still pending.

"Recounting the trees will be expensive as the project area is very large. We are working on adding the sanctuaries to Panna but there is not much progress yet," said Sunil Agarwal, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Land Management), MP.

NWDA's Singh, however, assured that the Government would "certainly meet the project deadline".

Point to note: the Supreme Court is yet to decide on its Central Empowered Committee's 2019 report that sought thorough studies on the environmental impact of KBLP which, it said, "poses a serious challenge to the very objective of the legislature in enacting" wildlife and forest laws.

3,000-MW Dibang multipurpose project, Arunachal Pradesh

After rejecting it twice in July 2013 and April 2014, the Environment Ministry's Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) recommended the project for preliminary approval in September 2014. The project is part of India's Act East Policy and key to establishing prior-use claim on water resources over China.

One of the conditions for the green signal required Arunachal to secure the ecological diversity of the Dibang river basin by declaring the right bank of the proposed reservoir as a national park.

However, in October 2019, when the Environment Ministry sought an update on this condition, the state's response in January 2020, records show, remained silent on that specific query.

And yet, the Environment Ministry granted the final forest clearance to Dibang in March 2020.

Senior officials in the Arunachal Pradesh Forest department and the Environment Ministry did not respond to emails and phone calls from *The Indian Express* seeking comment.

"Clearance for Dibang was conditional on giving protection to the river basin as a national park. If that was not feasible, the matter was to be sent back to the FAC. The Ministry cannot unilaterally decide to condone non-compliance and issue final clearance," said conservation biologist Firoz Ahmed, who was an expert member of the FAC that recommended the project in 2014.

2,000-MW Lower Subansiri hydel project, Arunachal-Assam border

For this project, strategic in the race over water resources with China, a key condition for clearance was laid down by the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) and reiterated by the Supreme Court in 2004: protection of reserved forests in the catchment and the submergence area by declaring a national park or sanctuary. Central Water Commission reports estimated that area at over 900 sq km.

As the Arunachal Pradesh government dragged its feet, the Environment Ministry in 2007 quantified the area as "not less than 500 sq km". But citing local opposition, the state said in 2008 that it could notify only 168 sq km as a sanctuary.

The Ministry agreed and asked the state to bring the remaining 332 sq km reserved forests under the category of conservation reserve, which is essentially a buffer zone. The Supreme Court also accepted the modification in 2009.

But records investigated by *The Indian Express* show that until now, only 127 sq km in two unconnected patches have been notified as sanctuaries in the Subansiri basin: 49 sq km of Ringba-Roba in 2013 and 78 sq km of the Kamala reserved forest in 2015. The conservation reserve has not been marked at all.

Top officials in the Arunachal Pradesh Forest department and the Environment Ministry did not respond to emails and phone calls from *The Indian Express* seeking comment — the first questionnaire was sent on December 8, 2021.

On December 16, 2021, the Environment Ministry wrote to the state, asking it to immediately furnish the compliance report of FC conditions pending since 2004.

"This is a classic fait accompli where you allow project work to begin on tough conditions which are forgotten soon after. Penal action for non-compliance is discouraged to protect big investments," said M K Ranjitsinh, who was part of the NBWL in 2003.

Ken-Betwa link "poses a serious challenge to the very objective of the legislature in enacting" green laws: SC panel. *Express*

Mopa International Airport, Goa

The Supreme Court suspended Environmental Clearance in 2019 for what it called "non-disclosure of vital information" on this "zero-carbon" project conceived to handle 13 million passengers per year and relieve pressure on Dabolim airport. While seeking EC, the Goa government had claimed — inaccurately — there were no forest, lakes, ecologically sensitive areas or rivers within 15 km of the proposed site.

The stay was lifted in January 2020 after Goa offered to plant 10 trees for every tree axed at the project site in Mopa. That worked out to 5.5 lakh saplings for 54,676 trees and the state claims to have achieved over 80 per cent of the target in less than two years.

Here's the catch.

Since the trees felled for the airport were on non-forest land, the state did not have to stick to the minimum plot size of 5 hectares while finding land for plantation or notify those plots as forestland. The saplings were instead "successfully distributed" among residents, NGOs and institutions across the state — or just about anyone to meet the target.

"We will plant 50,000 saplings at the airport site during landscaping once the work is complete. Of the remaining 5 lakh, already 4.6 lakh saplings have been distributed by the Goa State Biodiversity Board (GSBB)," said Suresh Shanbhogue, Director, Civil Aviation, Goa.

Few are convinced. "Such piecemeal, scattered plantations cannot compensate for the loss of 50,000 trees in a cluster which constituted a natural forest. Anyway, who is going to audit the number of saplings actually distributed and their survival rate across thousands of locations?" asked Claude Alvares, director, Goa Foundation.

GSBB member secretary Pradip Sarmokadam said that an undertaking was obtained from every recipient of free saplings, and that the Institute of Wood Services Technology (IWST) has been engaged to monitor survivability.

IWST director MP Singh said the success of monitoring would depend on the quality of distribution records. Sources in the institute said Goa is yet to provide "coordinates of those micro plantations — often a single plant at one location — spread all over the state".

The state, meanwhile, is already 46 per cent short of its overall compensatory afforestation goals.

Kulda coal mine, Odisha & Tamnar Thermal Plant, Chhattisgarh

The projects serve national interest "in view of the shortage of coal in the country and the resulting power crisis". In February 2018, when Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) applied for capacity expansion at its mine in Odisha's Kulda, the Environment Ministry expressed "deep concern over...the status of statutory compliances" before allowing it "in national interest" for one year.

The EC was extendable subject to compliance of conditions that barred transportation of coal on roads passing through villages.

In December 2018, the compliance report by the ministry's regional office said that special road corridors were constructed. This claim was repeated to obtain a one-year extension of the EC in March 2019 and then again for an extension by 30 years in January 2020.

But all this while, trucks carried coal from Kulda through villages to reach Tamnar thermal plant run by Jindal Power Limited (JPL) in Chhattisgarh. They still do.

According to JPL's own submission to the Environment ministry in 2020, 4,187 tonnes of coal is transported daily from Kulda to Tamnar in 200 dumpers of 21-tonne capacity, requiring 400 daily trips or a truck passing every 3-4 minutes, round the clock, through 14 villages with a combined population of over 15,000 as per Census 2011.

Officials at MCL and the Ministry's regional office did not respond to emails and calls from *The Indian Express*.

JPL started sourcing coal for Tamnar from Kulda in 2014. By 2015, Tamnar's environmental clearance was amended twice to allow transportation of coal by road as an interim measure until March 2017 "by which time the CCPC (Close Circuit Pipe Conveyer)" was to be "put in place".

Subsequently, the Environment Ministry granted another three extensions — in 2017, 2019 and 2020 — to the "interim permission" before doing away with a deadline altogether.

In May 2020, a gazette notification required all thermal plants to transport coal by rail or conveyor. Five months on, the ministry clarified that "coal may be transported by road" until "infrastructure regarding rail/ conveyor system" was ready.

In an email, a JPL spokesperson said that the construction work on a CCPC from Kulda could not be accelerated due to the non-availability of dedicated coal linkage. "JPL has also planned to develop a dedicated railway siding...(pending which) JPL will continue transportation of coal by road from Kulda by the ministry's gazette notification dated 21.05.2020," it said.

In multiple representations to various authorities over the years, affected villagers have complained of a spike in respiratory illness, and contamination of water bodies and cropland, leading to loss of productivity and blackening of vegetables and paddy.

In October 2021, asked by Orissa High Court to find a time-bound solution, the district collector of Sundargarh wrote: "The prayer of the villagers regarding stoppage of Coal Transportation by the Multi Axle Vehicles is not at all considerable."

Rape-accused MLA gets SC arrest protection for 1 more week

Seeks reply from Punjab govt; stays cases against woman complainant

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

THE SUPREME court on Thursday extended the protection from arrest granted to Lok Insaaf Party MLA Simarjit Singh Bains, who faces the charge of rape, by one more week even as it questioned his conduct and sought a report from the Punjab government in the matter.

"Have you seen your client's activities?... He is a public representative. Is this the way to behave?," Chief Justice of India N V Ramana, heading a three-judge bench, asked Senior Advocate Mukul Rohatgi, who appeared for Bains.

Rohatgi contended that the cases against his client were false but the bench, also comprising Justices A S Bopanna and Hima Kohli, which perused a plea also filed by the woman, said it wanted to know what the state government had to submit.

"How many cases did he file against that lady and now he wants anticipatory bail and he wants the lady to go to jail," said the CJI. Turning to Punjab Advocate General D S Patwalia, CJI Ramana asked, "What is happening in your state?" As the court sought to know how cases were booked against the woman in question, Patwalia said it is more of a dispute between the two. But the CJI added that the "state cannot be party to such misuse of police machinery".

The court said it is staying all proceedings against the woman for the time being and also gave Bains interim protection from arrest for a week.

"We grant one week to Punjab to file a reply. Don't arrest him for a week. We stay all the four cases against the complainant lady," the bench ordered and directed that the matter be listed after one week.

Hearing Bains's appeal on the arrest warrants against him by a magistrate, the top court had on February 1 restrained the Punjab government from arresting Bains till February 3. Bains faces arrest in connection with a rape case and also for violating the Covid protocol.

PANEL EXTENDS TIME TILL FEB 8 FOR THOSE WHO SUSPECT PEGASUS IN THEIR DEVICES

Only 2 devices submitted: SC panel

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

A THREE-MEMBER panel, constituted by Supreme Court to look into the allegations of snooping of phones using the Israeli company NSO's software Pegasus, on Thursday extended till February 8 the time for people who suspect their mobile phones to be infected with the malware, to get in touch with the committee.

In a public notice on Thursday, the three-member panel said in response to its earlier January 2 notice calling for people to get in touch by January 7 and subsequently submit their devices, only two people had till date given their devices to the panel for "taking digital images".

In the notice issued on January 2, the panel had requested citizens who suspected their devices to be infected with Pegasus, to contact the technical committee with reasons as to why they believe their devices had been infected and whether they would be in a position to allow the three-member committee to examine the infected devices. The committee had then also said that if needed, it would request the person to hand over the device for further investigation.

In the new notice, however, the committee said it would take the "digital image" of the device being submitted, "in presence of the person producing the instrument" and would immediately return the device to that person.

"A digital image copy will also be furnished to the person producing the mobile instrument," the committee said in the new notice.

The Indian Express had on November 30 last year reported that the panel had asked petitioners in the case to submit the targeted devices for "technical evaluation".

The members of the panel are Dr Naveen Kumar Chaudhary, Dean of National Forensic Sciences University in Gandhinagar; Dr Prabaharan P, Professor at Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham in Kerala; and Dr Ashwin Anil Gumaste, Institute Chair Associate Professor at IIT, Bombay. It is supervised by retired Supreme Court judge, Justice R V Raveendran.

Earlier this year, following reports that Pegasus had been used to snoop on journalists, activists, officials and even Union Ministers, some of the activists and journalists moved the Supreme Court seeking the formation of a committee to look into the issue.

On October 27, a three-judge bench of Chief Justice of India N V Ramana, and Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli, ordered the formation of a three-member technical committee to be overseen by Justice Raveendran.

Have no information on Pegasus spyware controversy, says MEA

New Delhi: The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Thursday said it does not have any information relating to the Pegasus spyware controversy.

"The alleged matter that has been referred to is under investigation by a committee set up by the Supreme Court. No information is available with the Ministry of External Affairs on this matter," MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said.

He was responding to a volley of questions on a recent *New York Times* report that claimed India bought the Pegasus spyware as part of a USD 2 billion defence deal with Israel in 2017.

The report also referred to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Israel in July 2017 -- the first by an Indian prime minister.

An international investigative consortium had claimed last year that many Indian ministers, politicians, activists, businessmen and journalists were potentially targeted by Pegasus, the phone-hacking software of Israeli firm NSO Group Technologies. **ENS**

1998 road rage case: SC to hear on Feb 25 plea against letting off Sidhu

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

THE SUPREME Court on Thursday deferred till February 25 its hearing on a plea seeking review of its 2018 order letting off Punjab Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu in a road rage case in which a man was killed in 1988.

A bench of Justices A M Khanwilkar and S K Kaul, which had issued notice on the review petition filed by family members of the deceased, Gurnam Singh, on September 11, 2018, agreed to Sidhu's plea to postpone the hearing.

As soon as the matter was taken up for hearing, Justice Khanwilkar pointed out that Sidhu's counsel had circulated a letter seeking adjournment.

Appearing for the cricketer-turned-politician, senior advocate P Chidambaram said he has been asked to appear in the case only on Thursday morning. He pointed out that a new Advocate on Record had also been appointed, and requested that the matter be heard after February 21.

Navjot Singh Sidhu

Assembly elections in Punjab are due on February 20, and the ruling Congress in the state has fielded Sidhu from Amritsar East constituency.

The bench also said there is a statement in the letter that the matter was listed "unexpectedly".

Justice Khanwilar said it is "not an accurate statement because it was shown in the advance list". He said that "we thought of rebutting the position stated here," and that its registry should not be cornered with such statements.

Appearing for the petitioners, senior advocate Siddharth Luthra urged the court to take up the matter after two weeks.

He said Sidhu was served notice in September 2018 itself.

The SC had issued notice in the matter "restricted to quantum of sentence".

On Thursday, Luthra also prayed the court to enlarge the scope of the notice.

"Review can also be dismissed in chambers," Justice Kaul pointed out. "We had put it for hearing after notice on a particular aspect. They have not filed it; they have delayed it.... But the nature of notice, which has been served, will only elicit response from the other side."

TN Governor returns Bill against NEET, terms it 'anti-poor'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHENNAI, FEBRUARY 3

TAMIL NADU Governor R N Ravi has returned to the Assembly Speaker a Bill that seeks exemption for the state from the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET), stating that the Bill is "against interests of the students, specially the rural and economically poor students of the state", according to a statement from Raj Bhavan issued on Thursday.

The state government had cited the same reason — that NEET was against the poor, among others — while formulating the Bill.

The Tamil Nadu Admission to Undergraduate Medical Degree Courses Bill, 2021, was sent back to Speaker M Appavu on Tuesday, "giving detailed reasons, for its reconsideration by the House", the Raj Bhavan stated. It said the decision came after a detailed study of the Bill for admission to undergraduate (UG) medical courses seeking exemption from NEET for the state, as well as a report of the high-level committee formed by the state government.

"The honourable Supreme Court in Christian Medical College, Vellore Association Vs. Union of India (2020) also has comprehensively examined the issue, specially from the social justice perspective, and upheld NEET as it prevents economic exploitation of poor students and is in furtherance of social justice," according to the statement.

The Bill was passed by the state Assembly in September 2021. Almost all parties in the state had supported it, including main opposition AIADMK, with BJP being the only party to stage a walkout during its introduction in the House.

Arguing that NEET was against the equality clause enshrined in the Constitution, the Bill stated, "It [NEET] festers inequality, as it favours the rich and the more privileged class of society, who are able to afford special coaching apart from pursuing Class XII. It virtually barricades the underprivileged social groups from medical and dental education."

It also raised concerns that students from the affluent class do not serve in rural areas after medical UG programmes and often pursue postgraduate courses abroad, leading to a decline in the number of serving doctors in the state.

Meanwhile, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin on Thursday announced convening an all-party meeting on Saturday to discuss the next course of action on NEET issue after the Governor returned the Bill.

The previous AIADMK government in the state had also brought two similar proposed legislation in this regard.

Both Bills placed for consideration of the President of India in September 2017 were not given his consent with powers under Article 201 of the Constitution and were returned to the state.

Tamil Nadu Governor RN Ravi and Chief Minister MK Stalin

EXPLAINED

Why the Bill was introduced

THE BILL sought to provide admission to medical courses on the basis of marks in Class XII Board examination, a system followed in Tamil Nadu before the implementation of NEET in 2017. The Bill stated that medical courses were traceable to entry 25 of List III, Schedule VII of the Constitution, thereby making the state government a competent authority to regulate admissions for the underprivileged social groups.

SEVENTH EDITION: INTERNAL MIGRATION - IMPACT ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN

SONALDE DESAI
PROFESSOR AND DIRECTOR OF NCAER-NATIONAL DATA INNOVATION CENTRE

We must recognise the women who are marriage migrants because their property rights in their natal families are very difficult to exercise since they do not live in the same location

PROFESSOR DIPA SINHA
SCHOOL OF LIBERAL STUDIES, AMBEDKAR UNIVERSITY

Women migrants in cities also have an additional burden of unpaid work because of poor public infrastructure. Access to toilets, drinking water and safety of children is a must

RAJESHWARI B
MGNREGA COMMISSIONER, JHARKHAND

Women migrants are the most vulnerable groups. Then the kids who join the mother and father during their migratory period are even more vulnerable

ANJALI BORHADE
FOUNDER-DIRECTOR DISHA FOUNDATION

There's a lack of awareness among women migrants when it comes to healthcare, especially related to maternal and child health and nutrition programmes

'Protect their rights, remove policy blindspots'

At the seventh edition of the eight-part IE Thinc Migration series, presented by *The Indian Express* with Omidyar Network India and moderated by Deputy Associate Editor Udit Misra, panelists discussed solutions for addressing the vulnerabilities of women migrants as well as children of migrants

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
RENANA JHABVALA
CHAIR, SELF-EMPLOYED WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (SEWA-BHARAT)

We have to remember that women are the original migrants. Apart from adjusting in the new family after marriage, they also have to adjust in a new place workwise, where they have no identity and no social support... We need to recognise the migrant woman worker, whether she is part of the family, or is an individual migrant. They have no identity, no citizenship, bad housing and bank accounts, among other things

On invisibility, vulnerability of women migrants

RENANA JHABVALA: I have many studies to show that our statistics really undercount them (women migrants) so that they, in most ways in the country, do not exist. They exist, but they don't exist to any policymakers.

SONALDE DESAI: Of the 45 crore migrants that the 2011 Census records, 31 crore are women; which means 67 per cent of the migrants are women. There are about 21 crore marriage migrants. While women who migrate with their families are about 11 per cent, or four crore; solo women work migrants are about three percent or 73 lakh. But the biggest group for which we have virtually no statistics are those whose husbands migrate for work. Our Human Development survey in 2004 found that three per cent of women whose husbands migrated were left in the place of origin. That number increased to eight per cent in 2011.

DIPA SINHA: There is also the larger context of invisibility of women and children, not just migrants. And when they are migrants, they become even more vulnerable. There is no one representative migrant woman. It's a hugely heterogeneous group, there are women who are migrating from one village to another because of marriage or for work with family. We need to specially design programmes and ensure that migrant women are included in the design and the way to solve this would not probably be the same for every migrant format.

OMIDYAR NETWORK INDIA presents The Indian EXPRESS thinc MIGRATION

On the issues affecting women migrants

JHABVALA: When work stopped (during Covid-19), problems of food emerged. Many did not have ration cards or the ration cards were in their villages. They were not transferable, and so they could not get access to the food later on. Some governments did do universal food distribution, but a lot of that was through online registration, and many of them didn't have mobile phones, or their accounts were not linked to their phone numbers.

SINHA: Even though as a citizen of this country, a woman migrant is entitled to government schemes, she is being left out because of the fact that she is a migrant. For instance, when a woman is married out of her village, but goes back to her natal village to deliver for five or six months, often for those months, which are the most important, she doesn't get these services because her residence seems to be somewhere else; all of our schemes are still linked to the place of residence. This keeps women out particularly from anganwadi services and PDS. So the universality of the services lose meaning if there is no portability attached to them.

Looking at the fact that they are denied those rights just because they have shifted location for whatever reason, we can work out decentralised policies.

JHABVALA: Women migrants have no identity as workers, which means that they do not have access to healthcare or work during the lockdowns. There's also an issue of bank accounts. Perhaps the greatest burden was rent. A domestic worker in Delhi was living with three girls and a boy. Her husband had died during Covid-19. Seeing a vulnerable woman, the landlord harassed her for rent, and wanted sexual intercourse with the young girl who was 15. And this is not uncommon.

DESAI: Marriage migration in north India, where a girl cannot be married in her own village, has led to a cultural tradition of devaluing daughters. These are the areas in which we see very unfavourable sex ratios. This marrying of daughters outside of the village devalues the importance of daughters to parents. The feminist movement has fought very hard for land right and inheritance rights for women. But the daughters who are married somewhere else have found it very difficult to exercise those rights and retain control of the land.

RAJESHWARI B: Migrant workers live and work in very unhygienic conditions. In brick kilns, we saw that the living area is badly made. Just to save money, the contractors make very makeshift shelters for them. Women migrants are vulnerable to sexual assault at these sites. We need to have an understanding of how they work and how we can ensure people do not take advantage of these vulnerable communities.

JHABVALA: There is a Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act and it does include informal workers. But those systems for informal workers have not been set up. And they can be set up also with the help of civil society, especially in places where women work at the worksite.

SHILPA KUMAR
PARTNER, OMIDYAR NETWORK INDIA

The double invisibility of women migrants is compounded by the double layer of vulnerability. Indeed, it seems like the woman migrant worker has lesser access to livelihoods and the increased possibility of violence, both physical and sexual

On issues of children's education

JHABVALA: Education has always been a major issue for children of migrants, even in normal times. In one study we did in brickfields, we found that 85 per cent of the children (of seasonal migrants) had never enrolled in a school, as opposed to 10 per cent of the local children. We have come across cases where girls were married off at 15 or 16 as there was no chance for them to go to school because of the pandemic.

RAJESHWARI B: Hardly 30 per cent of people have access to the Internet on their smartphones. How many children can actually hold a smartphone in their hands and have access to the digital class that the government system is giving them? In rural areas, a family usually has one phone and many times not even a smartphone.

On awareness about schemes

BORHADE: There is a severe lack of awareness about what kind of programmes are available for them (women migrants) when they're migrating. There are certain schemes, specially for mother and child health such as Integrated Child Development Services or even the Janani Suraksha Yojana. Another important aspect is that the financial inclusion of migrant women is needed on a really large scale, especially related to bank account opening, which is linked with various social protection programmes.

Convict in Kathua case moves HC for suspension of life term

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 3

THE LIFE term convict in the rape and murder of an eight-year-old nomad girl in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua in 2018 has moved the Punjab and Haryana High Court seeking suspension of his sentence. The court posted the matter for February 24.

Sanji Ram has moved the application under section 389 of CrPC. Under this provision, an accused can approach the court for suspension of his sentence pending an appeal.

The application came up for hearing on Thursday before a division bench of Justices Tejinder Singh Dhindsa and Lalit Batra through video conferencing.

Advocate Sonpreet Singh Brar, appearing for Sanji Ram, sought the suspension of the life term awarded by a sessions court of Pathakot in June 2019. "There are various lacune in the investigation as well as in the statements recorded during trial court," the petitioner has claimed. Appearing for Jammu and Kashmir, Senior Advocate RS Cheema and advocates Arshdeep Singh Brar and Satish Kumar requested adjournment, which the court granted.

Put off marital rape hearing, govt tells HC

'Issue has broad implications, needs comprehensive look'

SOFI AHSAN
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

URGING DELHI High Court to defer the hearings in a case seeking criminalisation of marital rape to await the outcome of a consultative process with stakeholders, the Centre on Thursday said the question involved "will have far-reaching socio-legal implications in the country". It said the matter needs a comprehensive approach rather than a strictly legal one.

While the Centre's counsel have made repeated requests in the court in the last few weeks for adjournment of the proceedings, the Centre for the first time placed its request on record by way of an affidavit on Thursday.

The Ministry of Home Affairs said in an affidavit before the court, "…considering the social impact involved, intimate family relations being the subject matter and this Hon'ble Court not having the privilege of having been fully familiarised with ground realities prevailing in different parts of society…taking a decision merely based upon arguments of (a) few lawyers may not serve the ends of justice."

Undertaking to provide a time-bound schedule, within which it will carry out the consultative process on the issue, the Centre said the matter has been pending since 2015, and if it waits for such "fruitful exercise" for some time, no prejudice would be caused and it will be possible for the government to assist the court meaningfully.

The division bench of Justices Rajiv Shakdher and C. Hari Shankar has, for the past few weeks been hearing the petitions challenging Exception 2, which protects men, who have forced non-consensual intercourse with their wives, from criminal prosecution under Section 376 IPC.

While the matter has remained pending since 2015, and the government submitted its stand in 2017, the Centre last month told the court that it wants to hold a consultative process with stakeholders and place a fresh and comprehensive stand before the court.

Stating that socio-legal implications of criminalisation of marital rape needs an exercise of a meaningful consultative process with various stakeholders on several aspects, the Centre, in the affidavit, said that no other stakeholders are before the court other than the few affected parties.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

EXPLAINED

Centre's previous stand on marital rape

STATING THAT what "may appear to be marital rape" to a wife "may not appear so to others", the Centre had, in 2017, submitted that striking down Exception 2 under Section 376 IPC "may destabilise the institution of marriage apart from being an easy tool for harassing the husbands". It also cited "rising misuse of Section 498A of IPC" — cruelty by husband or his relative against a woman — to say laws on violence against women can be misused "for harassing the husbands".

BACK TO CLASS

With cases declining, schools in West Bengal reopened for Classes 8-12 with Covid-19 protocol on Thursday. Primary schools remain closed for now. *Partha Paul*

Classes 10, 12: Maharashtra Board firm on offline exams

ALIFIYA KHAN
PUNE, FEBRUARY 3

REFUSING TO budge despite pressure from students and parents, the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education (MSBSHSE) on Thursday announced that board exams for Class X and XII will be held in offline, pen and paper mode. Officials ruled out the possibility of either online exams or allotting marks to students based on internal assessments, stating that holding offline exams was the final decision.

For the last few days, a section of students and parents have been running a campaign on social media, demanding cancelation of offline exams. On January 31, violent protests had erupted in Mumbai after students took to the streets to vent their anger. YouTuber and social media influencer Vikas Phatak aka 'Hindustani Bhau' was arrested on Tuesday for allegedly instigating the students to protest on streets.

Sharad Gosavi, chairman of MSBSHSE, on Thursday said there would be no change in the dates for practical or theory papers and these would be conducted as per the declared timetable, amid strict Covid-19 protocol.

HSC theory exams will be held from March 4 to March 30 and practical exams from February 14 to March 3, while SSC theory exams will be held from March 15 to April 4 and practical exams from February 25 to March 14.

As positivity rate falls, hope rises of third wave decline

ANONNA DUTT
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

THE UNION Health Ministry Thursday said as many as 34 states and UTs are reporting a decline in Covid-19 cases as well as positivity rate — an indication that the Omicron-fuelled third wave could be on the retreat.

According to the ministry data presented Thursday, 297 districts reported a positivity rate above 10 per cent in the week ending February 2. For comparison, 406 districts reported a positivity rate over 10 per cent in the week ending January 26.

"The highest number of cases was reported on January 21 during the current surge when 3 lakh 47 thousand cases were reported. This is a little less than the 4 lakh 14 thousand cases that were reported on May 7 last year. The daily cases have reduced from 3 lakh 47 thousand to 1 lakh 72 k cases in the last 24 hours. A substantial decrease has been noted in the active cases over the last 12 days. Along with this, the positivity rate has also reduced from 20.75 per cent on January 24 to 10.99 per cent in the last 24 hours, which is approximately half," said Joint Secretary (Health) Lav Agarwal said during a weekly briefing.

The official highlighted that there were eight states with over 50,000 active cases; 12 states where there were 10,000-50,000 active cases; and 16 states where there were less than 10,000 cases. Kerala is the only state where the active cases are increasing, he said.

Both daily cases and positivity rate are rising in Kerala and Mizoram. Kerala's positivity rate has increased from 13.3 per cent one month ago to 47 per cent this week. For Mizoram, it has increased from 17 per cent to 34.1 per cent, said Agarwal.

The government also said the districts having less than five percent Covid positivity rate can move in the direction of reopening schools but it is up to the state governments to take a call in this regard.

"There are 268 districts where the positivity is below 5% and clearly these districts can now move in the direction of non covid care and also in the direction of other economic activities, as well as school opening. The declining trend of pandemic allows us to think about those options," said NITI Aayog member Dr VK Paul.

"As far as school reopening is concerned. In 11 states, schools are fully open, in 16 states and union territories they are partially open — mostly these are the higher classes (9, 10, 11, and 12) in a staggered way — and in nine states, schools still remain closed. In all the states, the teaching and non-teaching staff vaccination status is around 95% on an average, some states have also completed 100%. All these measures are being taken and the ministry has been encouraging the states to follow the SoPs that we have prepared in consultation with them,and also to take forward the issue of vaccination, and alternative measures so that continued learning is carried on," said L. Sweety Changsan, joint secretary, ministry of education.

During the briefing, ICMR chief Dr Balaram Bhargava presented data from 37 hospitals in the National Clinical Registry which showed that the in-hospital mortality — deaths among hospitalised Covid-19 patients — was 10.2 per cent among vaccinated individuals and 21.8 per cent among unvaccinated individuals.

The study, which has been submitted for publication, shows that 91 per cent of vaccinated persons who died had comorbidities, while 83 per cent of unvaccinated persons who died had these.

The requirement for oxygen fell to 36.1 per cent among vaccinated people as compared to 45.5 per cent among the unvaccinated. "The requirement for mechanical ventilation was also lower — 5% vs 11% in the fully vaccinated. This is just emphasising that vaccination helps," said Bhargava.

Andhra govt staff to go on strike over pay revision

Hyderabad: Government employees and teachers in Andhra Pradesh have decided to go on a strike from February 6 in protest against the recent pay revision. On Thursday, thousands of protesters converged at Vijayawada and demanded the order be withdrawn.

"The pay revision was supposed to increase our salaries but it has resulted in cuts and loss of salary. Pensioners are hit hard," said Y Rao, a member of the Pay Revision Commission Struggle Committee. Minister Botsa Satyanaryana, member of a government panel set up to look into the employees' demands, said none of the staff leaders had met him for last three days. **ENS**

HC takes up video of girl alleging abuse at Patna home, asks why no FIR registered

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, FEBRUARY 3

THE PATNA High Court has taken suo motu cognizance of a viral video in which a former inmate of an after-care home in the state capital has accused a top official at the home of enabling sexual abuse of victims, and exploiting them himself. The girl, who left the Patna home some time back, has also alleged that an inmate who resisted the harassment was killed.

In an order on Wednesday, the court questioned the fact that no FIR had been filed in the matter yet. "The aforesaid news... is yet again societal / collective failure and shame in not containing such offences, even after this state and the nation read about the happenings in Muzaffarpur (the shelter home case, in which 12 were sentenced to life)," the court said.

While not giving any directions at this stage, a Division Bench including Patna High Court Chief Justice Sanjay Karol and Justice S Kumar said the court was not satisfied by the inquiry conducted by the Social Welfare Department. It also took note of the Juvenile Justice Monitoring Committee's report that several CCTVs at the home were non-functional.

The court said: "No FIR has been registered on such a disclosure of the victim. Even more surprising is that the Director of the Social Welfare Department has conducted an inquiry and only on the basis of the CCTV footage installed in the After Care Home has come to the conclusion that the accusation made by the so-called victim is baseless and false. It does not appear that any inquiry was made with the victim."

It added: "She (the girl in the video) has allegedly reported that the victims... are not provided basic amenities of food and bedding and many of them are not even permitted to leave the home. Another shocking disclosure has been made by her that strangers are permitted to masquerade as relatives of the victims, who come and pick up such hapless women."

Social Welfare Department Director Raj Kumar said: "We investigated the matter and also studied the CCTV footage... We will respond to the court after thoroughly looking into the matter and its suggestions."

Earlier, the court had called an emergency meeting of the Juvenile Justice Monitoring Committee over the allegations regarding inmates "being forced, after being sedated, to submit themselves to immoral acts of wrongdoers". The court sought an affidavit from the government by the next hearing on February 7, directing it to meanwhile install more CCTV cameras and employ more staffers at the come.

The court said the Additional Registrar, Juvenile Justice Monitoring Committee, had visited the home on January 30, 2022, along with two social activists and met the Superintendent. The report submitted to the Principal Magistrate, Juvenile Justice Board, Patna, said the committee had found that the home had 260 inmates, of whom 30 were mentally challenged, while the rest were either victims of human trafficking or children held in connection with crimes.

Apart from the non-functional CCTV cameras, the report had found no records of vouchers for purchases of vegetables etc.

ASSAM

60-yr-old man fighting for name in NRC kills self

TORA AGARWALA
GUWAHATI, JANUARY 3

A 60-YEAR-OLD man, who was fighting a legal battle to prove his citizenship before a Foreigner's Tribunal in Assam, died by suicide Tuesday in Morigaon district.

Manik Das, a dry fish seller and resident of Borkhal village, was defending his case before an FT since December 2019, despite his name appearing in the National Register for Citizens (NRC) that was published a few months before that.

Das's family alleged that he was going through 'mental trauma' because of the ongoing case. "All our names, including my father's, featured in the NRC, but he received the notice in December 2019, saying that he had to prove his citizenship," his son Kartik Das told *The Indian Express*. "My father would appear for all his hearings on time, but the entire process used to take a toll on him, especially because of the financial losses," he added.

Kartik further said that the family would "get by okay", but after the case, financial troubles increased, with Das having to spend more than a lakh on the proceedings. "All his documents were in order… but he would often worry and ask, 'how will I survive?' We all knew he was affected by this but never expected him to take such a step," said 35-year-old Kartik, who is a carpenter.

Das's legal counsel Deepak Biswas said that he had all identity documents, such as PAN card, Aadhaar card, as well as land records. "He had the requisite documents linked to his mother. The other documents were in order and he would appear in time for all his hearings. The last hearing was about a month ago, where we submitted our reply to the tribunal, and in the next, we were supposed to produce witnesses," said Biswas. He added that it was likely that they would have been able to prove his citizenship.

According to news agency PTI, Das was missing since Sunday and his body was found near his house on Tuesday. The police said that it is prima facie, a case of suicide.

ODISHA PANCHAYAT ELECTIONS

A fish, an LED TV: Poll candidates woo voters with real-life symbols

AISHWARYA MOHANTY
BHUBANESWAR, FEBRUARY 3

WITH RESTRICTIONS imposed on campaigns for the coming elections for the Panchayati Raj institutions, candidates from across the state have come up with unique ways to connect with the voters. In a notification issued on January 13, the State Election Commission had banned roadshows and large gatherings and only permitted door-to-door campaigns with not more than five people.

Undeterred by the restrictions, candidates are now seen physically carrying their real-life 'poll symbols' and seeking votes.

In Nabarangpur's Patri panchayat, sarpanch nominee Bhagavati Bhotra carries a freshly-caught fish, her election symbol, while going door-to-door seeking votes. Bhotra, who is currently a Zilla Parishad president, decided to contest the sarpanch elections this year after the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) fielded another candidate for the post.

Sarpanch nominee Bhagvati Bhotra. *Express*

"Since we cannot conduct roadshows or gather a large number of people together, a door-to-door campaign feels very interpersonal. I did not want to roam around with big banners and posters. So, every morning I get the best fish from the market and start my campaign. This way the people will even remember me and my symbol and I can expect a good number of votes," she said.

Comprising 21 villages, Patri panchayat has 6,633 voters and four candidates running for the sarpanch post.

Nearly 100 km from Bhubaneswar, Sashmita Khera, an Independent candidate, contesting the Zone-2 Zilla Parishad elections in Koraput has been campaigning door-to-door with an LED Television set in hand.

"A TV is a sought-after electronic item in every household. Voters across all generations can relate to it. This is why I chose the symbol and to register it even better with the candidates I decided to campaign around carrying a TV set rather than just asking for votes and sharing pamphlets," Khera said. Formerly with the BJD and the Congress, Khera decided to contest as an Independent candidate after the parties failed to field her.

The elections are scheduled to be held in five phases from February 16 to 24.

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NO. CWC/CO/PN/2021-22
PRESS NOTICE
CWC invites on-line tenders from the contractors for the following work:

SL	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs. Lakh)	Last date of on- line submission
1.	Upgradation of road with CC paver block & other face uplifting (Civil & electrical works) at CW, Moga-II (Punjab). (E NIT_CO/Engg -41/21-22)	Rs. 1385.39	04.03.2022
2.	Construction of 6930 sqm PEB Godown along with electrical installations at CW, Kundli (HR) (E NIT_CO/Engg -42/21-22)	Rs. 786.99	04.03.2022

Detailed Tender Notice along with Conditions of Contract and Notice Inviting E-Tender may be seen and downloaded from the CWC's website **www.cewacor.nic.in** or e-tender website **www.cwceprocure.com** or CPP Portal **http://eprocure.gov.in/epublish/app.** Further Corrigendum/Addendum to this Tender, if any, will be published on above websites only Press advertisement in Newspapers shall not be issued for the same.
CHIEF ENGINEER

Government of India, Department of Atomic Energy, Directorate of Purchase & Stores Sale Tender

Director, Directorate of Purchase & Stores, Department of Atomic Energy invites Tenders on behalf of the President of India from interested parties for sale of below mentioned items lying at, e-Tenders are invited by Director, DPS for and on behalf of the President of India for following:

Sr. No	Tender Number	Brief Description	Last date of submission of Tender (Up to 14.00 Hrs.)
1	DPS/HWPK/KRSU/29/ 2021-22/PT-04	Disposal of used/waste oils	18.02.2022
2	DPS/HWPK/KRSU/29/ 2021-22/PT-05	Disposal of used lead acid batteries	18.02.2022
3	DPS/HWPK/KRSU/29/ 2021-22/PT-06	Disposal of Unserviceable e-waste items	18.02.2022
4	DPS/HWPK/KRSU/29/ 2021-22/PT-07	Disposal of PVC scrap items	18.02.2022

Complete tender documents can be viewed and downloaded from website **https://enteders.dpsdae.gov.in**. Enrollment is mandatory for participating in tender. Tenders are to be submitted online only.
Stores Officer, KRSU/HWP(K)

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON
See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely **Anand @ Nageshwar, S/o Raj Kumar, R/o: Bagabond, Patri IInd Pusta, Usmanpur, Delhi** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 150/18, U/s 380/457/411/34 IPC** registered at P.S. Lahori Gate, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said **Anand @ Nageshwar** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Anand @ Nageshwar** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Anand @ Nageshwar** accused of **FIR No. 150/18, U/s 380/457/411/34 IPC,** P.S. Lahori Gate, Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **06.04.2022.**

By Order
Ms. Neha Gupta Singh,
Metropolitan Magistrate (09),
Central Room No. 286,
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi
DP/1937/N/2022

DEVI AHILYA VISHWAVIDYALAYA
NALANDA CAMPUS, RNT MARG, INDORE-452001
Computer Center
No. DAVV/CC/2021-22/3 **Dated : 03.02.2022**
RE-TENDER
Online tenders are invited under two bid system (Technical and financial) for Software Development and AMC for Examination Results Processing for DAVV. The tender document may be downloaded on payment of Rs. 2000/- at **https : www. mptenders.gov.in** (main portal) and can be seen at website **www.dauniv.ac.in**
M.P. Madhyam/103536/2022 **REGISTRAR**

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Tender Notice
Sr.DEN/C/MB acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders against following Tender Notice closing date time are mentioned against each coloumn. and will be received online up to 16:00 hrs on same day. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards earnest money **only through online payment modes** available on IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker's cheque, Deposit receipts. FDR etc are not allowed. Details regarding tender is available on IREPS www.ireps.gov.in website.

Tender No.	186-DRM-MB-21-22 Dt : 02.02.2022
Name of Work	Reconditioning of 166 nos CMS crossing by using technology of Translamatic Robotic welding in Moradabad division under DEN/ Track/MB.
Tender Closing Date Time	03.03.2022 16:00 hrs
Advertised Value (Rs.)	69,63,334.80
Earnest Money (Rs.)	1,39,300.00
Tender Doc. Cost (Rs.)	Nil
Period of Completion	06 Months
Bidding Start Date	17.02.2022

No. 75-W/2/3/WA/DEN/T/T.Notice Dt.: 02.02.2022 248/2022
Serving Customers With A Smile

SEARCH FOR MISSING BOY

Shiv Kumar

General public is hereby informed that one boy namely **Shiv Kumar S/o Ram Nandan Mehto** R/o H.No. 185, Kali Basti Hastsal, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi. Age 16 years, Height 5'3", Complexion Wheatish, Round Face, Wearing Shirt & pant and school shoes in feet is missing since 25.12.2021. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out this boy but no clue has come to light so far. In this regard a case FIR No. 930/21 dated 31.12.2021 U/S 363 IPC has been registered at PS Uttam Nagar, New Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing boy may kindly inform to the following.

Website: http://cbi.nic.in
Email: cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-23011334
Ph: 011-23014046, 23015218
DP/04/DW/2022

SHO
PS: Uttam Nagar, New Delhi
Ph.: 011-25377461, 25357424

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER
E-Tender Notice No. : e-Tender/2022/04, dated 02.02.2022. e-Tenders are invited by Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.), S.E.Railway, Kharagpur-721301 for and on behalf of the President of India for the following works **before 15.00 hrs.** on the date mentioned against items and will be opened at **15.30 hrs. Sl. No. & Tender No.; Description of work; Tender Value; Earnest Money : (1) E-KGP-South-01-2022;** Execution of the work of (i) Renovation/Improvement of CETC building at Kharagpur. (ii) Provision of ladies room & gents staff room for C & W (Mechanical Department) at Hijli station. (iii) Construction of S & T store building at Jaleswar under the jurisdiction of ADEN/S/Kharagpur; ₹ 87,63,862.14; ₹ 1,75,300/-. **(2) E-KGP-South-02-2022;** Execution of the work of (i) Extension & replacement of broken ballast retainers on approaches of major girder bridges under the jurisdiction of ADEN/S/Kharagpur.(ii) Provision of flooring, ballast retaining on approaches, standard bridge tablet, inspection steps construction of damaged wing wall and other miscellaneous works to bridges in between Kharagpur-Rupsa under the jurisdiction of ADEN (South)/Kharagpur; ₹ 2,89,60,055.23; ₹ 2,94,800/-. **Cost of Tender Documents:** 0.00 for both. **Completion period of the works :** 09 (Nine) months for sl. no. 1 and 8 (Eight) months for sl. no. 2 . **Date of opening :** 28.02.2022 at 15.30 hrs. for both. Interested tenderers may visit website **www.ireps.gov.in** for full details/description/specification of the Tenders and submit their bids online. In no case manual tenders for these works will be accepted. **N.B.:** Prospective Bidders may regularly visit **www.ireps.gov.in** to participate in all tenders. **(PR-603)**

China suffered more casualties in Galwan clash than it revealed: Aus paper report

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

THE VALLEY clash on June 15, 2020, had resulted in the death of at least 38 Chinese soldiers, according to a report by Australian journalist Anthony Klan in newspaper 'The Klaxon' on Thursday, building on a report that he said was prepared by Chinese social media users.

Klan wrote that "evidence provided by a group of social media researchers, which The Klaxon has independently built on, appears to support claims that China's casualties extended well beyond the four soldiers named by Beijing".

He wrote that "China's losses" in the border clash, the bloodiest between India and China in over four decades, "were much higher than reported with many soldiers drowning while crossing a fast-flowing, sub-zero river in darkness, new research claims." According to the report, "Evidence has also emerged that strongly suggests some reports of the incident have conflated facts and imagery of two separate but similar clashes that occurred just over a week apart."

Quoting a report titled 'Galwan Decoded' "prepared by a group of social media researchers", without naming the researchers Klan wrote that it cites a "a year-long investigation involving discussions with mainland Chinese bloggers, information obtained from mainland-based Chinese citizens and media reports that have since been deleted by Chinese authorities."

While 20 Indian soldiers had lost their lives in the deadly fight, China admitted to losing at least four soldiers. A fifth, Qi Fabao, China said, had sustained serious head injuries.

IN KARNATAKA'S UDUPI DISTRICT

Principal of another college denies entry to students wearing hijab

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, FEBRUARY 3

WEEKS AFTER an institute in Karnataka's Udupi district barred students wearing the hijab from attending classes, another government college in the same district on Thursday denied entry to 25 students who had the headscarf on.

The latest incident took place at the Government Pre-University College in Kundapur. The principal, Ramakrishna GJ, asked the students to enter the campus after removing their headscarf. The students objected to this and asked why the rules were suddenly changed.

The headscarf row started in December last year, when the Government Pre-University College for Girls in Udupi banned the entry of eight students who wore the hijab.

The Karnataka High Court has listed this matter for Tuesday. The plea was filed on behalf of student Resham Farooq, who sought directions to allow students to wear the hijab. The plea said the students' right to wear a hijab is a fundamental, one guaranteed under Article 14 and 25 of the Constitution, and is an essential practice of Islam.

Thursday's incident took place a day after a few Hindu students had come to the college sporting saffron towels, objecting to the hijab.

Later that day, a meeting was convened by the Kundapur Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA Halady Srinivas Shetty, who tried to get the parents of the students to dissuade them from wearing the hijab. The College Development Monitoring Committee, headed by Shetty, then decided that no student would be allowed to wear headscarf in the college.

Principal Ramakrishna was not available for comment.

In a video which was widely shared on social media on Thursday, he is heard saying, "As a government servant, I am following the orders of the department." He was referring to the CDMC decision.

A Muslim student of the college said: "The Hindu students who had come to the college wearing saffron towels threatened to continue to attend college wearing the same. The college, then, decided to ban hijab and they stopped us."

Karnataka Education minister BC Nagesh on Thursday said that they did not want to turn education institutions into a battleground of two communities. "It is a sacred place and every student should feel equal. As it is now before the court, let us see what comes out."

Lanka Foreign Minister likely to visit India on Feb 6

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

SRI LANKA'S Foreign Minister G L Peiris is likely to visit India from February 6 to 8, sources said on Friday. This would be the second high-level visit after Sri Lankan Finance Minister Basil Rajapaksa visited India in December 2021.

Earlier this week, Sri Lanka signed an agreement with India for a USD 500 million credit line, which would help fund fuel purchases at a time when the country is facing its worst financial and energy crisis in decades.

Last month, the Indian High Commission in Colombo had said that External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar agreed to offer critical support and a USD 500 million credit line in a letter to his Sri Lankan counterpart Peiris.

J&K: Six killed as car falls into gorge

Jammu: Six people were killed on the spot on Thursday when an Eco vehicle in which they were travelling fell into a gorge in Keshwan's Naagarna nalla in the hilly Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir. The vehicle was on way from Kishtwar to Keshwan at that time, sources said. Local people rushed to the spot to launch rescue operations. Sources attributed the mishap to slippery condition of the road due to snowfall. Police have registered a case in the matter. **ENS**

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, MEDICAL EDUCATION & TRAINING
UTTAR PRADESH, 6th FLOOR, JAWAHAR BHAWAN, LUCKNOW.

No. ME-3/2022/ 286 — Lucknow, Dated: 03rd February, 2022

The Time Schedule of Second Round of Online Counselling of UP NEET PG-2021

The Time Schedule for the Admission through Online counselling in the State Uttar Pradesh for Government/Private Medical College/Institutions/Universtites for Postgraduate Courses (MD/MS/Diploma) is as follows:-

Date of Online Registration (MD/MS/Diploma)	4th February 2022 (From 2:00 PM) To 7th February 2022 (Till 2:00 PM)
Date of Security fee deposition	4th February 2022 (From 2:00 PM) To 8th February 2022
Expected date of Declaration of Merit List	08th February 2022
Date of Online Choice Filling	11th February 2022 (From 2:00 PM) To 14th February 2022(Till 2:00 PM)
Declaration of result of seat allotment	15/16th February 2022
Date for downloading allotment letters and admission date	17th February 2022 to 21st February 2022 (Except Sunday & Government Holidays)

- Registration fee & Security fee should be submitted by Debit card/Credit card / E-challan.
- For PH Candidates, please see the Government of India Notice dated 01-12-2021, the above notice contains the list of centers which will issue the Disability Certificate. The Notice dated 01.12.2021 of Government of India has also been displayed on the departmental website www.dgme.up.gov.in
- Candidates should register separately for MD/MS/Diploma & DNB course, and security fee deposited separate for each course.
- Candidates registered in first round of counselling are not required to register again.
- Those Candidates who have registered in first round but not submitted security fee, will have to submit security fee, to be eligible.
- Candidates allotted government medical college should report to allotted college and complete admission process and do their duties.
- Candidates allotted Private medical college should report to Nodal center and complete admission process, after that report to admitted college and do their duties.
- For further important and detailed information kindly visit the website. https://upneet.gov.in & www.dgme.up.gov.in

Director General

HINDUSTAN PETROLEUM CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Maharatna Company)
(A GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ENTERPRISE) REGISTERED OFFICE: 17, JAMSHEDJI TATA ROAD, MUMBAI – 400020.

MUMBAI REFINERY

NOTICE TO MUMBAI REFINERY VENDORS

1. New Vendors may apply for Registration. Visit https://www.hindustanpetroleum.com >> Quick Links >> Most Sought Links >> Vendor Registration >> Read Instructions >> Follow Instructions. >> Select Primary location as Mumbai Refinery >> Apply online >>Take Print out >> Submit online Application >> Send hard copy by Post / Courier to Vendor Management Office, Room No. 209, New Admin Building, HPCL Mumbai Refinery, B D Patil Marg, Mahul, Mumbai – 400074. Email: rmram@hpcl.in / hpclmrvmo@mail.hpcl.co.in. Contact 022-25076941/6808/6804.
2. Vendors who have already applied online but have not submitted hard copy of application must submit at the above address for processing.
3. All existing Mumbai Refinery Vendors (8 digits ERP code from 20000000 to 20999999) must update their email id and mobile no. on https://bills.hpcl.co.in/Vendor/index.jsp. All must renew by applying for re-registration every three years as guided in Sr. 1 itself.
4. Helpdesk contacts - eprochelpdesk@mail.hpcl.co.in / 022-41146666 or +91 7710911191.

CGM-Materials – Mumbai Refinery

/hpcl | /hpcl | /hpcl
www.hindustanpetroleum.com
Wear reusable face cover or mask
Wash hands frequently and thoroughly
Maintain Physical Distance

Issued in the public interest by the State Government

Ex-Gratia assistance of Rs. 50,000/- to next of kin of the deceased who died due to COVID-19 in the State

Government is providing Ex-Gratia assistance of Rs. 50,000/- per deceased, to next of kin of the deceased by COVID-19 in the State as per the guidelines of Government of India. All application claims will be settled within 30 days of submission of required documents and assistance shall be disbursed into the bank account of beneficiary.

Process of Application

Applicant can submit their claim application through online service "Ex-Gratia assistance to next of kin of the deceased by COVID-19" available at Antyodaya SARAL Portal. By clicking on Antyodaya SARAL Portal (https://saralharyana.gov.in/), Scheme of 'Ex-Gratia assistance to next of kin of the deceased by COVID-19' is available on left side on the home-page of the portal. Online application can be made from https://saralharyana.gov.in/directApply.do?serviceId=1674 link.

An application has to be made by generating OTP from Mobile/computer on the portal and by uploading the following documents.

- Copy of report diagnosing deceased as COVID-19 positive (RT-PCR/ Rapid Antigen/ Molecular Test/ Document Supporting the medical treatment diagnosis of Covid-19/ Form-4/Form-4A)
- Copy of death certificate of the deceased

The followings are also eligible under the scheme:-

- The deaths occurring within 30 days from the date of testing or from the date of being clinically determined as a Covid-19 case are also treated as "Deaths due to Covid-19", even if, the death takes place outside the hospital/in-patient facility;
- Also, the Covid-19 case, while admitted in the hospital/in-patient facility and who continued to be admitted beyond 30 days and died subsequently, are also treated as a Covid-19 death;
- A family member of the deceased, who committed suicide within 30 days from being diagnosed as Covid-19 positive, is also entitled to avail the financial help/Ex-Gratia assistance of Rs. 50,000/-.

Grievance Redressal mechanism:-

For resolving grievances of the public in the matter, Government has also constituted two Grievances Redressal Committees at the district level. Aggrieved person can submit their grievances to the concerned Deputy Commissioner or Additional Deputy Commissioner in their offices for the grievances as follows:-

- If any family member/kin of the deceased died due to Covid-19 has any grievance with respect to non-receipt of the Ex-Gratia payment of Rs. 50,000.
- If any hospital and/or the place where the deceased had taken treatment, refuses to furnish such documents, as required for the purpose of establishing that the death was due to Covid-19.
- In cases of the death certifications already issued and any family member of the deceased is aggrieved by the cause of death mentioned in the death certificate already issued, it will be open for the aggrieved person to move the appropriate authority, who issued the death certificate to modify/amend such death certificates on production of the necessary documents such as, positive RT-PCR/ Molecular Tests/ RAT OR clinically determined through investigations in a hospital/ in-patient facility by a treating physician, while admitted in the hospital/ in-patient facility. If the person is still aggrieved, it will be open for the aggrieved person to approach the Grievance Redressal Committee.

For any queries regarding online application related to the portal, Antyodaya SARAL Helpline - 0172-3968400 can be contacted.

Revenue and Disaster Management Department, Government of Haryana

7296/HRY

ANTI-CONVERSION LAW

Gujarat: Accused husband booked for atrocity; wife complains against father

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
VADODARA, FEBRUARY 3

NEARLY FOUR months after the Gujarat High Court granted bail to four accused as interim relief in the first case registered under the Gujarat Freedom of Religion (Amendment) Act, 2021, (GFR 2021), the prime accused — the husband of the woman — has been booked in a separate case of atrocity, causing hurt and criminal intimidation filed by the woman's father.

The offence was registered at the Gotri police station late Wednesday in an incident said to have taken place on January 21. Meanwhile, the woman filed a complaint against her father saying he was "trying to separate her from her husband".

According to a release from the Vadodara city police on Thursday, the FIR — classified as sensitive, was lodged based on the complaint of the 53-year-old father of the woman, who is the wife of the accused booked under the GFR 2021. The release stated, "The incident took place at 3 pm on January 21 when the accused went to the complainant's house to pick up his wife... When the complainant told the accused that he had been assaulting his daughter, the accused lost his cool and picked a fight with the complainant." "The accused said, 'I will not spare you, i will kill you' and attacked the complainant while hurling casteist abuses...".

The accused has been booked under IPC sections for voluntarily causing hurt (323), intentionally insulting and provocation to break public peace (504), and criminal intimidation [506(2)] as well as relevant sections of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. The HC had granted bail to all four accused in October 2021.

Assistant Commissioner of Police Megha Tewar, who is investigating the case, told *The Indian Express*, "The complainant told us that he remained silent all these days as his daughter asked him to not approach the police as she has been under pressure... We have registered a fresh FIR and started probe."

Advocate Sajid Sheikh, counsel for the accused, said that the wife of the accused filed an application before the Vadodara Commissioner against her father, just before the FIR was lodged at Gotri police station.

PUNJAB ENGINEERING COLLEGE
(Deemed to be University)
SECTOR-12, CHANDIGARH

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (Non-committal)

Punjab Engineering College intends to purchase one Multipurpose Versatile X-ray Diffractometer. Interested Manufacturers / authorized suppliers are requested to visit **www.pec.ac.in/tenders** to download EoI document. Manufacturers /authorized suppliers may offer the own design that can meet or better the specifications mentioned in EoI document. **Applied Sciences Department**

Government of Jharkhand
Directorate of Food & Consumer Affairs
3rd Floor, JSFC Bhawan, Kadru, Ranchi -834002
DIRECTORATE OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS
GOVERNMENT OF JHARKHAND, RANCHI

Letter No:- 179 — **Dated:-03/02/2022**

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The Department of Food, Public Distribution and Consumer Affairs, Government of Jharkhand intended to install Automated, Multi Commodity, Grain Dispensing Machine popularly (Grain ATM) on a pilot project basis, in the state of Jharkhand. Expression Of interest is being invited as follows :-

1	Last date for Submission of EOI Response Document via email	21.02.2022
2	Contact Detail	8210603232, 9547219531 Email ID- directorfood@gmail.com

Detailed EOI may be Downloaded from the Website of Department https://www.jharkhand.gov.in/food -> Tender and Corrigendum.Any changes/modification in the EOI will be posted on the same.

Sd/-
Director
(Directorate of Food & Consumer Affairs)

PR 263125 Directorate of Food and Consumer Affairs(21-22).D

बैंक ऑफ इंडिया
Bank of India

ZONAL OFFICE, PATNA ZONE
1st Floor, Chanakya Place, R-Block, Patna-800001
(Tel.2220640-643, Fax: 0612-2223178)

APPENDIX - IV, Rule 8(1)

Possession Notice (for Immovable Property)

Whereas,
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the BANK OF INDIA under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002 issued a demand notice as detailed in the table hereunder written calling upon the below mentioned borrowers to repay the amount shown in the respective notices mentioned against their names in the table, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
The borrowers/guarantors mentioned below having failed to repay the amount shown in the respective notices issued u/s 13(2) within the stipulated time, notice is hereby given to the aforementioned borrowers/guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property/ies (Secured Assets) described in the table given below in exercise of powers conferred on me under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 and 9 of the said rules on the date(s) mentioned against the respective property.
The aforesaid borrowers/guarantors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property/ies mentioned in the table hereunder written and any dealings with the said property/ies will be subject to the charge of the BANK OF INDIA for the amount shown in the respective column of the table and interest thereon.

Name of Borrower/ Guarantor	i. Branch, ii. Date & Amount as per Notice u/s 13(2)	Details of property	Date of Possession of Assets
M/s J R Deepu Automobiles Pvt. Ltd. Director:- Sri Jitendra Kumar Yadav Guarantor:- Sri Raj Kumar	(i) A. N. Puri Branch, Gaya (ii) Demand Notice Date : 22.09.2021, ₹ 1,54,29,030.73 with future interest and incidental charges	(A) EQM of Lease hold right of the company M/s J R Deepu Automobiles Pvt. Ltd. Through Lease Deed No. 16919 dated 22.09.2012 for the following property:- Property in the name of **Raj Kumar** having Sale Deed No. 14698 dated 11.08.2012 situated at Magadh Colony, Mauza: Chandauti, Thana No. 180, Distt.: Gaya, Khata No. 167(N) 102(O), Plot No. 470(O) 663(N), Khata No. 167(N) 102(O), Plot No. 472(O) 666(N) having area-76.50 Decimal., **Bounded by:-** North: New Plot No. 666, South: New Plot No. 666 and 667 Sri Jitendra Kr. Yadav, East: New Plot No. 666 and 667 Sri Jitendra Kr. Yadav, West: New Plot No. 666 and 667 Sri Jitendra Kr. Yadav.	02.02.2022

(B) EQM of Lease hold right of the company M/s J R Deepu Automobiles Pvt. Ltd. Through Lease Deed No. 16920 dated 22.09.2012 for the following property:- Property in the name of **Jitendra Kumar Yadav** having Sale Deed No. 16423 dated 22.11.2011 situated at Magadh Colony, Mauza: Chandauti, Thana No. 180, Distt.: Gaya, Khata No. 167(N) 102(O), Plot No. 473(O) 667(N), having area- 2 Katha 10 Dhur, **Bounded by:-** North: Sri Jitendra Kumar Yadav (Dipu Market), South: Sadak Govt.(Gaya Sherghati Road), East: New Plot No. 666 and 667, Bibi Saifiya Khatoon, M.A Khalid & others, West: New Plot No. 666 and 667.

*** With further interest at applicable rate till repayment.**

Date: 03.02.2022
Place: Gaya

Authorized Officer
Bank of India

SBI
STATE BANK OF INDIA
STRESSED ASSETS RECOVERY BRANCH
2nd Floor, Patna Main Branch Building, West Gandhi Maidan, Patna - 800001
Ph. No. (Office) : 0612-2219043, 2219385, Fax: 0612-2219385, E-mail : sbi.05176@sbi.co.in

[See Proviso to rule 8 (6)]
SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act,2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules,2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of State Bank Of India, the Secured Creditor, will be sold (e-auctioned) on **" As is Where is", As is What is" and Whatever there is" on 15/03/2022 (date of the sale)**, for recovery of **Rs 1,27,11,000.00 (Rupees One Crore Twenty Seven Lac Eleven Thousand only) as on 18/06/2020** plus accrued interest at contractual rate of interest, Charges, other miscellaneous expenses etc due to the secured creditor from the Borrower, **M/s Amit Generic; Prop: Mr. Amit Agrawal s/o- Santosh Kumar Agrawal and Legal Heirs of the Guarantor Late Mr Anil Kumar - Mrs. Jyoti Agrawal (Wife) and Mr. Harsh Agrawal (Son).**

Short description of the immovable property:

Sl. No.	Description of the property:	Proposed Reserve Price / EMD Amount / Bid increment Amount
1.	All that joint two flats bearing no. 101 & 102, on 1st floor, in the building named "Shambhu Nath Complex", constructed/ built by M/s Pery Homes-Pvt Ltd, with all kinds of easements, claims, right, title, interest and articles thereon and therein and One Car Parking Space No. 101 & 102, situated at Survey Mouza - Qazipur commonly known as Abu Las Lane, Patna-4, P.S- Pirbahore, Dist-Patna, measuring building area comprised within the said unit 1655 sq ft, bearing M.S. Plot No. 109, 111 and 196 under Circle No. 28, Sheet No. 69, Ward No. 11 (old) and 31 (new), Govt valuation list serial no. 508, Zone-3, Holding No. 102/108/105, with in the jurisdiction of Sub & Sadar Registry Office Patna and within the limit of Patna Regional Development Authority, Patna and Patna Municipal Corporation Patna. This joint flat is registered in the name of Mr. Amit Agrawal & Anil Kumar both sons of Mr. Santosh Kumar Agrawal vide Registered Sale Deed No. 18516 dated 15/11/2008. The Boundaries of the flat are:- North - Flat No. 103, South - Side Offset of the Building, East - Front Offset of the Building, West - Flat No. 104. The Boundaries of the Plot No.109 are:- North - Mr. Surendra Prasad and Mr. Reyazuddin, South - Mr. Madan Prasad, East - Mr. Prabhat Bhushan, West - Abu Las Lane. The Boundaries of the Plot No.111 are:- North - House of Mr. Sunil Kumar & Municipal Lane, South - Mr. Madan Prasad, East - House of Mr.. Prabhat Bhushan, Mr. Bharat Prasad & Municipal Lane. West - Mr. Surendra Prasad. The Boundaries of the Plot No. 196 are:-North - Gali, House of Mr. Bharat Prasad, East - Mr. Shivendu & Lala Gope, South - Mr. Lala Gope, West - Mr. Prabhat Bhushan. **(Property Id for e-auction:SBIN32839205328)**	₹ 65,00,000/- / ₹ 6,50,000/- / ₹ 10,000/-

e-Auction Terms And Condition

1. **Date of e-auction : 15.03.2022; Time : 120 Minutes. form 12:00 Noon to 02:00 PM with unlimited extension of 10 Minutes each.**
2. The auction sale will be **"online through e-auction"**. The intending Bidders/ Purchasers are required to participate in the e-Auction process at e-Auction Service Provider's website/ portal - **https://mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp.**
3. The intending Bidders/ Purchasers have to register on the portal using their mobile number and email-id & upload requisite KYC documents. Once the KYC documents are verified by e-auction service provider (may take 2 working days), the intending Bidders/ Purchasers have to transfer the EMD amount in Global EMD Wallet before the e-Auction date and time. The registration, verification of KYC documents and transfer of EMD in wallet must be completed well in advance, before auction.
4. Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) amount shall be paid online through NEFT/ Transfer after generation of Challan from "Pay Pre bid EMD" link in bidder's Global EMD Wallet. NEFT can be done from any Scheduled Commercial Bank, however for Transfer through the chalan bidder has to visit Indian Bank Branch. Payment of EMD by any other mode such as Cheques, etc will not be accepted. Bidders, not depositing the required EMD online, will not be allowed to participate in the e-auction. The Earnest Money deposited shall not bear any interest.
5. MSTC Central Helpdesk Number (for any technical help):033-40645207, 40609118, 40645316, 40602403, 40067351, 40628253. SBI contact no (for property related enquiry): **8811060438 & 9402506404**
6. **The General Terms and Conditions of e-auction sale is available on the website: https://sbi.co.in/web/sbi-in-the-news/auction-notices/sarfaesi-and-others.**
7. To the best of knowledge and information of the Authorised Officer, there is no encumbrance on the property/ies. However, the intending bidders should make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrances, title of property/ies put on auction and claims/rights/dues/affecting the property, prior to submitting their bid. The e-Auction advertisement does not constitute and will not be deemed to constitute any commitment or any representation of the bank. The property is being sold with all the existing and future encumbrances whether known or unknown to the bank. The Authorised Officer/Secured Creditor shall not be responsible in any way for any third party claims/rights/dues. The sale shall be subject to rules/conditions prescribed under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest act, 2002.

This publication is also a 30 days notice to all the borrower/guarantors require under Rule 8(6) of Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002.

NB: 30 days Sale Notice to Borrower/Guarantors has already been sent by Regd. Post at their last known address. In case they do not receive the said notice then this E-auction sale Notice may be treated as substituted mode of service. The other terms and conditions of the e-Auction are published in the following websites.

Date : 02.02.2022
Place : Patna

Authorised Officer
State Bank of India, SARB Patna

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE

IRON RUSTS FROM DISUSE; WATER LOSES ITS PURITY FROM STAGNATION...EVEN SO DOES INACTION SAP THE VIGOUR OF THE MIND. — LEONARDO DA VINCI

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

THE DIGITAL RUPEE

RBI must proceed cautiously, remaining mindful of design considerations, wider implications and challenges

IN THE UNION budget 2022-23, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed the introduction of a digital currency to be issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in the coming financial year. The announcement follows reports of central bank officials informing the central board of the RBI of a pilot project for the introduction of a Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC). Some countries have already introduced CBDCs in some form or the other. For instance, in 2020, the central bank of Bahamas issued a digital currency. More and more central banks across the world are beginning to explore the viability, usefulness and value of digital currencies. Countries like Japan, China, Singapore, Sweden are currently examining the various facets of such a transition. A few days ago, the US Federal Reserve also released a report outlining the costs and benefits of issuing a central bank backed digital dollar.

CBDCs are essentially fiat currencies issued in the virtual/electronic form. Their appeal or the interest in issuing them has gained traction with the rapid surge of cryptocurrencies, the increasing popularity of blockchain technology, and the benefits that many argue stem from its adoption. Among the likely benefits claimed by advocates of CBDCs are the acceleration of financial inclusion, lower costs for financial transactions, especially in the case of cross-border transactions, the advantages of an alternate payments system, the creation of another instrument in the monetary policy arsenal of central banks, the likely adverse impacts on corruption and money laundering, among others. However, to what extent these benefits actually materialise will vary from country to country depending on its specific economic scenario. On the flip side, though, there are several possible risks associated with the introduction of CDBCs. In the case that retail CBDC accounts are interest bearing, there are obviously implications for the banking system. It is also possible that during periods of extreme uncertainty, depositors may choose to migrate away from commercial banks, causing financial upheaval. Then there is also the question of whether CBDCs will offer the same degree of anonymity as cash does.

Recently, RBI Deputy Governor T Rabi Sankar has said that the central bank is "working towards a phased implementation strategy" and will examine the CBDCs in the wholesale and retail segments. However, as several economists have pointed out, while some benefits may accrue at the wholesale level, the real transformation, and the challenge as well, lies at the retail level. Considering the wider economic implications, the central bank must carefully weigh the pros and cons. It must proceed cautiously, remaining mindful of the various issues, the design considerations and the implications surrounding the introduction of the digital currency.

NOW YOU SEE IT

Mayawati breaks a long silence. Her party may need to say and do more to make a fight of it in UP

FOR A PARTY that has been in office several times and holds a vote share of about 20 per cent, the BSP's prolonged absence from public action and visibility in UP, where the first phase of voting is scheduled for February 10, seems mystifying. On Wednesday, BSP chief Mayawati broke a long silence with her first major public meeting of the poll season in Agra and claimed that she has been busy plotting her party's electoral strategy. She blamed the media for writing off her party and claimed that it would spring a surprise when the votes are counted, as happened in the 2007 assembly election, when the BSP won a simple majority.

The fact is that the BSP's political model is different from other parties. It relies on its loyal base among the Jatavs, and works to add to this core vote by reaching out to other communities. The party has in the past made tactical alliances with Brahmins and Muslims, with mixed outcomes. The shift in focus, from the Bahujan Samaj, as conceived by party founder Kanshi Ram, to Sarvajan Samaj, has helped the party to expand beyond its niche and make itself acceptable to a broader cross-section of the electorate, but it has not proved to be enduring. At the same time, the party seldom undertakes street mobilisations even on issues that impact Dalits. It was absent from the anti-CAA/NRC protests, and even from the public agitation that followed the rape and death of a Dalit woman in Hathras. However, this approach may be coming up against new challenges in times when the BSP's rivals, especially the BJP, see politics as a 24X7 activity and work themselves up into perpetual electioneering. With the rise of social media, old forms of political association are being tested and there is continuous political messaging on virtual platforms. Even among the Dalits, newer and younger voices have emerged who are more willing to mobilise on the ground rather than wait until elections. Parties such as the Bhim Army of Chandrasekhar Azad Ravan are no match for the BSP yet, but the rise of these outfits suggests a churn that could dent the prospects of the party that most successfully laid claim to represent the Dalits.

In the current scenario, the BSP's reticence in the public sphere in between elections, and its reliance on an air-tight, centralised model of decision-making within the party, has costs. As the only state where the party has managed to leverage its core vote to win power, UP is crucial to its survival. Another election defeat could marginalise the party even more in the state as well as in national politics.

JUST LET GO

The concept of 'life members' in Indian institutions would have made both the ancients and Karl Marx angry

THE ANCIENTS WOULD have been disappointed with the Uttar Pradesh Cricket Association (UPCA). Millennia ago, they laid down a fairly simple HR policy that ensured timely retirement of upper management, ensuring that new blood entered organisations. After having their day in the sun, rulers and householders were expected to gradually withdraw from daily responsibilities — the *vanaprastha ashrama* — and begin the process of renouncing the world. The UPCA, though, appears to have a renunciation problem.

The list of "life members" — including BCCI official and Congress leader Rajeev Shukla's brother, a family member of Shukla's one-time office assistant Akram Saif, the son of a UPCA director and corporates linked to cricket in UP — has caused some disgruntled members to approach the courts. But, then, who in India wants to retire? Politicians don't retire — unless they are forced to, by sending them to *margdarshak mandals*, for instance. Bureaucrats often jockey for government sinecures and it is the rare business magnate who leaves the company to a capable executive over less-than-capable children.

But spare a thought for the young and the ambitious, and those born without a high-achieving family member. Their struggle to even enter and then to "make it" in the many feudal bastions — politics, administration and yes, even business — will only get more bitter if the venerable and the powerful don't consider the way of the forest or *margdarshak mandal*. Even Karl Marx, that hater of capitalist free enterprise, saw feudalism — when power and position come from family and are permanent — as so much worse than the economic inequality of free enterprise. So, a message for the patriarchs at the UPCA, and at so many other institutions across India: Just let go.

Unpacking growth

Budget emphasis on public sector-driven growth raises concerns about sustainability of such a strategy

JAHANGIR AZIZ

WHILE THE 2022-23 budget is being heralded as a "growth" supportive budget, under the hood it delivers quite a complicated message. To see that one needs to unpack the budget and that means (with apologies to the readers) wading through numbers. But patience has its rewards.

Let's start with the current year's deficit. The budget estimates it at 6.9 per cent of the GDP. Even with the lower privatisation receipts, unless tax revenue — having grown 44 per cent year-on-year till December — suddenly plummets this quarter, the deficit is likely to be lower at 6.6 per cent of GDP in a replay of the end-year dynamics in 2020-21. Against such an eventual outturn, the 2022-23 deficit target of 6.4 per cent of GDP isn't much of a consolidation.

But isn't this what a "growth" supportive budget should do? Prima facie, yes, but not when one parses the message it delivers. If the budget is an indication, then the overall public sector borrowing (Centre, state and PSUs combined) will likely decline from 11.5 per cent of GDP to 11 per cent of GDP next year. This will need to be funded by the private sector's net savings (household and corporate savings less private investment) and foreign borrowing (the current account deficit). The arithmetic for this year goes something like this: The Centre and state governments' fiscal deficit of around 11.5 per cent of GDP is being funded by 10 per cent of private net savings and 1.5 per cent of GDP of foreign borrowing (the current account deficit).

So, for the next fiscal year, private consumption and investment combined can rise only 0.5 percentage points of GDP without increasing foreign borrowing. Put differently, if India's private consumption and investment are to grow more than 0.5 percentage points of GDP, then foreign borrowing — the current account deficit — will necessarily have to increase. This has little to do with economics. It's just the tyranny of arithmetic.

In normal times, India has found it hard to fund a current account deficit of more than 2.5 per cent of GDP without facing serious currency depreciation pressures. Doing so in a year when global financial conditions are poised to tighten sharply as the US Fed embarks on raising interest rates and removing quantitative easing, will be that much more challenging. This arithmetic must have been obvious to the government. So, by limiting the effective consolidation to just 0.2 percentage points of GDP, the message being sent is that the private sector is not yet ready to lead India's recovery and that for the fifth year in a row, growth will need to be driven by the public sector.

> The RBI will be tested. The gross borrowing by the government next year will be a whopping Rs 14.2 trillion, up from Rs 10.5 trillion this year. If the private sector is to revive even a bit, it will need to borrow more. In which case, it is very unlikely that the government can raise such a large amount without interest rates rising sharply unless the RBI purchases a substantial amount of bonds. This means that the RBI will be forced to add more liquidity exactly when it should be reducing the high and excessive amount already in the banking system.

Why does it matter whether growth is driven by the public or private sector? It matters for two reasons. First, the need of the hour is to generate not just growth but also employment. And the public sector doesn't create many jobs and neither do the corporates, start-ups, or infrastructure investment. The bulk of employment is created by SMEs. And, it is the SMEs who have been battered over the last five years. First by the demonetisation, then the troubled implementation of the GST, and now the pandemic. But the budget does not provide any meaningful support to this sector. It extends the ECLGS for one more year, which, for all practical purposes, is just forbearance for banks that have provided loans to SMEs. It is unlikely that this will make SMEs, whose balance sheets have been seriously impaired over the last few years, start investing or expanding employment.

The second reason is that growth via public spending has a high cost and it isn't sustainable beyond a few years. The pressures are already building with the sharp rise in government debt over the last five years to close to 90 per cent of GDP at present. This rise in debt exerts continued upward pressures on interest rates and makes the task of keeping the government's interest payments under control (currently 3.5 per cent of GDP) that much harder without substantial bond purchases by the central bank. This, in turn, seriously complicates monetary operations and communications as it becomes difficult to untangle if the central bank is targeting inflation or bond yields.

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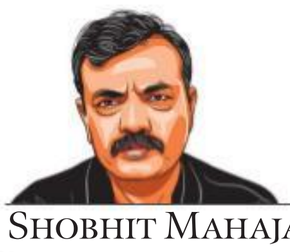
There is one area where the budget appears to have built some space to meet potential demands for additional support, although without being very transparent about it. Gross taxes are pegged to decline to 10.7 per cent of GDP from the 11.4 per cent of GDP we expect this year (after adjusting for the underestimation this year as discussed earlier). The effective tax buoyancy (that is, by how much taxes rise for a one per cent increase in GDP) is, thus, just 0.4 versus an expected outturn of 1.8 this year. Consequently, there is a clear upside to next year's tax projections, and this could be used to either reduce the overall deficit or to offset cuts in excise duties that might be needed to stabilise retail oil prices if global crude spikes, for example, because of geopolitics.

So, while there is some space to meet contingencies, the budget has complicated macroeconomic management and the continued emphasis on public-sector driven growth raises concerns about the sustainability of such a strategy with debt already at such a high level.

The writer is Chief Emerging Markets Economist, J P Morgan. These are his personal views

TRYST WITH UNREASON

Use of academia to promote anti-science, ideological agendas, must worry us all



SHOBHIT MAHAJAN

THE IITS HAVE been in the news lately for all the wrong reasons. This time it is not about the fat pay packets their students have got in the institute placements, but about ghosts and steppe people invading, or rather not invading, Bharatvarsh.

First, the ghosts. The director of an IIT posted a video on social media where he claimed he had exorcised ghosts by chanting mantras and espousing the wisdom of the Bhagwad Gita. Then, IIT Kharagpur, the oldest amongst these venerable institutions, brought out its 2022 calendar. Ordinarily, these things are either harmless propaganda for the institution's great work or contain innocuous photographs of flora and fauna. What made this particular piece of work remarkable was that it claimed to be debunking certain myths about ancient India.

The calendar is supposed to be based on research by the recently created Centre of Excellence for Indian Knowledge System at IIT Kharagpur, which strives to do inter-disciplinary research on various branches of the Indian knowledge systems. The areas of interest range from Indian history to advanced archaeological exploration; from Indian language systems to aesthetics systems; from Indian systems of geometry and mathematics to cosmology and positional astronomy; and from Indian constructs of ecology and ethics to systems of welfare economics and planning.

On the face of it, any such endeavor should be lauded. However, if the calendar is any indication, instead of genuine scholarship, the centre seems to be more focussed on fighting ideological battles. Among the many themes which the calendar explores is the "rebuttal to the Aryan invasion myth". It lays out "evidence" that "the myth is not just erroneous but maneuvered and widely popularised! A large scholarship is needed now to erase the misinterpretation sustained by the colonial hangover!" The claim is that the historians and archeologists have been wrong in saying that the Vedic period followed the Aryan invasion, which was preceded by the Harappan civilisation. Instead, the claim is that the Vedic era extends far into antiquity and there was simply no migration or invasion from outside Bharatvarsh.

> Anyone familiar with recent scholarship in the fields of paleo-genetics and DNA sequencing of existing populations would find all of this laughable. Several labs around the world have confirmed that there was indeed migration from the Eurasian steppe into north India around 4,000 years ago, around the time when archeologists believe that the Harappan civilisation was in decline. All of this evidence is well-documented not only in scientific literature but also in popular books.

Anyone familiar with recent scholarship in the fields of paleo-genetics and DNA sequencing of existing populations would find all of this laughable. Several labs around the world have confirmed that there was indeed migration from the Eurasian steppe into north India around 4,000 years ago, around the time when archeologists believe that the Harappan civilisation was in decline. All of this evidence is well-documented not only in scientific literature but also in popular books like those by David Reich and Tony Joseph, among others.

Why then would a centre that is supposed to carry out scientific investigation in areas related to ancient India bring out such a blatantly un-scientific document? If recent history is any guide, it seems that the idea was to provide support for the grand narrative which the government has been actively promoting, namely that of the greatness and antiquity of an indigenous Indian civilisation. Bizarre statements by those in important positions in the current dispensation regarding mythical scientific achievements of ancient India, rewriting of textbooks, active support of certain institutes and think tanks, funding of research into pseudo-scientific areas, among others, are part of this exercise. The capture of respectable academic institutions to serve this purpose is only the latest tactic being employed.

The case of the gentleman exorcising ghosts is not something we need to worry about. After all, the private beliefs of individuals are not something which should bother us as long as they are not imposed on others. There is no evidence to suggest that the person's beliefs have impacted his capabilities as a researcher or an administrator. And if people who are superstitious or hold irrational beliefs were to be excluded from important administrative posts, then a large percentage of our bureaucrats and politicians would need to be superannuated. Even among the scientists, this dichotomy of professional and private spheres is widespread. The case of a famous scientist at a premier research institute in Mumbai throwing away food from his refrigerator after a solar eclipse is only one such example.

The promotion of anti-scientific beliefs and the use of academia to further a particular ideological agenda are things all of us should be worried about. Replacing robust scientific theories with pseudo-science in textbooks and using academic credentials for ideological purposes is the far more insidious exercise. The ghosts can take care of themselves. It is the former we need to be concerned about.

The writer is professor of physics and astrophysics, University of Delhi

FEBRUARY 4, 1982, FORTY YEARS AGO

INDIAN EXPRESS

Kerala no-trust move taken up amid uproar

KERALA CRISIS

THE RULING SIDE and the Opposition fought every inch of the ground as the assembly began its two-day debate on the no-confidence motion against the 38-day old Karunakaran ministry. The debate started immediately after the new Speaker A C Jose was elected uncontested and was installed. It progressed through a series of bitter procedural wrangles and arguments over proprieties. It's expected to end with the crucial voting on February 4. The Opposition's main point was that the government still did not have a majority, that the governor had committed impropriety in installing it, that the Government was the child of political immorality propped up by defections and that the casting vote of the speaker could not sustain a government. The government side countered this by saying that the misrule of the Marxist-led government had forced the democratic forces to come together.

OPPOSITION UNITY

REPRESENTATIVES OF THREE Opposition parties — the Janata, the Lok Dal and the Congress — discussed inconclusively the modalities of their merger in an effort to form a national alternative to the Congress (I). The discussion will be resumed on February 7. The convenor of the coordination party of the three parties, Biju Patnaik, was hopeful that the modalities and policies of the three parties would be finalised in the meeting.

MERCENARY RACKET

THE INTERROGATION OF the group pf Indians who were deported from Lebanon earlier this week has revealed a massive racket to recruit mercenary soldiers from India under the cover of exporting labour to West Asia. Scores of villagers, especially from Punjab, are suspected to have been duped by these agents and sent to Beirut to fight as soldiers for the warring groups there.

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

Since Covid-19 is likely to continue interrupting supply chains and shooting up international prices for some more time, high inflation may continue to be a reality

— THE DAILY STAR

Getting the fiscal story right

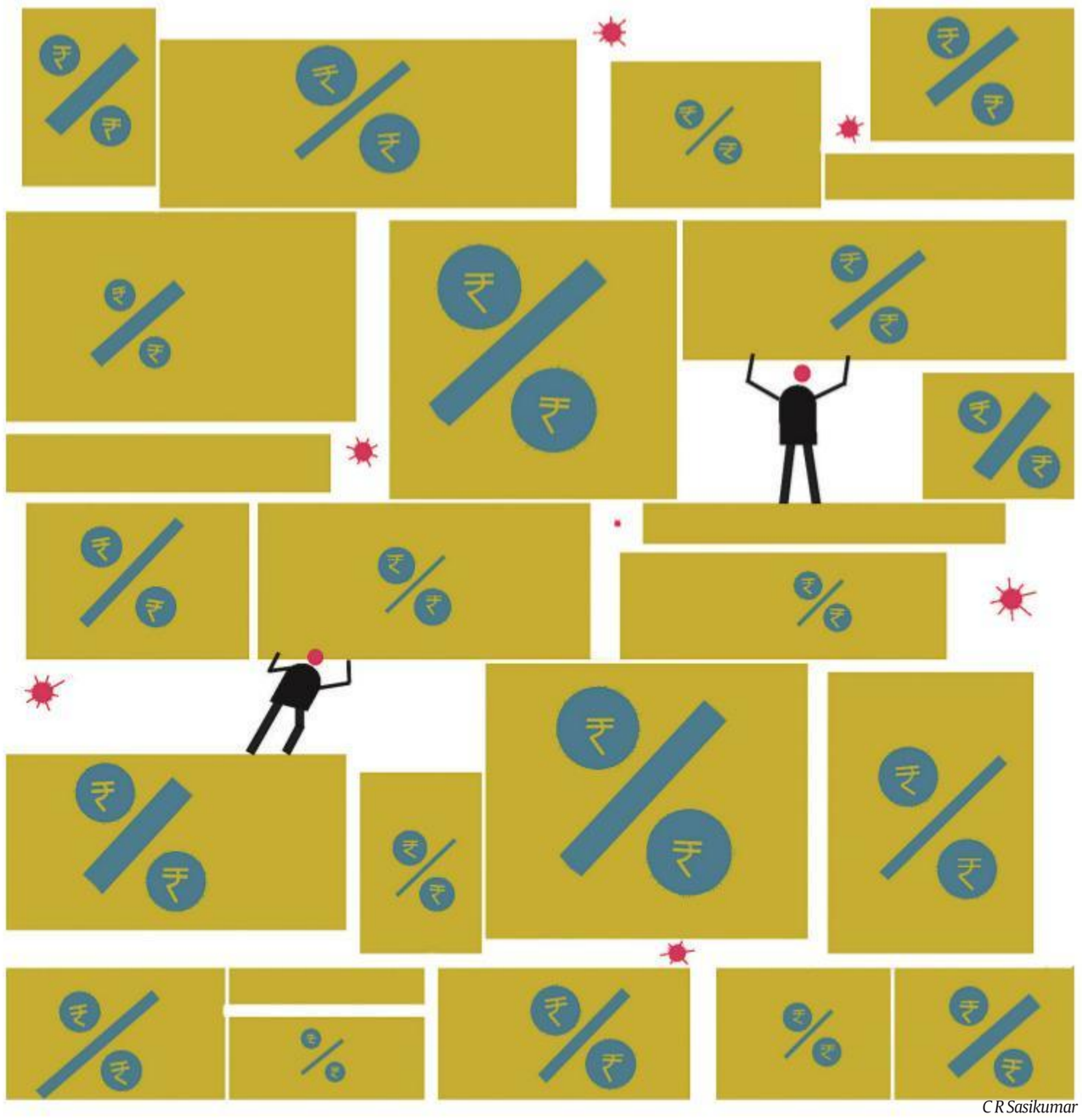
There is no 'one-size-fits-all' solution. The direction of consolidation, rather than a specific quantified path, is the most appropriate consideration during a pandemic

PINAKI CHAKRABORTY

THE UNION BUDGET 2022-23 indicates that the Covid-induced fiscal shock is much less pronounced now as compared to last year. We do not have a post-Covid medium-term growth projection for the country yet. However, if we take the Fifteenth Finance Commission's growth projection as a reference, India's actual growth performance for the fiscal years 2020-21 and 2021-22 was well above the projections made by the commission. For the fiscal year 2022-23, the economy is projected to grow at 11 per cent (at current prices) compared to 9.5 per cent projected by the Finance Commission. This improved growth performance is also reflected in higher revenue mobilisation, thus creating fiscal space for higher spending.

One of the highlights of the budget has been its focus on capital investment. However, financing for such capital investments has several dimensions. Given the economy's savings-investment profile and macroeconomic uncertainties due to the pandemic, private and household investments are likely to be reactive to the general economic environment and it is safe to assume that the decisions to save and invest may have been seriously impacted by the pandemic. But for the government, making capital investment in such uncertain times assumes a much higher priority and is equally indispensable for achieving a strong and sustainable recovery from the pandemic. Data available till 2019-20, as per National Accounts, shows that gross fixed capital formation by the general government (Centre and states) has shown an increase as a percentage of GDP from 3.48 in 2011-12 to 3.82 in 2019-20, while other sectors, particularly households, the share fell from 15.75 per cent to 11.39 per cent during the same period.

The fiscal stance taken in the post-pandemic budgets for higher capital spending, including the budget of 2022-23, is likely to further enhance the general government share in overall capital formation. This year's Union budget projects an increase in capex by Rs 3.14 lakh crore, as compared to the budgeted numbers of the previous fiscal. However, it is also important to recognise that two-thirds of the general government's capital expenditure is undertaken by states and in this context, the announcement of the Rs 1 lakh crore interest-free loans to the states to increase public investment has been a significant step. The 50-year interest-free loan to the states for the fiscal-year 2022-23 is important for two reasons: First, as it is meant for capital spending, it cannot be diverted to finance revenue deficit and thus has the potential to augment capital spending at the state level and thereby the overall capital spending in the country. Second, in the year 2021-22, 13 states had reported revenue deficit in their accounts and this loan facility (which is over and above the FRBM limit), can prevent the downside fiscal-risk of reduction in capital expenditure at the state level. Allocation priorities for this interest-free loan have also been indicated in the budget. One such priority is the states' share of the PMGSY contribution from this fund. Since states taken together have a higher share in the country's public capital spending, effective absorption of this additional borrowing facility will be critical for higher public investment.



C R Sasikumar

On the fiscal consolidation story, there are three broad trends. First, the increase in taxes by Rs 5.71 lakh crore between 2020-21 (the first year of the pandemic) and 2022-23 shows that the fiscal challenges have eased, but remain present as we navigate economic recovery in uncertain times. Second, between 2020-21 and 2022-23 (BE), the reduction in revenue deficit has been substantial — from 7.3 per cent to 3.8 per cent of GDP. Third, compositionally, revenue deficit continues to be more than 55 per cent of the fiscal deficit and the management of such a deficit has few important considerations for revenue expenditure, that is, interest payments and allocation under various centrally sponsored and central sector schemes.

The change in allocation within the CSS basket receives a great deal of attention after every budget. However, the fundamental point is that resource flow to the states in the form of CSS is still substantial. Aggregate allocation under centrally sponsored and central sector schemes (CSS) as per the 2022-23 (BE) is Rs 3.83 lakh crore and the interest payment cost of the Union government is Rs 9.56 lakh crore. Beyond scheme-wise allocations, it is also important to consider CSS allocation as an issue of macro-fiscal management issue at the Union and state level, especially when it is contributing to the high revenue deficit of the central government and binding state resources for matching contribution, thereby increasing states' deficit.

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Overall, the fiscal deficit for the year 2022-23 is higher than what was recommended by the Fifteenth Finance Commission. However, if we consider the direction of consolidation, it is towards a reduction in the fiscal deficit. The post-Covid fiscal consolidation framework is evolving globally and there is pressure on governments to calibrate the deficit and debt in a way that responds to the crisis. Though in the medium-term, the fiscal story is about supporting recovery, it is also true that there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution to fiscal consolidation and debt sustainability. This remains the most complex part of fiscal management when one focuses on the budget of a single year. The direction of fiscal consolidation rather than a specific quantified path in an unprecedented time like this is probably the most appropriate consideration.

The writer is director, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy. Views are personal

Ideas in the numbers

Budget continues Modi government's attempt to disrupt status quo, put citizen in the forefront

G KISHAN REDDY

IT WOULD be apt to call the 2022-23 budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman a "blueprint for India's Amrit Kaal". As India celebrates 75 years of Independence and prepares to spend the next 25 years in building its stature as a global power to reckon with, this budget will serve as the guiding light on India's pathway to prosperity and international dominance.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been an unwavering votary of disrupting the status quo to ring in transformational change. The ideas he brings to governance put the citizen at the forefront of policy-making. The Union budget continues that tradition by bringing in several new ideas and fitting them snugly in the framework of government policies and expenditure.

The goals that the Modi government has set for the Amrit Kaal are ambitious, comprehensive and unambiguous. First, there is a focus on growth and all-inclusive welfare. Second, India will see technology-enabled development, and a comprehensive energy transition plan, coupled with climate action. Third, the government will push for a virtuous cycle of private investment, crowded in by public capital investment.

Four priorities define these goals — the PM Gati Shakti plan, a new vision for how infrastructure is developed in the country, inclusive development with the fruits of progress reaching the last person in society, innovative financing of investments and productivity enhancements and a focus on sunrise sectors. The budget outlines the government's vision for these goals and priorities very ably and effectively.

This budget gives a thrust to strong infrastructure building. Under the PM Gati Shakti framework, the budgetary capital expenditure has been increased by 35 per cent. Seven sectors of roads, railways, ports, airports, mass transit, waterways and logistics infrastructure will be the thrust of this record-high of Rs 7.5 lakh crore government asset-building push.

Another thing that will contribute immensely to India's progress will be the focus on industrial development. The 14 production-linked incentive (PLI) schemes operationalised by the government will result in additional industrial output of Rs 30 lakh crore over the next five years and create 60 lakh new jobs. An additional allocation of Rs 19,500 crore has been made for the solar industry PLI scheme. This will also help India realise its goal of 280-gigawatt solar installed capacity by 2030.

The budget is not just about large-scale infrastructure and industrial vision. The government is working tirelessly to help the micro, small and medium enterprises, which have borne the brunt of the Covid-19 pandemic. An additional Rs 50,000 crore has been provided for the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme, which will be used exclusively for the hospitality and related sectors. This will benefit a beleaguered sector and help stabilise business operations as the tourism industry recovers.

Another interesting feature of the budget is creating specific, targeted development plans for different geographies based on the data and indicators available. A new scheme, the Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North-East, has been proposed to be implemented via the North Eastern Council. In the spirit of the PM Gati Shakti plan, this scheme will fund local infrastructure. However, the prioritisation and selection of the projects will be done by the states themselves. The decision-making and execution for this Rs 1,500 crore programme will be decentralised from end to end. Not only will this programme create better local accessibility, bringing jobs to the region, but will also demonstrate the true spirit of devolution and local empowerment.

In the spirit of cooperative federalism, collaboration with the states is also reflected in a Rs 1.05 lakh crore support to the states for productive economic investments. These will be 50-year interest-free loans over and above the state borrowing, demonstrating true federalism and bereft of any political considerations. States will also benefit from central support on urban planning, which has been identified as key to improving ease of living.

River linking is a transformational idea that was put forward by the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government and has now been taken forward by the Modi government. Draft project reports of five river links, namely the Damanganga-Pinjal, the Par-Tapi-Narmada, the Godavari-Krishna, the Krishna-Pennar and the Pennar-Cauvery have been finalised. These projects will immensely benefit the southern states.

The budget lays the path not only for a "Digital India", but also for a "Digital First India". Be it banking, education, agriculture, health or skill development, digital will be the backbone for India's socioeconomic transformation. For each sector, the budget offers specific interventions and a futuristic vision of how the J-curve of productivity can be unleashed.

The taxation proposals reflect the government's view of balancing the precarious pandemic situation and the need for constant improvements on the margins. Capital gains being capped at 15 per cent will help unleash a wave of angel investments in Indian start-ups. This will help develop a new asset class for those who are able to invest in emerging businesses. As the service economy opens up further and activities like travel and tourism pick up, the goods and services tax collection will continue to build on a robust base. The Finance Minister has also proposed a realistic fiscal deficit target given the current scenario. This is indeed a commendable achievement.

The Modi government has shown that budgets need not only be accounting documents. They can be the engineering drawings for nation-building.

The writer is Minister of Culture, Tourism and Development of Northeastern Region in the Government of India

The inequality drag

Reading the budget through the missing keywords

ASHWINI DESHPANDE

WHAT WERE the keywords in the 2022 budget speech? Digital, green, climate, Aatmanirbhar, Make in India, capital expenditure, ease of doing business, tax revenues, GST collection. The finance minister emphasised robust tax collections, an optimistic projection for GDP growth and a futuristic economy driven by technology, clean fuel, and smart cities. Which words were either completely missing or sparsely used? Unemployment, poverty, food security, informal sector, migrants, daily wagers, health for all, welfare, social protection, women, youth.

Are the missing words irrelevant or inconsequential? The Covid-19 pandemic is not over. The economy has been badly battered and is in urgent need of a broad-based recovery, not the K-shaped one, where the economic conditions of those at the top of the income/wealth pyramid have improved but the lives and livelihoods of those at the bottom have become more precarious and vulnerable due to high unemployment and inadequate safety nets. The substantial gains that India had made in terms of poverty reduction are under threat of reversal. The share of the top 10 per cent in the total national income stands at 57.1 per cent whereas the share of the bottom 50 per cent in total national income stands at 13.1 per cent. India's rising inequality is a real and serious problem, likely to jeopardise future growth.

The big-ticket announcement in the budget is an increase in capital expenditure by 35.4 per cent. Note that this would raise the share of this expenditure in GDP from 2.2 per cent last year to 2.9 per cent this year. First, as a fraction of GDP this is not massive, and the increase this year is roughly the same as last year. (Did we see a big jump in employment as a result of increased capex last year?) Two, capex comprises expenditure on creating or upgrading fixed assets, as well as loan repayment. Indeed, an additional Rs 51,971 crore have been allocated towards settlement of outstanding guaranteed liabilities of Air India and this amount has been accounted for in the total expenditure.

Three, while infrastructure investment benefits economic activity, it would be a fallacy to assume that the immediate impact of infrastructure projects would be to expand employment. For one thing, infrastructure projects could be capital- instead of labour-intensive. Secondly, the multiplier effects could be small and not immediate. India has witnessed jobless growth in the past. Finally, not all the capex is for infrastructure. It is concentrated in mainly eight ministries/departments — atomic energy (1.9 per cent of capex); telecommunications (7.2 per cent), defence (20.3 per cent), transfer to states (1.4 per cent), housing and urban affairs (3.6 per cent), railways (18.3 per cent) and road transportation and highways (25 per cent).

MGNREGA is the employer of last resort for the poorest households. Despite the massive unemployment challenge, the budget did not announce an increase in allocation to this crucial safety net programme, which remained at Rs 73,000 crore, same as the budgetary estimate for last year and lower than the revised estimate of Rs 98,000 crore for last year.

While we are still reeling under the biggest health crisis of the century, the expenditure under health continues to be low and misleading as items such as water, sanitation, nutrition, and air pollution (no doubt important determinants of public health) are now clubbed with conventional health expenditure. This makes it harder to track specific expenditure on strengthening health infrastructure and healthcare services. Provision of basic public goods must be a key area of focus. Last year, only 44 per cent of the amount allocated to the Department of Water and Sanitation had been spent till December 2021.

Opportunities for women to participate in paid economic activities have been low and falling in recent years. The omission of this critical divide from the budget speech was disheartening, compounded by the fact that key flagship schemes like Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 did not see an increase in budgetary allocation, with the funds earmarked failing to meet the pre-pandemic levels.

On education, the finance minister focused on the marvels of digital education (while the allocation under Digital India e-learning component was reduced to Rs 421 crore from Rs 645 crore in 2021-22), with no mention of how the deep digital divide has resulted in virtually no formal schooling for millions of children with no access to the internet or digital devices. The solution is to immediately open schools, and to improve the quality of schooling instruction. A hundred television channels can never be a substitute for good quality classroom experience.

The two sectors which provide livelihood for millions of Indians, and which overlap to some extent but not completely, are the MSME and the informal sectors. These segments of the Indian economy have been facing acute distress. For the MSME sector, the government has extended and expanded the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) to Rs 5 lakh crore. This is essentially a credit support scheme, i.e., tackling economic distress from the supply side. The informal sector, which employs close to 80 per cent of India's workforce, finds no mention in the budget speech. As has been argued several times, what is needed is a strong demand-side push that would include payroll support to MSMEs and direct cash and in-kind transfers to informal workers.

India's real GDP in FY 2019-20 was Rs 145 lakh crore. This has shrunk by Rs 15-20 lakh crore over the last two years. To get back on the growth track and to increase the size of the economy, economic policy needs to alleviate distress and focus on expanding the incomes and consumption of those at the bottom of the pyramid. Widening of inequalities due to a two-speed, K-shaped recovery will hurt consumption demand and threaten social stability as well as economic growth.

The writer is professor of economics; director, CEDA, Ashoka University

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

INEFFICIENT SEEDING

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'The seeds not planted' (IE, February 3). Making nutritious meals affordable for all is certainly needed. However, the obstacles pointed out by the article are misplaced. Highly fragmented landholdings have made farming unviable due to higher fixed costs, while crop yields remain far below international levels due to lack of sufficient capital to adopt modern techniques. Subsidising these inefficiencies and raising the tariff walls to block "cheaper food" from reaching the Indian masses will not remain sustainable for long. The need of the hour is to pool land parcels to achieve economies of scale. The youth in "disguised employment" should focus on reskilling, and move to secondary and tertiary sectors to augment the village incomes. Cooperatives can play a role in creating joint land pools, building storage facilities, pooling and renting of expensive modern farm equipment, and in infusing the necessary capital.

Jorawer Singh, *Chandigarh*

WRONG APPROACH

THIS REFERS TO the report, "Jaishankar leads counterattack on Rahul Gandhi, cites 'history lessons'" (IE, February 3). It appears that the ruling party and the opposition always think that it will show them in poor light if they readily appreciate or accept each other's viewpoint on the issues discussed in Parliament. This seems to be the reason that they are rarely seen high-fiving each other even when debating non-controversial topics. Regarding Rahul Gandhi's charge that our government has brought together China and Pakistan, thus making a strategic mistake in Ladakh, it could have been repudiated in a cool-headed manner instead of the external affairs minister giving the impression of having been cut to the quick by the allegation. Going with all guns blazing after Gandhi will only encourage him to continue to cross swords with his BJP detractors in the future.

Tarsem Singh, *Mahilpur*

A BETTER WAY

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Talk it out' (IE, February 3). Freedom of expression is the basic right in any democracy. The move to outlaw protests against the government's foreign policy by the ruling party does not augur well for the country's democratic credentials. It is important for the government to engage with protesters and address their grievances by clearing the clouds of misconceptions about India's policies towards the Maldives. The government has many options to convince people how its "India First" policy is in the interest of the country. Strong people-to-people ties, India's needs-based development projects as against some countries' "top-down" approach, India's prompt responses during the coup d'etat attempt in 1988, first responder role during the Indian Ocean tsunami, and Operation Neer in 2014 — to name a few as examples — can help calm protesters.

Dewang Ganesh Thosar, *Raigad*

MEANWHILE

WINTER STORM CAUSING DISRUPTIONS IN US

More than 100 million Americans were under some form of winter weather warning on Thursday, a day after a storm disrupted life across a wide swath of the country, closing courtrooms in New Mexico, blocking highways in Missouri and causing vehicle crashes in Indiana. The storm was creating dangerous road conditions in several states, and more than 4,000 flights were canceled on Thursday, according to FlightAware, a tracking website.

TOP OF THE WORLD

Rishi Sunak. *Reuters*

UNITED KINGDOM

'Covid parties damaged public faith in govt'

London: Revelations about parties at British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's residence and office during the Covid-19 lockdown has damaged public confidence in the government, finance minister Rishi Sunak said on Thursday. Asked about whether the scandal, which has resulted in a police investigation, had damaged the public's confidence in the government, Sunak said: "Yes I think it has." "I can appreciate people's frustration and I think it is now the job of all of us in government, all politicians to restore people's trust," he told the BBC. **REUTERS**

MYANMAR

Suu Kyi faces new bribery charge: Report

MYANMAR'S MILITARY government announced a new bribery charge against deposed civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi on Thursday, the country's state broadcaster reported. Nobel laureate Suu Kyi, 76, is on trial in nearly a dozen cases that carry combined maximum sentences of at least 150 years in prison. She has been already been sentenced to a total of six years detention for other cases. A spokesperson for Myanmar's military, which overthrew Suu Kyi's government in a coup last February, could not be reached for comment. **REUTERS**

President Tayyip Erdogan will discuss tensions between Ukraine and Russia with his counterpart Volodymyr Zelenskiy in Kyiv on Thursday. *Reuters*

Russia slams US troop deployment to east Europe

THE NEW YORK TIMES
FEBRUARY 3

THE KREMLIN denounced the US on Thursday for deploying additional troops to Eastern Europe, saying the move was intended to "stir up tensions," even as American officials and satellite imagery indicated that Russia had not slowed its large-scale buildup of military forces that threaten an invasion of Ukraine.

The Kremlin spokesman, Dmitri S. Peskov, accused the US of "igniting tensions on the European continent," and described the US deployment to Poland and Romania as a threatening act "in the vicinity of our borders."

"Clearly, Russian concerns are justified and understandable," Peskov told reporters on Thursday. "All measures to ensure Russia's security and interests are also understandable."

"These are not permanent moves — they are precisely in response to the current security environment in light of this increasing threatening behavior by the Russian Federation," said Ned Price, the State Department spokesman.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy on Thursday welcomed an offer from visiting Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan to mediate in Kyiv's standoff with Moscow, and Erdogan promised to do whatever he could to end the crisis peacefully.

NATO: Russia to have 30k troops on drills in Belarus

REUTERS
KYIV/BRUSSELS, FEBRUARY 3

NATO SAID Russia had stepped up deployments to Ukraine's northern neighbour Belarus in recent days and was expected to have 30,000 troops there for joint military exercises this month.

The Russia-Belarus exercises, running until February 20, have provided Moscow with cover to further increase forces near Ukraine. Ukraine's defence minister said Russia had currently massed a total of 115,000 troops near Ukraine's borders.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said: "Over the last days, we have seen a significant movement of Russian military forces into Belarus. "This is the biggest Russian deployment there since the Cold War, with an expected 30,000 combat troops" as well as Spetsnaz special operations forces, SU-35 fighter jets, and nuclear-capable Iskander missiles, he said.

Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu arrived in Belarus on Thursday to inspect Russian and Belarusian troops and was due to meet Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko, Interfax news agency said.

TARGET KILLS HIMSELF 13 die in commando raid | **OP PLANNED LONG AGO** Tip located accused in Syria in Dec | **BIGGEST OPERATION** Since Al-Baghdadi killing in 2019

ISIS chief killed in US raid

Biden says raid shows that US forces can take out terrorist threats anywhere in world

THE NEW YORK TIMES
FEBRUARY 3

PRESIDENT BIDEN said on Thursday that the leader of the Islamic State died during a raid by US Special Operations commandos in a risky pre-dawn attack in northwest Syria. Rescue workers said women and children were among at least 13 people killed during the raid.

Biden said in a statement that the terrorist leader, identified by ISIS as Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi, was killed. A senior administration official said al-Qurayshi died at the beginning of the operation when he exploded a bomb that killed him and members of his own family, including women and children.

"Thanks to the skill and bravery of our armed forces, we have taken off the battlefield Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi — the leader of ISIS," Biden said in a statement. "All Americans have returned safely from the operation."

The helicopter-borne assault carried out by about two dozen American commandos, backed by helicopter gunships, armed Reaper drones and attack jets, resembled the raid in October 2019 in which Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the previous leader of the Islamic State, died when he detonated a suicide vest as US forces raided a hide-out not far from where Thursday's operation took place.

The airborne raid came days after the end of the largest US combat involvement with the Islamic State since the end of the jihadists' so-called caliphate three years ago. American forces backed a Kurdish-led militia in northeastern Syria as it fought for more than a week to oust Islamic State fighters from a prison they had occupied in the city of Hasaka.

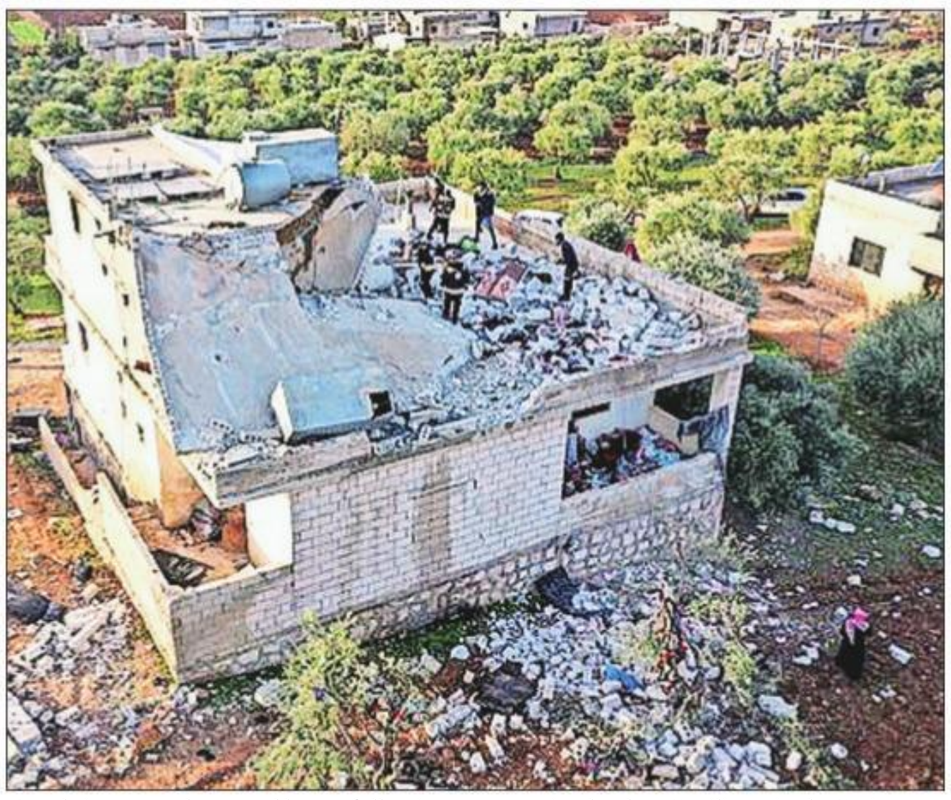
Little is known about Al-Qurayshi, who succeeded al-Baghdadi, or ISIS's top command structure. But analysts said the death of the Islamic State leader was a significant blow to the terrorist group.

American helicopters ferried the commandos into position after midnight, surrounding a house in Atmeh, a town close to the border with Turkey in rebel-held Idlib Province, according to eyewitnesses, social media reports and the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a conflict monitor based in Britain.

Speaking in the Roosevelt Room at the White House, Biden said Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi was behind a series of atrocities, including against the Yazidi people.

Biden said he "made a choice to pursue a Special Forces raid at a much greater risk to our own people" to limit civilian casualties, rather than to order an airstrike that would have destroyed the entire building.

"This operation is testament to America's reach and capability to take out terrorist threats no matter where they try to hide anywhere in the world," he said.



People inspect a destroyed house following an operation by the US military in the Syrian village of Atmeh, which killed at least 13 people on Thursday. *AP*

Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi was behind a series of atrocities, including against the Yazidi people. Thanks to the bravery of our troops, this horrible terrorist leader is no more This operation is testament to America's reach and capability to take out terrorist threats no matter where they try to hide anywhere in the world"

JOE BIDEN
US PRESIDENT

Who was Abu Ibrahim al-Hashemi al-Qurayshi?

Abu Ibrahim al-Hashemi al-Qurayshi

EXPLAINED

THE HEAD of Islamic State, Abu Ibrahim al-Hashemi al-Qurayshi, died as he lived most of his life: off the grid in the jihadist underworld.

Little is known about the ISIS leader, whose real name is Amir Muhammad Said Abdel-Rahman al-Mawla, or other members of the group's senior command. But his death in a raid by U.S. commandos in Syria on Thursday was a significant blow to the terror group and a victory for US counterterrorism efforts.

While he was nowhere near as prominent as his predecessor, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who died in a similar US operation in 2019, "Qurayshi still commands a lot of respect within jihadi circles and is known to be highly intelligent and able to think strategically, said Colin P Clarke, a counterterrorism analyst at the Soufan Group, a security consulting firm based in New York.

Clarke said al-Qurayshi had kept a low profile, which helped him elude an American-led manhunt but also may have hampered his ability to expand the Islamic State's global network and brand. In March 2019, ISIS lost the last piece of territory from its so-called caliphate in parts of Syria and Iraq.

"The next ISIS leader could be someone relatively unknown, which will present the US and its allies with a challenge in terms of intelligence collection and mapping his network. But it's also a challenge for ISIS, particularly if the next leader is not someone with a reputation on par with previous jihadist leaders."

Al-Qurayshi, who was 45 and born in Iraq, was named the head of ISIS after al-Baghdadi died in October 2019 in similar circumstances: detonating a suicide vest as US forces raided his hide-out in Syria's Idlib Province. Once he took up that mantle, the United States put a bounty of up to $10 million on his head.

The US government said he "helped drive and justify the abduction, slaughter, and trafficking of the Yazidi religious minority in northwest Iraq and also led some of the group's global terrorist operations." He was captured by US forces in Iraq in early 2008. The date of his release is not known. **NYT**

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E-mail: cs@torrentpower.com

EXTRACT OF STATEMENT OF CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021

(₹ in Crore except per share data)

Particulars	Quarter ended	Nine months ended	Quarter ended
	31.12.2021	31.12.2021	31.12.2020
	Un-audited	Un-audited	Un-audited
Total income from operations	3,767.43	10,513.96	2,952.75
Net profit for the period before tax and exceptional items	509.12	1,267.30	398.68
Net profit / (loss) for the period before tax and after exceptional items	509.12	1,267.30	398.68
Net profit / (loss) for the period after tax and exceptional items	369.45	946.07	321.73
Total comprehensive income for the period (after tax) (attributable to owners of the Company)	367.74	940.63	318.48
Equity share capital	480.62	480.62	480.62
Reserves (excluding revaluation reserve as shown in the balance sheet of previous year)			9,703.62 (as at 31.03.2021)
Earnings per share (of ₹ 10/- each)			
Basic (₹)	7.66	19.60	6.67
Diluted (₹)	7.66	19.60	6.67

EXTRACT OF THE STATEMENT OF STANDALONE FINANCIAL RESULTS

(₹ in Crore)

Particulars	Quarter ended	Nine months ended	Quarter ended
	31.12.2021	31.12.2021	31.12.2020
	Un-audited	Un-audited	Un-audited
Total income from operations	3,635.46	10,082.29	2,866.88
Net profit for the period before tax and exceptional items	525.20	1,253.66	423.48
Net profit / (loss) for the period before tax and after exceptional items	525.20	1,253.66	423.48
Net profit / (loss) for the period after tax and exceptional items	380.18	935.47	345.78
Total comprehensive income for the period (after tax)	379.75	933.89	343.86

Note:
1. The above is an extract of the detailed financial results for the quarter and nine months ended December 31, 2021 filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the same, along with the notes, are available on the websites of Stock Exchanges at www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com and also on the Company's website at www.torrentpower.com.

Place : Ahmedabad
Date : February 03, 2022

FBI confirms it bought Pegasus from NSO Group

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 3

THE FBI has confirmed purchasing NSO Group's powerful spyware tool Pegasus, whose chronic abuse to surveil journalists, dissidents and human rights activists has long been established. It suggested its motivation was to "stay abreast of emerging technologies and tradecraft."

The agency added in a statement Wednesday that it obtained a limited licence from the Israeli firm "for product testing and evaluation only," never using it operationally or to support any investigation. But critics wondered why the premier US law enforcement agency would need to pay for access to a notorious surveillance tool that has been extensively researched by public interest cyber sleuths if its interest was so limited.

"Spending millions of dollars to line the pockets of a company that is widely known to serially facilitate widespread human rights abuses and operations that threaten the US's own national security is definitely troubling," said Ron Deibert, director of Citizen Lab, the University of Toronto internet watchdog that has exposed dozens of Pegasus hacks since 2016. **AP**

13 militants, seven soldiers killed in attacks on security posts in Pak

SAJJAD HUSSAIN
ISLAMABAD, FEBRUARY 3

ARMED ASSAILANTS attacked two security forces' camps in Pakistan's restive southwestern Balochistan province, triggering an intense exchange of fire in which at least 13 militants and seven soldiers were killed, the Army said on Thursday.

The attacks, claimed later by the banned Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), took place in Panjgur and Noshki districts on Wednesday. In Panjgur, the terrorists tried to enter a security forces' camp from two locations while in Noshki they attempted to get into a Frontier Corps (FC) post.

After successfully repulsing the attacks at both posts, the forces carried out a clearance operation to hunt down the militants hiding in the area, according to a statement by the Pakistan Army.

Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed said in a video message that nine militants and four soldiers were killed in Noshki.

"The militants were repulsed from both places by the Pakistan Army. A few — four to five people — are surrounded by the army in Panjgur and will be defeated," he said, terming it a "great success" against terrorism.

Prime Minister Imran Khan took to Twitter on Thursday to congratulate the security forces for foiling the terror attacks on their camps in Balochistan.

"We salute our brave security forces who repulsed terrorist attacks against security forces' camps in Panjgur & Naushki, Balochistan. The nation stands united behind our security forces who continue to give great sacrifices to protect us," he wrote.

The BLA claimed responsibility for the attacks in a statement. The separatist outfit has recently stepped up attacks on security forces and installations. **PTI**

MORE GREEN CARDS AVAILABLE FOR PROFESSIONALS

US hospitals seek foreign nurses amid visa windfall

AMY TAXIN
FEBRUARY 3

WITH AMERICAN hospitals facing a dire shortage of nurses amid a slogging pandemic, many are looking abroad for healthcare workers.

There's an unusually high number of green cards available this year for foreign professionals, including nurses, who want to move to the United States — twice as many as just a few years ago. That's because US consulates shut down during the coronavirus pandemic weren't issuing visas to relatives of American citizens, and, by law, these unused slots now get transferred to eligible workers.

Amy L. Erlbacher-Anderson, an immigration attorney in Omaha, Nebraska, said she has seen more demand for foreign nurses in two years than the rest of her 18-year career. And this year, she said, it's more likely they'll get approved to come, so long as US consular offices can process all the applications.

A nurse works on a computer while assisting a Covid patient in Los Angeles. *AP File*

US hospitals are struggling with a shortage of nurses that worsened as pandemic burnout led many to retire or leave their jobs. Meanwhile, coronavirus cases continue to rise and fall, placing tremendous pressure on the health care system. Some hospitals have long brought nurses from the Philippines, Jamaica and other English-speaking countries, and more are now following suit. And both longtime recruiters and newcomers are trying to take advantage of the green card windfall before the fiscal year ends in September.

The US typically offers at least 140,000 green cards each year to people moving to the country permanently for certain professional jobs, including nursing. Most are issued to people who are already living in the United States on temporary visas, though some go to workers overseas. This year, 280,000 of these green cards are available, and recruiters hope some of the extras can be snapped up by nurses seeking to work in pandemic-weary hospitals in the United States. **AP**

Indian-American body urges Biden to reject appointment of Pakistan envoy to US

LALIT K JHA
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 3

Masood Khan

A TOP Indian diaspora group has urged US President Joe Biden to reject the appointment of Masood Khan as Pakistan's ambassador to the United States, alleging that the diplomat is a sympathiser and supporter of terrorist groups.

The Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies (FIIDS), in a statement on Wednesday, urged Biden to reject the appointment of the "Jihadi-terrorist-sympathiser" Masood Khan as Pakistani ambassador to the US.

"We also request Secretary of State Antony Blinken and members of the Senate and House committees on foreign relations to support this rejection," it said.

"Masood Khan has repeatedly demonstrated a soft spot for Jihadi-terrorists, including Aafia Siddiqui, a convicted terrorist operative known as 'Lady al-Qaeda'. His support to designated terrorist organisations under the US law such as Hizbul Mujahideen, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM), and Jamaat-e-Islami, is not only inimical to US Interests, but also to global peace," FIIDS said. FIIDS is a US-based institute for US-India policy studies and awareness.

"Khan's diplomatic role in the US may open an avenue for access for terrorist organisations to US institutions. Furthermore, his former active role as president of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir will complicate US relations with its strategic partner India. His support to the Taliban will also adversely affect US interests in Afghanistan," it said.

The group also alleged that in 2019, Khan shared stage with Fazlur Rehman Khalil, global terrorist and founder of Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM), designated as a terrorist organisation under the US law. **PTI**

@ieExplained
#ExpressExplained
If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to **explained@indianexpress.com**

TRACKING INDIA'S COVID CURVE

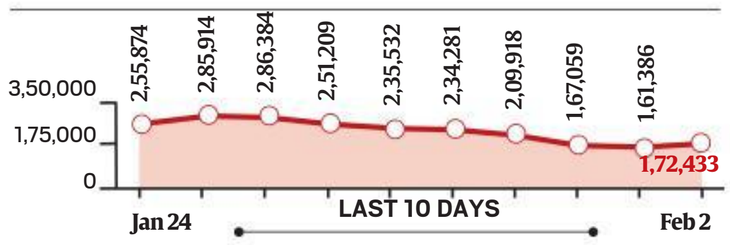
DASHBOARD, AS ON FEB 2

703 DAYS SINCE PANDEMIC BEGAN

New cases	Active cases	Deaths
1,72,433	15,33,921	1,008

Weekly CFR: 0.38% | Overall CFR: 1.31% | Total deaths: 4,98,983

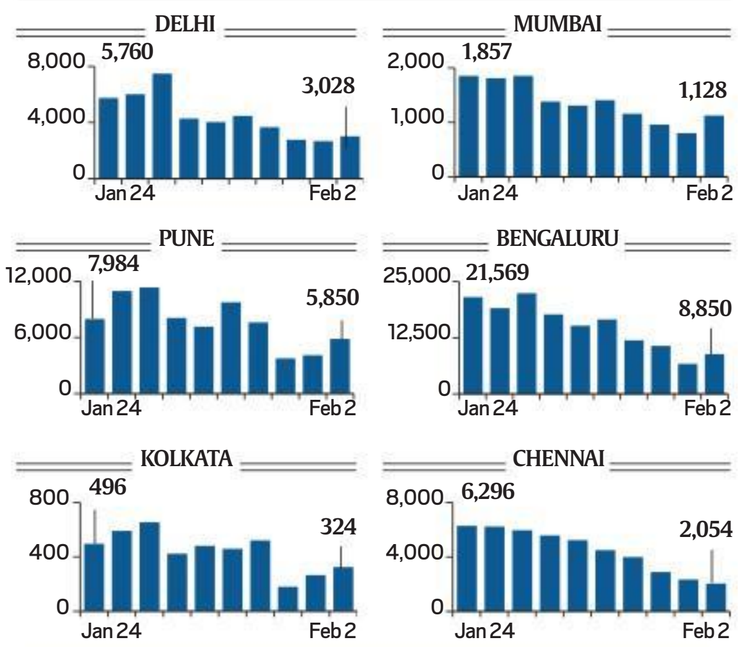
NEW CASES, DAILY



SURGE IN THE STATES

State	ON FEBRUARY 2			Weekly positivity
	New Cases	Active Cases	Deaths	
Kerala	52,199	4,34,704	500	44.95%
Karnataka	20,505	2,16,413	81	17.40%
Maharashtra	18,067	3,19,915	89	13.68%
Tamil Nadu	14,013	2,15,635	37	15.70%
Gujarat	8,934	79,732	34	8.50%

CASES IN THE CITIES, LAST 10 DAYS

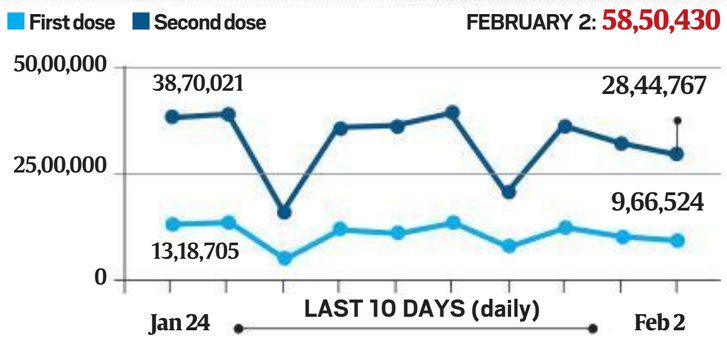


TOTAL TESTS 73,41,92,614

TESTS ON FEB 2	WEEKLY POSITIVITY	OVERALL POSITIVITY
17,52,628	11.91%	5.69%

INDIA TOTAL DOSES 167,87,93,137

(Adults 1st dose: 89,73,44,938; 2nd: 71,80,30,613; 15-18 age group 1st dose: 4,77,79,454; 2nd: 21,63,015; precautionary: 1,34,75,117)



SIMPLY PUT

The Pak-China relationship

Rahul Gandhi has accused the government of bringing Pak and China closer; the MEA has responded that the two were always close. A look at their relationship over the years, and what it has meant for India.

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

SPEAKING IN Parliament on Wednesday, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi accused the NDA government of bringing Pakistan and China together, noting that keeping the two countries apart has been the "single biggest strategic goal of India's foreign policy". In response, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar referred to history and cited instances from the Pakistan-China friendship over the decades. "So, ask yourself: were China and Pakistan distant then," he tweeted.

So, what's the history of the relationship?

Pakistan PM Imran Khan and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing in October 2020. *ANI/File*

The initial years

Pakistan had recognised the People's Republic of China— after India — in the initial years after 1947, and established diplomatic ties in 1951. But, due to Pakistan's membership of two US-led anti-communist military pacts, SEATO and CENTO, it was seen as part of the non-Soviet bloc — and China, under Mao Zedong, was on the other side.

On the other hand, India had a working relationship with China — emblazoned with slogans like *Hindi-Chini bhai bhai*. The two had the same anti-colonial, non-aligned approach.

However, there was a complex layer to this. In *Buddha's Warriors: The Story of the CIA-backed Tibetan Freedom Fighters, the Chinese Invasion, and the Ultimate Fall of Tibet*, author and historian Mikel Dunham wrote that after Chinese troops invaded in 1950, Pakistan provided transit facilities for US aircraft to supply equipment to the Tibetan rebels.

The 1962 war

The India-China war of 1962 led to Beijing developing closer ties with Islamabad. Pakistan got support from China diplomatically in the 1965 India-Pakistan war. In fact, analysts say that Pakistan was emboldened into aggression after India's defeat against China in 1962.

In a boundary agreement in 1963, Pakistan ceded the Shaksgam Valley to China. Part of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, it is a territory claimed by India but controlled by Pakistan. The agreement laid the foundation of Karakoram highway, built jointly by China and Pakistan in the 1970s.

The real diplomatic bonhomie began in the 1970s, when Pakistan ruler Gen Yahya Khan facilitated the outreach between the US led by Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger and China's Mao and Zhou Enlai. This paved the way for Kissinger's secret trip in July 1971 and the beginning of the US-China effort to discuss issues that had divided them.

Nuclear cooperation

Nuclear cooperation was one of the key pillars of the Pakistan-China relationship, especially after India tested its nuclear device in 1974. In September 1986, Pakistan and China signed an agreement to facilitate the transfer of civil nuclear technology. In 1991, China agreed to supply Pakistan with its indigenously developed Qinshan-1 nuclear power plant. The 300 MWe reactor at Chashma Nuclear Power Plant-1 became operational in May 2000, and a second 300 MWe plant C-2, went critical in 2011. After India tested its nuclear device in 1998, Pakistan followed suit —largely due to help from Beijing.

India-China ties

The 1988 *rapprochement* between India and China with Rajiv Gandhi's visit became a watershed moment. Much to the discomfiture of Islamabad, there was a clear shift for Beijing, where it saw ties with New Delhi from an economic lens and focused on trade, while separately talking to India on the border dispute.

For Islamabad, the biggest jolt came in 1996 when "the Chinese president Jiang Zemin [then visiting Pakistan] failed to mention Kashmir explicitly… It undercut Pakistan's position that Kashmir should be resolved through international mediation, not bilateral negotiations," analyst Andrew Small wrote in *The China-Pakistan Axis*.

During the Kargil conflict of 1999, Beijing counselled Islamabad that they should withdraw troops, and "should exercise self-control and solve conflicts through peaceful means". And in July that year, the Chinese foreign ministry asked India and Pakistan to "respect the line of control in Kashmir and resume negotiations at an early date in accordance with the spirit of the Lahore declaration". This was perceived as a snub to Islamabad.

Beijing adopted a similar cautious approach after the Parliament attack in 2002, the Op Parakram buildup, as well as the Mumbai terror attack in 2008. This was also visible in the way China responded when the Balakot air strikes took place after the Pulwama attack in February 2019. In fact, China signed off at the UNSC statement, while blocking Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar's designation as a global terrorist in March 2019.

The US nuclear deal

The China-Pakistan tango continued with the turn of the century, as Beijing saw India moving closer to the US. The US-India nuclear deal left Pakistan worried, and the Beijing-Islamabad nexus tried to block the exemption at the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

Since 2013, as China sought to flex its muscle with border stand-offs in Depsang, Chumar, Doklam and eastern Ladakh, India has been wary of the axis with Islamabad.

India's August 2019 move to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir has brought China and Islamabad even closer.

Economic dependence

Pakistan's economic dependence on Beijing too has increased in recent years. The fact that it has been on the grey list of the Financial Action Task Force for terrorist financing, despite Beijing presiding as the chair for a year, displayed China's limitations in helping its all-weather friend.

China had blocked the listing of Masood Azhar several times before yielding in 2019. It is also worried about the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) getting emboldened and support from Pakistan-based terror groups and creating trouble in Xinjiang province where Uighurs have been marginalised.

Islamabad, which speaks for the rights of Muslims across the world including India, has kept a studied silence on the treatment of Uyghur minorities. Imran Khan has said his country believes in China's version.

From Pakistan's perspective, with the US out of the region and Washington losing interest in Afghanistan, Beijing is the best bet for its failing economy, which is dependent on external debt bailouts. China's Belt and Road Initiative has manifested in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. It has led to investments, but there are voices within Pakistan who have started questioning whether the project will provide jobs for people of Pakistan.

From China's perspective, it offers access to the western Indian Ocean through the Gwadar port in Balochistan.

Closer defence ties

In 2020, China signed a defence pact with Pakistan. Gen Wei Fenghe, China's defence minister, visited Islamabad and signed a memorandum of understanding to enhance defence cooperation between the Pakistan Army and the People's Liberation Army.

The Pakistan Army recently inducted its first batch of Chinese-made VT-4 battle tanks. Pakistan has procured Chinese-made combat drones or unmanned combat aerial vehicles.

Pakistan endorses China's position on its core issues including the South China Sea, Taiwan, Xinjiang, and Tibet.

The growing number of China-Pakistan military exercises are a further sign of the deepening military partnership. The two militaries recently conducted a joint exercise close to the Line of Actual Control in Tibet.

The Afghanistan angle

After Kabul fell to the Taliban last year, China has sensed an opportunity to get into Afghanistan for influence and resources with help from Pakistan. There have been several meetings between Chinese leaders including foreign minister Wang Yi and Taliban leaders.

China hopes Islamabad will be able to convince the Taliban that Afghanistan would not be used as a base for ETIM attacks, and Beijing would be transitioning towards normalising the Taliban by giving them financial aid.

With Beijing's rise as a global power, India views its partnership with Pakistan as a greater concern than before. For New Delhi, the Indo-Pacific strategy involving the US, Australia, Japan and European partners is a key bulwark against the axis.

LONGER VERSION ON
www.indianexpress.com

Haryana's law on local job quota and HC stay

VARINDER BHATIA
CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 3

THE PUNJAB and Haryana High Court has stayed the implementation of the Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Act, 2020, which reserves three of four non-government jobs with a monthly salary of Rs 30,000 or less for candidates belonging to Haryana. While the detailed order is yet to be made available, a division Bench of Justices Ajay Tewari and Pankaj Jain ordered an interim stay and sought the government's reply.

A case against a similar law in Andhra Pradesh is pending in the state's High Court.

On whom does the Haryana law apply?

Earlier, the government had said the Act would apply to jobs that offer a gross monthly salary up to Rs 50,000. But by a notification last year, it lowered the ceiling to Rs 30,000. The Act is applicable to employers of private sector companies, societies, trusts, limited liability partnership firms, partnership firms and any person who employs 10 or more persons for the purpose of manufacturing, carrying on business or rendering any service in Haryana. It came into force on January 15 this year.

What led to the stay?

In petitions to the High Court, the Faridabad Industries Association and other associations submitted that the Act is unconstitutional, discriminatory and violative of fundamental rights of Industries, and sought its quashing. They argued that it would make it binding on them to recruit their workforce from Haryana, irrespective of employability, and would affect their business operations and investments.

Ensuring 75% reservation for Haryanvi youth in private establishments was one of the main poll promises of the ruling BJP. However, when the Bill was introduced, the BJP's own MLAs opposed it, as did Opposition MLAs. BJP MLA Ram Kumar Gautam called it an "absolutely ridiculous legislation" and said if Haryana implements it, so would other states, resulting in "complete chaos".

Which other states have such a law?

The Andhra Pradesh Employment of Local Candidates in Industries and Factories Bill, 2019, was passed in July 2019. However, after objections from the industry, the government went slow on it. In May 2020, hearing a petition by several persons, the Andhra Pradesh High Court directed the government to file a reply whether the 75% quota for locals is as per the Constitution, and whether the right to work was being infringed upon. The matter is still pending. Industries Minister K Gautam Reddy said that Andhra Pradesh government decided to give three years' time to industries to implement the law, and that they have decided to go slow on it due to the pandemic, too.

How has Haryana responded to the stay?

The state argued that during earlier consultations over the Bill, more than 900 industrial units had given their consent. Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala has said it would open new avenues for employment of thousands of youth from Haryana.

What happens now?

Additional Advocate General Jagbir Singh Malik said Haryana will file a special leave petition in the Supreme Court. Unless the stay is vacated either by the HC Bench or by the higher court, the legislation has to be kept in abeyance.

"We are seeking suggestions from lawyers. The points on which it was challenged, and on which apparently the stay was imposed today, had already got the Governor's assent," Dushyant Chautala told *The Indian Express*.

He said they were waiting for a copy of the order. "Once we get that, we shall surely approach the Supreme Court."

INPUTS FROM SREENIVAS JANYALA IN HYDERABAD

EXPLAINED YOUR MONEY

What to make of rising bond yields, for now and the near future

GEORGE MATHEW & SANDEEP SINGH

ON FEBRUARY 1, as Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman indicated that the government would borrow more from the market to meet the gap between its income and expenditure, the yield — return or interest paid to the buyer — on the 10-year benchmark bond issued by the central government jumped 17 basis points to 6.85%.

Between December 31 and Wednesday, the yield on 10-year G-Secs has risen from 6.47% to 6.9%. With markets expecting interest rates and the cost of borrowing to rise further, there will be implications for debt investors, both existing ones and new.

Borrowings and bonds

Higher government borrowing through issuance of securities, especially when inflation is high, will push up yields on bonds and result in a fall in bond price.

A higher yield means the government will have to pay more as return to investors, leading to a rise in the cost of borrowing. This will impact the financial system, and put upward pressure on general interest rates.

If the RBI opts for normalisation of monetary policy and intervenes less in the market, interest rates are bound to go up. However, the RBI has tools like auctions and open market operations (OMO) purchases to keep a check on rising yields.

Higher government borrowing means the market will have to absorb a greater supply of bonds in the coming months. Bond yields have been rising across the world on the back of higher inflation and plans for policy normalisation. The yield on 10-year benchmark bonds has increased almost 110 bps from pandemic-era lows. It has risen by 43 bps in the last one month, and was at 6.89% on Thursday.

Rising crude prices, inflation risks, and signals of interest rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve have also contributed to the hardening of bond yields. A section of the market attributes the rise in yields to the RBI's plan to exit its accommodative stance in the coming months.

Seeing the writing on the wall, buyers of government bonds have been demanding higher yields in the recent past. In the state development loan (SDL) auction, yields on 10-year securities of UP and Uttarakhand were 7.28% and 7.25% respectively.

Could yields rise more?

Analysts expect yields to hit 7% in the near term, and touch 7.5% in the next fiscal. "We expect the 10-year bond yield to rise to 6.9-7% by the first half of FY23," said Abheek Barua, Chief Economist, HDFC Bank.

Interest rates are expected to move up in the wake of large government borrowing and supply-demand mismatch in government bonds, removal of monetary support by RBI, and increase in policy rates as the central bank focuses more on inflation management.

Strong intervention by RBI and efficient management of the borrowing programme can stabilise the yield below 7%. The forthcoming RBI monetary policy review will be closely watched for the committee's views on the Budget, and any measures to manage yields.

Impact on investors

Rising yields mean investors expect a rise in interest rates and are, therefore, selling the bond papers they are holding. Since a rise in interest rates would result in decline in bond price of existing bonds (and thereby capital loss on sale before maturity), investors rush to sell in order to limit capital loss.

Debt investors will be impacted by the rise in yields. When yields rise and bond prices fall, net asset values of debt funds, which hold a sizeable chunk of government securities in their portfolios, will also decline. Corporate bonds, which are priced higher than government bonds, will also be impacted, as will the equity markets.

"We believe the risk to equity market is likely to emanate from the bond market in the near term," said S Naren, ED and CIO, ICICI Prudential AMC.

A rise in bond yield would make relatively less risky debt investments more attractive for investors. Not only can this reduce the funds flow into equities, it could also result in an outflow of funds from equities.

An increase in interest rates in the economy will raise the cost of borrowing for companies and impact net profit margins, which could also hurt the equity markets.

The ways forward

Investors with hold to maturity (HTM) products should not panic seeing the mark to market (MTM) impact. Experts say even others should not, because when the bonds mature, mutual funds would buy higher interest rate products. However, some advise that debt fund investors who have to exit over the next one year should move out now — while those who can stay with the product for the next three years should stay put.

For new investors looking to invest in debt funds now, advisors say the approach should be of gradual investment over the next six months, as yields may rise further.

"Either you can hold cash for some time and invest when rates rise, or deploy all the money for the long term. The right approach would be to keep some component liquid and deploy as the rates go up," Vishal Dhawan, founder, Plan Ahead Wealth Advisors, said.

Expecting further hardening of yields over the next six months, Surya Bhatia, founder, AM Unicorn Professional, said, "If you have to invest, do it gradually over the next six months and go for a 3-5-year investment horizon."

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNICAL TEACHERS TRAINING AND RESEARCH

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www.nitttrchd.ac.in
e-mail: cpc@nitttrchd.ac.in, dirnitttrchd@yahoo.com

TENDER NOTICE

e-tenders are invited for purchase of equipment. Tender details are available on the Institute website and complete tender documents giving details of the equipment and other conditions are available on Chandigarh administration website: **http:/www.etenders.chd.nic.in.** **Director**

INDCOSERVE

No. 35, Church Road, Coonoor - 643 101 – The Nilgiris
Ph: + 91- 423-2231821 www.indcoserve.com

CORRIGENDUM FOR TENDER Ref. No. 587/C/2021

The corrigendum for the Tender Ref. No.587/C/2021 dt: 12.01.2022 published vide DIPR/260/TENDER/2022 on 12.01.2022 for the Supply, Installation and Commissioning of various Tea Processing Machineries, Civil & Electrical Works and Eco - Restoration Works (18 Packages) at the 10 INDCOSERVE Tea Factories in the Nilgiris District is available at website : **www.indcoserve.com & www.tenders.tn.gov.in**

For Further details please contact the General Manager, INDCOSERVE, Coonoor. Telephone No.+91- 9443731821

Coonoor
04.02.2022 DIPR/ 652 /TENDER/2022

General Manager,
INDCOSERVE, Coonoor.

சொந்தமா கூடத்து கனவுகளும் அடைந்தோம். சாதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம்.

The Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport Undertaking

(OF THE BRIHANMUMBAI MAHANAGARPALIKA)

TENDER NOTICE

E-tender is invited for the supply of following item.

(1) Supply of SMD-type LED Integral Street Lanterns, Fully/Semi Cut-Off type of various wattages with 5 years Warranty Period for existing Street Lighting Poles,

RE-INVITED E-TENDER

(2) 72640.

Note : For more details, log on to website **https://mahatenders.gov.in.**

PRO/AAM(M)/118/2022 **GENERAL MANAGER**

WESTERN RAILWAY

E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE No. S/03/2022
Date 02.02.2022

S.N.	Short Description of item	Quantity	T.O.D.
33	Copper Contact Wire Jointless, 107SQMM	232875.00 MTR	16-Feb-22
34	Golden Yellow	16590.00 LTR	18-Feb-22
35	Reverser J1 & J2, Capacity 1500 Amps	15.00 Set	18-Feb-22
36	Emergency Battery Charger Single Phase 50	137.00 Nos	21-Feb-22
37	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of CVVR	226.00 Nos	21-Feb-22
38	Supply, Installation, Commissioning and Testing of Emergency Talk Back System	93.00 Nos	21-Feb-22
39	Set Of PU Foam as per MMDTS 19020 Rev. 3 Amd.1	500.00 Set	21-Feb-22
40	Transformer Oil Pump	80.00 Nos	21-Feb-22
41	Knuckle For Upgraded High Tensile CBC	6783.00 Nos	21-Feb-22
42	Cochlear Implant	13.00 Nos	21-Feb-22
43	Copper Catenary Wire (19/2.10MM) 65SQMM	184289.00 MTR	24-Feb-22
44	Railway Carriage Fan 110 VAC	1550.00 Nos	25-Feb-22
45	High Capacity Thermoplastic Polyester Elastomeric	3850.00 Nos	25-Feb-22
46	Set of Axle Box Assembly	20.00 Set	25-Feb-22
47	Rheostatic Braking Resistor	23.00 Set	01-Mar-22

Corrigendum: Due date postponed from 24.01.2022 to 14.02.2022 for Tender notice no. 42/2021 Sr. No. 1013 (Supply, Transportation, Installation, Testing and Connection of Multi Section Digital Axle Counter (MSDAC))

Regarding detailed notice EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions, please visit website **www.ireps.gov.in**. and **www.wr.indianrailways.gov.in**.

For Principal Chief Materials Manager

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ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL DELHI CANTT

SADAR BAZAR ROAD, DELHI CANTT-110010
www.apsdelhicantt.com, 25693777, 25692720

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed Tenders are invited from manufacturers/dealers with professional expertise in **Erection of Shed at Assembly Stage**

RFP with specification can be downloaded from school website **www.apsdelhicantt.com**. Tender Form duly completed in all respect be submitted to APS Delhi Cantt by 25 Feb 2022 at 1030 hrs along with DD (Tender Form Fee & EMD) as per RFP in favour of **Army Public School Delhi Cantt.** For any queries contact APS Delhi Cantt on 25693777, 8700817317.

Presiding Officer

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport Mumbai

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN BIDDING PROCESS FOR VARIOUS RETAIL CONCESSIONS AT CSMI AIRPORT

Mumbai International Airport Limited ("**MIAL**") invites parties to participate in the competitive bidding process for various **Retail** Concessions at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport ("CSMIA"), Mumbai.

Parties are requested to visit the website: (https://csmia.adaniairports.com/→Business→Tenders) for downloading form of Application for purchase of Request for Proposal document(s).

Please check the website for Last date and time for submission of Application.

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE FOR SUPPLY OF SYNTHESIZED TRANSCEIVER SET

E-TENDER NOTICE NO: NIT/11/22/06, **Dated: 31.01.2022.**

On behalf of the President of India, The Sr. Divisional Materials Manager/ South East Central Railway, Bilaspur division invites e-tender for the following items.

Srl. No	Tender No.	Due Date	Due Time	Tender Cost. (Rs)	EMD (Rs.)
1	11225041	21.02.2022	10:30	00	96320.00

Description 1 :- Supply of 5 watt hand held synthesized transceiver set (Analog Walkie Talkie set with basic design) with rapid battery charger and Battery 2000 mAH as per RDSO specification No. RDSO/SPN/TC/107/2018/Rev.0.0, Inspection by RDSO.

Tenderer please visit IREPS website at **https://www.ireps.gov.in.**

Note:- In controversial condition **English** text version will be considered certified.

Sr. Divisional Materials Manager
S.E.C. Railway, Bilaspur

CPR/10/332

South East Central Railway @secrail

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a man namely **Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown was found dead on 26.01.2022 at 5:31 AM at Platform No. 8, Under FOB-III, New Delhi Railway Station, Delhi.** In this regard **DD No. 7 A dated 26.01.2022, U/s 174 CrPC** has been lodged at Police Station, New Delhi Railway Station, Delhi. Identification of unidentified dead body of male is as under:

Name: Unknown, Age: 55 Years, Height: 5'7", Complexion: Shallow, Wearing: Red Sweater, Grey Shirt and Black Lower, ID Mark: Mole on Right.

If anyone have any information or clue about this male deceased may kindly be inform undersigned. **SHO**

Police Station New Delhi Railway Station, Delhi
Ph.: 011-23744073, 8750871305

DP/28/RLY/2022

WESTERN RAILWAY-AHMEDABAD DIVISION

File No. WR-ADI/COMM(SCOT)/1/2021-C/o ACM/CHG/ADI/WR, Corrigendum No. 01 Date: 01.02.2022, Tender Notice No: C78/1/117/Tender/SLR/04/2021-22 dated 24.01.2022

CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

In **Tender Notice No. C78/1/117/Tender/SLR/04/2021-22 dated 24.01.2022, 'Days of Service or Days of Space Available' for Train No. 20954** mentioned at Sr. No. 10 is shown as 'Monday'. However, the correct frequency of the Train is 'Saturday'. As such, the 'Days of Service or Days of Space Available' for Train No. 20954 mentioned at Sr. No. 10 may be ready as under:

Sr. No.	Train No.	Station From	Station To	Days of Service or Days of Space Available	Space Available (In Tonne) FSLR Ist	FSLR IInd	RSLR Ist	Reserve Price Per Trip Per 04/3.9 Tonne (in ₹)
10	20954 (19420)	Ahmedabad	Chennai Central	Saturday	3.9	-	3.9	25,512/-

All bidders please note that bid(s) received for parcel space in the subject Train will be processed & finalized for the frequentcy of 'Saturday' only. 219

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DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF N.C.T. OF DELHI

OFFICE OF THE DY. SE (WB)-II
C/o ACE (WB)-II, 3rd Floor, Varunalaya Ph-I, NEW DELHI-110005
Email: eewb2djb@gmail.com

NIT No. 5/DY.SE(WB)-II (2021-22)

Sl. 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
1.	Supply of treated effulent from Mehrauli STP to DLF Chhattarpur, Satbari & Radhey Mohan Drive Farm houses under ACE(E&M)-I	Rs. 14,42,28,170/-	Rs. 24,43,000/-	Rs. 1500/-	02.02.2022 2022_DJB_215898_1	24.02.2022 At 03.05 PM
2.	Supply of 1.0 MGD treated effluent from Narela STP to Bakoli/ Bakhtawar pur Farm Houses under ACE(E&M)-I	Rs. 3,93,50,714/-	Rs. 7,88,000/-	Rs. 1500/-	02.02.2022 2022_DJB_215898_2	24.02.2022 At 03.05 PM
3.	Providing and laying 400 mm dia D.I. pipe And construction of pumping station for supply of treated effluent from Ghitorni STP to Aya Nagar Forest under ACE(E&M)-I	Rs. 12,69,67,541/-	Rs. 22,70,000/-	Rs. 1500/-	02.02.2022 2022_DJB_215898_3	24.02.2022 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. 1082(2021-22)

Sd/-
Dy. S.E (WB)-II

"STOP CORONA, WEAR FACE MASK, FOLLOW PHYSICAL DISTANCING, MAINTAIN HAND HYGIENE"

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MECHANICAL HOSPITAL AND CENTRAL HEATING DIVISION SRINAGAR
Telefax:- 0194-2496089, Email ID: xenmhchdk@yahoo.in

Gist of e-tender
(Short-term)
NIT No: MHCHD/TS /2021-22/308/e-tendering
Dated:-02.02.2022

For and on behalf of the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir state, e-tenders, valid for 180 days, are invited from the Original equipment manufacturers of Lifts or their authorized dealers/ representatives or Registered/ reputed and experienced firms for the following works-

Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In rupees)	Earnest Money (In Lacs)	Time of completion (in months)	AA accorded vide	Technical sanction vide
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of one No. 15 Passenger MRL Lifts (G+3) along with allied works and AMC for two years post two years normal warranty period at Islamia College, Srinagar.	22.50	1000	0.50	1.5	CD-2nd/19439-41, Dt: 24.01.2022	MHCHD/TS/231 Dated 01/22

1. Downloading of Bids:- The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in from **02.02.2022 (18.00 hrs)** and can be downloaded from **02.02.2022 (18.00 hrs).**
2. Uploading: The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above web site from **03.02.2022 (10.00 hrs) to 15.01.2022 (14:00hrs)** in two (02) covers.
3. Opening of Bids:- The bids received upto due date and time shall be opened on **16.02.2022 (14.00 hrs**)or any date convenient to the department in the office of Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
MHCHD, Srinagar

No: MHCHD/TS/10355-59
Dt:02-02-2022 **DIPK-17473**

Government of UT of Jammu and Kashmir

DIRECTORATE OF AGRICULTURE TALAB TILLO JAMMU

www.diragrijmu.nic.in

ABBREVIATED e-AUCTION NOTICE

For and on behalf of Governor of Jammu and Kashmir UT, e-Auction of Unfit Leftover/Undersized/Mix Grain Seed Stocks of Rabi 2020-21 and Kharif 2021 will be conducted online through **www.eauction.gov.in** as per the details mentioned here under:

S. No.	Particulars	Earnest Money
01	e-Auction of e-Auction of Unfit Leftover/ undersized/ mix grain seed stocks of Rabi 2020-21 and Kharif 2021 Published vide No. DAJ/ Acctts/ NIA/ 2021-22/ 1457-63, dated: 1.02.2022.	1. As per Detailed Notice Inviting Auction (DNIA) 2. Demand Draft (Tender Fee) Rs. 2000/- Non-Refundable.

S.No.	Critical Dates	DD/MM/YYYY Hrs
1	e-Auction Publish Date	03.02.2022 (01.00 PM)
2	Documents Submission/Payment Start Date	04.02.2022 (10:00 AM)
3	Physical Documents Submission/ Payment End Date	17.02.2022 (11:30 AM)
4	Online Documents Submission/ Payment End Date	17.02.2022 (11:30 AM)
5	Document/Payment Approval Start Date	17.02.2022 (01.00 PM)
6	Document/Payment Approval End Date	20.02.2022 (05.30 PM)
7	Auction Start Date	21.02.2022 (10.30 AM)
8	Auction End Date	22.02.2022 (3.30 PM)

The e-Auction documents along with Terms and Conditions of the e-Auction and relevant documents can be downloaded from the e-Auction portal **www.eauction.gov.in**. The e-Auction shall be conducted in the electronic format through e-Auction portal **www.eauction.gov.in**. The Bidder/Firm shall have to upload scanned copies of all the necessary documents as described in e-Auction notice. **Earnest Money shall be pledged to Member Secretary, Auction Committee (Directorate of Agriculture, Jammu).** Earnest Money Deposited in the shape of CDR/FDR is refundable.

Accounts Officer,
Member Secretary, DLAC
Directorate of Agriculture, Jammu

DIPJ-12462

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE

Office of the Executive Engineer-1, (Lakes),
3rd Floor, New Building, N.R. Square, Bengaluru-560 002.

No: EE-1(Lakes)/TEND/22/2021-22 **Date: 02.02.2022**

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)
(Through **GOK e-Procurement Portal** only)

The Executive Engineer-1 (Lakes), BBMP, Bengaluru invites Tenders from eligible Tenderers for the construction of works detailed in the table below.

Sl No.	Name of the Works	Estimate Value of Work (₹. in Lakhs)	EMD (in ₹.)
1	Construction of Sewage Diversion drain at Allalasandra Lake.	300.00	368000/-
2	Balance Development works at Avalahalli Lake.	100.00	164000/-
	Cost of Tender Document (in ₹.): As Per E-Portal		

Calendar of Events : (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from the e-procurement portal of GOK from **07.02.2022** and **09.02.2022** for following works Sl No.1 & 2 Respectively. (2) Tenders must be submitted online through e-procurement portal on or before **14.02.2022 & 04.03.2022** respectively and the opening of tenders will be as per the e-procurement portal guidelines. (3) Pre-Bid meeting will be held on **14.02.2022 & 18.02.2022** at **3:00** pm in the office of the Executive Engineer-1, Lakes, BBMP for following works Sl No. 1 & 2 respectively. (4) Technical Bids will be opened on **18.02.2022 & 05.03.2022** at **4:30** pm in the Office of the Executive Engineer-1 (Lakes) for the works Sl No.1 & 2 respectively. Further details may be obtained from the above office during office hours on working days or from website: **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Executive Engineer-1, Lakes

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.

Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

LEASING OF ONE VPH BY TRAIN

E-Tender No. CMVP Leasing 159331593; Date: 01-02-2022. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work. **Name of work:** Leasing of one 24.0-tonne VPH by train no. 15933/15934, Amritsar Express Ex NTSK (New Tinsukia) Railway station to ASR (Amritsar) Railway station and back on round trip basis. **Advertised Value:** ₹83962656.00; **Earnest Money:** ₹400000.00. **E-tender will be closed** at 15:00 hrs. of 28-02-2022. The complete information with the tender documents of above e-tender will be available in the website **www.ireps.gov.in**.

Sr. DCM/Tinsukia

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers with a smile

CENTRAL WAREHOUSING CORPORATION

(A Govt. of India Undertaking)
4/1, Siri Institutional Area,
August Kranti Marg,
Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110016

Warehousing for Everyone

PUBLIC NOTICE

CALLING TECHNICAL BIDS FOR EXPANSION OF PANEL

CWC CO-CD0COMM/8/2022-COMM
Date: 01.02.2022

Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) invites the technical bids for Empanelment (Expansion) of Project Management Consultant for monetization and modernization of warehousing and other assets of Central Warehousing Corporation under Public Private Partnership.

Interested parties may visit our website www.cewacor.nic.in/www.cwceprocure.com for complete details, terms & conditions of Tender Document.

GM(Comm.), CWC, New Delhi

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

Corrigendum No. 1

E-Tender No- 2021/WP/Engg/CRW/MCS/WT-09 (Open). Name of the work with its location : Composite Works (Civil, Electrical, Mechanical) involving improvement, augmentation & replacement of old infrastructure, electrification and illumination works, procurement and commissioning of specified Mechanical Machineries and Plant at CRW Mancheshwar for POH of LHB coaches, East Cost Railways. **Description :- Date & Time for closing of e-tender : As published earlier :** 15.03.2022 at 13.00 hrs., **As Revised :** 04.03.2022 at 13.00 hrs., Other terms and conditions will remains unchanged. Corrigendum can be seen on IREPS **website: www.ireps.gov.in**

CE/ WP
PR/1614/WPO/Engg./C/21-22/24

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NORTHERN RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE (Through e-Tendering)

Name of work with its location	Comprehensive AMC of Exchange installed at Residence of Hon'ble MOSR, Digital/ISDN Telephone Exchange at Tilak Bridge, Rohtak statons & GM Directorate, Engineering branch, Baroda house for three years.
App. Cost of the work	Rs. 6,30,405 only
Tender Document Fee	Rs. 0 (Zero) only.
Earnest Money Deposit	Rs. 12,600 only
Address of the office	Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-C, Northern Railway, 3rd Floor, Annexe-1, DRM Office, New Delhi-110055.
Date & Time for upload the tender/closing of tender	Tender uploading/closing date & time- 02.03.2022 up to 15.00 hrs.
Website particular & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen etc.	See the Northern Railway website **www.ireps.gov.in** & Notice board at S&T branch, 3rd Floor, DRM office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055.

No.: 558-Sig-16-Tele-AMC-581 Dated: 03.02.2022 **244/2022**

Serving Customers with a Smile

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

E-Procurement Tender Notice No. 22/02 Date: 25.01.2022

E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

On behalf of President of India, Sr. Divisional Material Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj invites the E-procurement tenders:

S. N.	Tender No.	Description	Qty.	EMD (Rs.)	Tender Opening Date
1.	19205859A	SMF VRLA 48V/200AH Battery set to RDSO Spec No. IRS: S:93/96(A) (Amend1) Prechagred completed with intercell connecter consisting of 24 cells of 2V each.	35 Set	₹ 80,580/-	24.02.2022

Note: (1) The complete information of above E-Procurement Tender are available on IREPS website i.e. http://www.ireps.gov.in. (2) Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above Tender. For this purpose, Vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with class III digital signature certificates issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. (3) Rates entered into financial rate page and duly signed digitally shall only be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/letter head if attached by vendor shall be straight away ignored and shall not be considered. (4) Documents being attached should be signed on their body. (5) Allocation for "Cost of Drawing" is Z-650 and for "Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)" is Deposit Misc, stores-00844517.

The above tender notice has been uploaded on http://www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in". In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the IREPS website may be approached. **130/2022 V**

North Central Railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

E-Tender Notice No. NCR-VH-161-PCM-NDLS-22-I **Dated 31.01.2022**

E-Tendering Notice

For and on behalf of President of India, Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer(W)/ North Central Railway Prayagraj invites the following E-Tenders in prescribed forms, from reputed contractors with adequate experience and financial capability for the under mentioned work up to **03.03.2022** on **15:00** Hrs. The details of tender are under:-

SN	Name of Work	Approx Cost of Work (₹)	Earnest Money (₹)	Cost of Tender Form	Duration of work
1	Hiring of Piecemeal Vehicles (AC & Non AC) for the officers of NC Railway Prayagraj for visiting New Delhi for 24 months.	29,66,691.00	59,300.00	3,000/-	24 Months
Date & Time of Opening of Tender:		03.03.2022 at 15:30			
Minimum Eligibility Criteria:		No Applicable			

Note:- 1. The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders will be available/uploaded from 31.01.2022 and shall remain on website **www.ireps.gov.in** up to **15:00** hrs. on the due date **03.03.2022** of tender opening. **2.** Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. **3.** Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall only be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. **4.** Document being attached should be personally signed by the Tenderer with firm seal. **5.** This tender notice have also been uploaded on **www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in** & **www.ireps.gov.in 6.** Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and Tender Document Cost (TDC) in respect of e-Tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. **7.** In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. **8.** Tender on line can be submitted up to **15:00** hrs. on **03.03.2022 9.** The said supplier of goods and/or services would be subjected to GST Act and Rules as applicable from time to time. **121/22(D)**

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @ CPRONCR

STATE ELECTION COMMISSION

NCT OF DELHI & U.T. CHANDIGARH NIGAM BHAWAN, KASHMERE GATE DELHI-110006
Phone: -011-23990919 E-mail: -delhielectiontender@gmail.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Online open Bids have been invited by the State Election Commission, from the reputed Firms/Companies/Agencies are as under:

Sr No.	Name of BID & Tender ID	Bid Start Date & Time	Pre Bid meeting	Last Date of receiving queries	Bid End date time	Opening cf Technical BID
1.	E-TENDER FOR RATE CONTRACT FOR PROVIDING DIGITAL VIDEOGRAPHY AND DIGITAL STILL PHOTOGRAPHY SERVICES AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS ACROSS DELHI FOR THE UPCOMING GENERAL ELECTIONS TO THE THREE MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS OF DELHI. ID: 2022_STELC_215854_1	03-02-2022 at 11:00 AM	12-02-2022 at 1:30 PM	10-02-2022 by 1:30 PM	24-02-2022 at 03:00 PM	24-02-2022 at 05:30 PM
2.	E-TENDER FOR RATE CONTRACT FOR PROVIDING CCTV AND WEBCASTING SERVICES AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS ACROSS DELHI FOR THE UPCOMING GENERAL ELECTIONS TO THE THREE MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS OF DELHI. ID: 2022_STELC_215792_1	03-02-2022 at 11:00 AM	12-02-2022 at 1:00 PM	10-02-2022 by 1:00 PM	24-02-2022 at 03:00 PM	24-02-2022 at 05:00 PM
3.	E-TENDER FOR RATE CONTRACT OF HIRING OF COMPUTERS/PRINTERS/PHOTOCOPIERS/ SCANNERS/ LAPTOPS ETC. FOR THE UPCOMING GENERAL ELECTIONS TO THE THREE MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS OF DELHI. ID: 2022_STELC_215771_1	03-02-2022 at 11:00 AM	12-02-2022 at 12:30 PM	10-02-2022 by 12:30 PM	24-02-2022 at 03:00 PM	24-02-2022 at 04:30 PM
4.	E-TENDER FOR RATE CONTRACT FOR PROVIDING SERVICES OF LASER PRINTING OF PHOTO ELECTORAL ROLLS, PHOTOCOPYING OF ELECTORAL ROLLS AND PRINTING OF POSTER/ BANNER/PAMPHLETS/FLEX BOARD ETC. FOR THE UPCOMING GENERAL ELECTIONS TO THE THREE MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS OF DELHI. ID: 2022_STELC_215755_1	03-02-2022 at 11:00 AM	12-02-2022 at 11:30 PM	10-02-2022 by 11:30 PM	24-02-2022 at 03:00 PM	24-02-2022 at 04:00 PM

The said Tender can be seen and downloaded from the Web-Portal **https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in** free of cost. Interested prospective Bidders may visit the Website or may contact Commission on Phone: -011-23990919 or E-mail: - **delhielectiontender@gmail.com**.

Sd/-
HEAD OF OFFICE

DIP/SHABDARTH/0627/21-22

KRISHNA BHAGYA JALA NIGAMA LIMITED

(A GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA UNDERTAKING)

Office of the Executive Engineer, KBJNL, Dam Division, Narayanpur-585219 Taluk Hunasagi, Dist.:Yadagir
IFT No. KBJNL/DDN/PB/DRIP-II/P-1/Call-2/2021-22/1566 Date: 02.02.2022
NATIONAL OPEN COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTIFICATION
(ONLY THROUGH E PROCUREMENT SYSTEM)

National Open Competitive Procurement Tender in electronic mode on item rate basis is invited from the eligible tenderers vide this office tender notification **No.KBJNL/NCB/EE/DDN/DRIP-II/P-1/Call-2/TENDER/2021-22/1565 Dtd. 02.02.2022** by the undersigned on behalf of Managing Director, KBJNL, Bangalore. The tender will be offered through e-procurement system only and will be in two covers system viz Technical Bid and Financial Bid. The tenderers can access e tender document through website: **www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in** and can be submitted through electronic mode only.

The details of work put to tender and the category of contractors eligible is as under

No.	Name of Work	Approximate amount put to tender (Rs.in Lakhs)	EMD (Rs in Lakhs)	Transaction Fee Rs.	Stipulated period for completion of Work	Category /Class of Contractor Eligible
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Treatment of Masonry Dam for Block No.38 to 52 below MDDL RL 486.00 M including arresting observed leakages in Drainage gallery of Concrete over flow section of Narayanpur Dam (Package-I) under DRIP Phase-II (**Indent No.21663 Call-2**)	2171.15	INR 21.72	As per E-Procurement	18 months (Including Rainy Season)	Bidders registered with the Government of India or other State Governments/Central Government Undertakings

The intending bidders are requested to submit any queries not later than **11.02.2022** through the e-procurement portal only or raise enquiries during the pre-Bid meeting. All the queries will be answered in the pre-Bid meeting.

The Calender of Events of bidding process is as under:

Sl.No.	Calender of Events	Dates
1	The Tenderer can have access to the e-tender technical bid document in the website: **www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in** on payment of e-cash towards transaction fee as per e-procurement	**From 04.02.2022 to14.03.2022 up to 5.00 PM**
2	Pre-Bid meeting at the Office of the Managing Director, KBJNL,PWD Annex III Floor, K.R.Circle, Bengaluru	**15.02.2022 11.00 AM**
3	Last date of receipt of queries from the prospective bidders	**11.02.2022 up to 5.00 PM**
4	Last date for submission of completed tender documents	**14.03.2022 up to 5.00 PM**
5	Date of Opening of technical bid at O/o.Executive Engineer, KBJNL, Dam Division, Narayanpur-585 219. Dist.Yadgir	**16.03.2022 at 11.00 AM**
6	Date of Opening of Financial bid at O/o Executive Engineer, KBJNL, Dam Division, Narayanpur-585 219. Dist.Yadgir	**21.03.2022 @ 11.00 AM (Tentative). Will be intimated to the qualified bidders after approval to Technical Bid**

Further information can be had from the Office of the undersigned during office hours.

Sd/-
(**Shankar H.Naikodi**)
Executive Engineer, KBJNL,Dam Division, Narayanpur

GOLD	RUPEE	OIL	SILVER
₹47,902	₹74.88	$89.41	₹61,102

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

SENSEX: 58,788.02 ▼ 770.31 (-1.29%) **NIFTY:** 17,560.20 ▼ 219.80 (-1.24%) **NIKKEI:** 27,241.31 ▼ 292.29 **HANG SENG:** 23,802.26 ▲ 252.18 **FTSE:** 7,565.90 ▼ 17.10 **DAX:** 15,540.00 ▼ 73.77

International market data till 1900 IST

LACK OF CLARITY ON RECOURSE AGAINST DEFAULTING CONTRACTORS

Surety bonds: Slow take-off likely as pricing, reinsurance concerns remain

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 3

THE GOVERNMENT'S move to allow the use of surety insurance bonds as a substitute for bank guarantees is likely to take time for implementation by the insurance industry.

The insurance sector is yet to achieve expertise on risk assessment of suppliers and work contractors and there's no clarity on pricing, the recourse available against defaulting contractors and reinsurance options, experts said.

While the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India has given the framework for issuing surety bonds by insurance companies, experts said the guidelines are silent on the right of recourse available to a surety insurance company in case of a default by the contractor. "These are critical and may impede the creation of surety-related expertise and capacities and eventually deter insurers from writing this class of business," said an insurance sector official.

In her Budget speech, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the use of surety bonds as a substitute for bank guarantee will be made acceptable in government procurements to reduce indirect cost for suppliers and work contractors. Business such as gold imports may also find this useful, she said. Experts said surety bonds, a new concept, are risky and insurance companies in India are yet to achieve expertise in risk assessment in such business. There's no clarity whether surety bonds will get required reinsurance support.

According to K K Srinivasan, former member, Irdai, these types of bonds are enormously risky and have the potential to sink reckless insurers. "And insurers are often blindly top line growth oriented. The risk to PSU insurers, whose ability to do cherry picking is relatively limited, is even more. To believe that reinsurers will provide cushion to this bad class of business is naive," Srinivasan said.

"Banks which had expertise on credit risks were swamped by NPAs. Insurers here are light-years away from building expertise in assessing the type of risks that these bonds entail," Srinivasan said. As surety bonds is an entirely new line of business, insurance companies would need clarity on various aspects such as pricing, the recourse available against defaulting contractors, reinsurance options and global best practices. "As an industry, we would urge the regulatory bodies to facilitate changes to laws such as the Indian Contract Act and the IBC and bring surety bonds on par with bank guarantees regarding recourse available to issuers. This will help the industry approach surety solutions with much more confidence, but it will be even more a viable proposition for all stakeholders," said Bhargav Dasgupta, MD & CEO, ICICI Lombard General Insurance.

Surety bonds are mainly aimed at infrastructure development, mainly to reduce indirect cost for suppliers and work-contractors thereby diversifying their options and acting as a substitute for bank guarantee. "With these surety bonds, I believe initial project cost will slightly reduce and the overall project viability will improve," said Tapan Singhel, MD & CEO, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance. *Full report on www.indianexpress.com*

A SUBSTITUTE

■ **Surety bonds are aimed at infrastructure development to reduce indirect cost for suppliers and work-contractors, thereby diversifying their options and acting as a substitute for bank guarantee**

INTERVIEW WITH SECRETARY, DIPAM

'Entering difficult phase; Nuanced divestment to have far-reaching impact'

THE NEW public sector enterprises (PSE) policy will keep following the process of off-loading government stake with an aim to have bare-minimum holding except in some strategic sectors. The idea is to let the private sector envision the future of companies and let them test their capacities, Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) Secretary TUHIN KANTA PANDEY told AASHISH ARYAN and SUNNY VERMA in an interview. Edited excerpts:

Tuhin Kanta Pandey *UNI*

What is so different about the new PSE policy?

For the last 20 years, there had been no privatisation. Some strategic disinvestment, which took place was between x-to-y company, within the government space. There, the problems are completely different. You are sure that one bidder is going to bid. There are no litigation, employee agitation, allegations and counter-allegations. Because the situation doesn't change, it moves from one public sector company to another public sector company. You can argue that it is not reform.

Now, what we are saying is that the private sector has greater employment, productivity, sustainability, and capacity to innovate. That comes with the private sector today. Here, the question is of whether the government should be in business. We will retain the bare minimum in certain sectors.

We are looking at the next 10 years of the company. Who is going to envision its future, think what new technologies and practices will come in? Are we going to do it in the public sector or leave it to the private sector? We believe there is sufficient capacity in today's India to have multiple players who can think along these lines, build large infrastructure, manage large companies as well as large shareholders.

The government has to be in essential things. This is the kind of thought process that has gone into the new PSE policy. Since these are public assets, we have to do it with transparency. There has to be open bidding, multiple players, etc. Private sector may have much more of a bilateralism, which we cannot have. We have to work within those limitations. It could be a little time taking.

What are the learnings from the recent divestment and sale?

We now have a template and there is a certain learning process. Our institutional capacity building has taken place. There is much better clarity on the inter-ministerial process. Our professional advisors, who also advise the private sector, now have a better understanding of the government's concerns. Because, say for example, the employees' concerns and their expectations in public sector are different from the private sector. For government employees, private sector culture becomes a big leap, a big change, and there is a lot of resistance to it.

They think that jobs would go. The jobs would actually increase and not vanish. Because, if you have no capacity addition, technologies get old, and jobs will go. Whereas, if these keep on getting replaced, more jobs will actually come. Of course, some of the non-essential, redundant jobs can go. That's part of the whole process of change.

But, in the interim, they will like to go to the court to stall it and allege a lot of things. But, our books are clean. Everything is transparent. Anybody can look at it. We need to give a certain kind of confidence to the several officers who are working. So, we should give them confidence that nobody is going to trouble them 10-20 years later just because they did a professional job without any malice.

We will also not like to dump our equity at frequent intervals for our listed stocks. Because we will be mindful of shareholders who are invested in those stocks. What we are saying is that there will be nuanced disinvestment, which will get more difficult but have a far-reaching impact on the economy, reforms and jobs.

Is there a pullback on privatisation from the last Budget? The Finance Minister had said there would be a Bill for helping privatisation of two banks. That Bill has not been brought to date.

I think, first, the legislation has to pass. Without legislation, DIPAM cannot do anything. So, the Department of Financial Services is looking into it. The timing is always an issue. In privatisation, we have to move in a more nuanced way. It is not a fire sale. Steel plants, for example. You cannot say that all these 4-5 public sector units are available. There is also a limited capacity of the bidders with competitive bidding. So, that means there would be a certain kind of a scheduling of the transactions. That we have to look out for.

Even within the system, if something gets done after hard work, it is much better than doing 10 different things together, but succeeding in none. The bidders' interest will, then, wane. We have to see that bidders also have multiple channels today in brownfield acquisitions. It is easy for the private sector, where one company comes and acquires another. We have a lot of dos and don'ts because of the public nature of our assets. This is effort and timing based. The economy may be doing too well and you may think it is a good time to sell. Not necessarily.

So it's a conscious call to go slow on privatisation?

No. Nothing stops us. Only thing we are now saying is that do not show big numbers. We are entering into a difficult area. We cannot say so much will be done quickly in 1 year. There is a pipeline approach. Some from the last year will materialise, some will get stuck, and so on. Some that we start this year will get completed within 8 months. It depends on case to case and the circumstances. *Full interview on www.indianexpress.com*

SECTOR WATCH
BIG TECH

FB user base falls, Meta crashes 26%: The key triggers

PRANAV MUKUL
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

EVEN AS its family of apps continued to record modest user growth, the Facebook app — mainstay of parent company Meta — saw user growth falling sequentially for the first time since its inception, which led to the stock tanking on Wall Street. Further, the Facebook-backed digital currency project Diem was shut down.

What was the decline that Facebook app witnessed? Why did it happen?

In the December quarter, Facebook's daily active users fell by about half a million (from 1.930 billion during July-September to 1.929 billion). This loss mainly saw contribution from Africa and Latin America, it said. Overall, the company reported a top line of $33.67 billion during the three-month period, compared to $28.07 billion same period last year. As per *Reuters*, Meta reported a weaker-than-expected forecast, blaming Apple's privacy changes, whose impact could be "in the order of $10 billion" for 2022, and increased competition for users from rivals like TikTok.

What else did Meta announce?

For the first time, Meta started reporting its financial results in two segments — the Facebook Family of Apps that includes Facebook app, Instagram, Messenger, WhatsApp and other services; and Reality Labs, which augmented and virtual reality-related consumer hardware, software and content. Of its total revenues of $33.67 billion, the Reality Labs segment accounted for only $877 million, suggesting a long path ahead in its pivot to metaverse aspirations.

EXPLAINED

What happened to the Diem project?

The backlash from regulators mainly on account of the currency's proximity to Facebook was what even led to the name change of the project from Libra to Diem in an attempt to show "organizational independence".

Earlier this week, the project announced its sale to Silvergate Capital.

What does this mean? How did the markets react?

A fall in number of users logging in each day to Facebook suggests a saturation of its chief product. Meta fell 26 per cent on Thursday, erasing over $200 billion in market value. On Wednesday, its shares had tanked 20 per cent.

'Rate hikes in India hit growth'

New Delhi: Increase in data rates in India limited the user growth of Meta (formerly Facebook) in the December 2021 quarter, it said. **PTI**

'RBI may hike reverse repo rate by 0.25% in next policy'

The MPC of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) may go for a hike of up to 0.25% in the reverse repo rate and leave the repo rate at which it lends, brokerage Barclays said

LIQUIDITY SIGNALS TILL NOW FROM THE RBI HAVE BEEN MIXED, WHICH HAVE INCLUDED

■ Shelving of the bond purchasing programme GSAP

■ Increase in both the quantum and cut-offs for voluntary reverse repo rate auctions

Growth concerns amid spread of the Omicron variant and relatively benign inflation out-turns provide the RBI with enough room to maintain its growth-supportive monetary policies

Budget's focus on capital expenditure is expected to provide a back-loaded fiscal impulse to the economy and does not change the macro backdrop, which includes concerns on inflation

Despite surging global oil prices, which generally play into domestic inflation through corresponding price hikes of fuels locally, inflationary pressures are unlikely to rise before state elections finish by March

Source: Barclays/PTI

***The Monetary Policy Committee** (MPC) of the RBI will hike the reverse repo rate — at which the RBI absorbs excess liquidity — by 0.20-0.25%, given its liquidity management actions*

Sensex snaps Budget rally, IT takes a hit

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 3

AFTER THE bull rally in the last two days, domestic stock markets on Thursday lost 1.2 per cent on weak global cues and profit-taking, following the post-Budget gain of 2.66 per cent in key indices.

Led by IT, finance and realty sector stocks, the Sensex fell 770 points to 58,788.02, while the NSE Nifty index plunged 220 points to 17,560.20 on profit-taking. The Sensex had gained 1,544 points on the back of the Budget proposals.

Further, global markets eased as technology stocks across the globe came under selling pressure. Traders globally were waiting for the outcome of the Euro and UK central bank meets.

All major sectors succumbed to selling, while auto stocks showed some resistance on the back of sequential growth in auto sales numbers during January.

US futures were under pressure following weak earnings numbers reported by Meta, while European markets fretted about monetary policy tightening ahead of the ECB policy announcement.

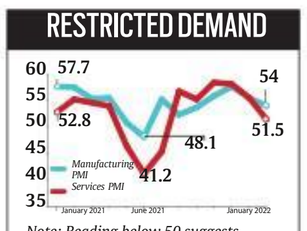
As per a *Reuters* report, at 11:57 a.m. ET, the tech-heavy Nasdaq fell 2.38 per cent as Meta and other social media companies took a beating. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 278.06 points, or 0.78 per cent, at 35,351.27, the S&P 500 was down 68.33 points, or 1.49 per cent, at 4,521.05.

The BSE, Mumbai. The BSE Sensex fell 770 points to 58,788.02 on Thursday. *File*

IN JANUARY

'Services activity moderates'

RESTRICTED DEMAND



Note: Reading below 50 suggests contraction and above it indicates expansion. Source: IHS Markit

New Delhi: Services sector activity moderated further in January as new business rose at a slower rate amid the escalation of the pandemic, reintroduction of curbs and inflationary pressures, a monthly survey said.

The seasonally adjusted India Services Business Activity Index fell to 51.5 in January, down from 55.5 in December, pointing to the slowest rate of expansion in the current six-month sequence of growth. A print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction. **ENS, WITH PTI**

BUDGET AMENDMENTS IN INCOME-TAX ACT

How plugging cess/surcharge loophole may bring legal clarity

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

THE UNION Budget brought in some amendments to the Income-tax Act that would be effective retrospectively. Making a retrospective amendment to the law from 2005-06, the Budget has clarified that cess and surcharge will not be allowed to be claimed as deductions in the form of expenditure — a practice that some companies and businesses were resorting to in the absence of legal clarity. It has also allowed exemption of the amount received for medical treatment and on account of death due to Covid-19 retrospectively from April 1, 2020.

The Budget has also made changes to the I-T law making space for the tax department to seek explanation for source of funds at the hands of the creditor.

Retrospective change about cess and surcharge

Citing some court rulings over the years that had given benefit to taxpayers in claiming cess as expenditure and not tax, the tax department said the retrospective amendment is being done to correct the anomaly. "This amendment will take effect retrospectively from 1st April, 2005 and will accordingly apply in relation to the assessment year 2005-06 and subsequent assessment years," the Budget documents stated.

Covid ward, Ahmedabad. The Budget allowed exemption of amount received for treatment and on account of death due to Covid-19. *File*

Amendments on health, Covid-related expenditure

The Budget has allowed exemption of the amount received for medical treatment and on account of death due to Covid-19 retrospectively from April 1, 2020. It said, "Any sum of money received by an individual, from any person, in respect of any expenditure actually incurred by him on his medical treatment or treatment of any member of his family, in respect of any illness related to Covid-19 subject to such conditions, as may be notified by the Central Government in this behalf, shall not be the income of such a person."

The Budget has also allowed exemption for amount received by a member of the family of a deceased person, from the employer of the deceased person (without limit), or from any other person or persons with such money not exceeding Rs 10 lakh, where the cause of death of such person is illness relating to Covid-19 and the payment is, received within twelve months from the date of death of such person. These amendments will be effective retrospectively from April 1, 2020.

Separately, gifts and freebies to doctors shall not be treated as business expenditure under Section 37 of the Income-tax Act.

Legislative change for questioning sources of funding for companies

In another legislative change, a provision has been introduced stating that the source of funding for loan and borrowings for a recipient will be treated as explained only if the source of funds is also explained in the hands of the creditor. This could have an impact on funding of businesses, especially startups, if the creditor is not a venture capital fund, a venture capital company registered with markets regulator Sebi.

"Earlier, if any company used to have bogus entries, taxpayer would just provide details such as PAN and other financial details of the creditor and that was enough for the tax department. Now, it's upon the recipient to prove it's the right source of income and they had the right net worth to provide this amount," Amit Maheshwari, tax partner, AKM Global, said. *Full report on www.indianexpress.com*

BRIEFLY

UK energy prices

Washington: Energy prices for millions of British households are set to soar from April after energy regulator Ofgem said it would raise its cap on the most widely used tariffs by 54% due to record global gas prices. Ofgem said it had no choice but to raise the cap **REUTERS**

Appointments

New Delhi: Ravi Mittal will be chairperson of IBBI, while Tarun Kapoor will be appointed chairman of PNGRB, sources said. **PTI**

'iPhone flaw'

Washington: A flaw in Apple's software exploited by Israeli surveillance firm NSO Group to break into iPhones in 2021 was simultaneously abused by a rival Israeli company QuaDream, said sources. **REUTERS**

Co-founders' sons to lead Emami in Apr

Mumbai: FMCG firm Emami has announced a succession plan with the founders RS Agarwal and RS Goenka donning the role of mentors and the next generation taking the driver's seat.

Effective April 1, Harsha V Agarwal (45) and Mohan Goenka (49), sons of the two co-founders and currently whole-time directors at the company, will take over as vice chairman & MD and vice chairman & whole-time director, respectively, subject to shareholder approval, Emami said. Harsha is the son of RS Agarwal, while Mohan is RS Goenka's son.

The co-founders expressed their desire to step down from their current executive positions while continuing on the board, Emami said. The board decided to appoint Goenka Non-executive Chairman while re-designating Agarwal as Chairman Emeritus from April 1. The two will not accept any emoluments from the firm for taking up their new positions. **ENS**

BoE hikes rates to cap inflation

REUTERS
LONDON, FEBRUARY 3

THE BANK of England raised interest rates to 0.5 per cent Thursday and nearly half of its policymakers wanted a bigger rise to contain rampant price pressures, as the central bank warned inflation will soon top 7 per cent.

In a surprise split decision, four of the nine members of the Monetary Policy Committee wanted to raise interest rates by half a percentage point to 0.75 per cent. This would have been the biggest increase in borrowing costs since the BoE became operationally independent 25 years ago.

The majority, including Governor Andrew Bailey, voted for a 0.25 percentage point increase.

The BoE said consumer price inflation looks set to peak at around 7.25 per cent in April.

ECB keeps status quo

CHRISTINE LAGARDE
President, ECB *Reuters file*

Frankfurt: The European Central Bank (ECB) kept policy unchanged on Thursday, staying on track to provide stimulus this year even as inflation runs at a record high.

The ECB however removed a clause saying its next move could be in "either direction". **REUTERS**

FRAUDULENT TRADING

Sebi: ₹3.9 cr impounded from ex-news anchor, kin

New Delhi: Sebi on Thursday impounded ill-gotten gains of Rs 3.9 crore from former CNBC Awaaz anchor Hemant Ghai and his family members following a detailed investigation in the matter related to fraudulent trading practices.

The detailed investigation by the capital markets regulator revealed total wrongful gains made by them was Rs 6.15 crore, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in its order.

However, via an interim order in January 2021, Sebi already impounded Rs 2.95 crore from Ghai, his wife and his mother. It also barred them from the capital markets for indulging in fraudulent trading practices.

Thereafter, a confirmatory order was passed by Sebi in September last year. **PTI**

Classifieds

PERSONAL

In my Army,records my, daughter name Sanjna wrongly,mention.While his correct name is Sanjana D/o-No4087303F,Hav Mukesh Singh Negi Vill-Nagni,P.O.-Naou, Tehsil-Thalisain, Distric-Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand-17, Garhwal Rif. 0040601413-8

I,Kamlesh Kore W/O Surjeet Singh,R/O 15/34-A First-Floor Tilak Nagar New Delhi-110018,Have Changed My Name To Kamlesh Kaur. 0040601410-6

I,VIBHU YADAV S/O PARVEEN KUMAR YADAV,R/O.HOUSE NO.33, VPO KHERA DABAR, SOUTH WEST, DELHI,DELHI-110073,Inform THAT CORRECT-NAME OF MY FATHER IS PARVEEN KUMAR YADAV.IN SOME DOCUMENTS HIS NAME IS MENTIONED AS PRAVEEN KUMAR.BOTH NAME ARE THE SAME AND OF ONE PERSON i.e.MY FATHER'S. 40601410-10

I,Sanjay Bansal S/o-Shankar Dass Bansal R/o-House-No.20, Road-No.53B,Punjabi Bagh West,Delhi-110026,have changed the name of my minor-son from-Atharva Bansal to Atharv Sanjay Bansal, permanently. 0040601410-8

I,Sakshi Sawhney,W/O Sh. Manish Kapoor,R/O,H.No.C-94 Surya-Nagar, Chander-Nagar, Ghaziabad,Uttar Pradesh-201011,have changed my name to Sakshi Kapoor after-my marriage,for all future purposes. 0040601434-2

I,Sai Prajwal,s/o Munikrishnaiah Sani, R/o C-5 First-Floor Paryavatan-Complex IGNOU-Road New Delhi-110030,have changed my name to Sai Prajwal Sani,for all purpose. 0040601413-3

I,SANCHITA,D/O-MUKESH KUMAR, R/o-601 FF-1,NITI KHAND-1 INDIRAPURAM GHAZIABAD UP-201014, Changed my name to SANCHITA JAIN. 0040601434-3

I,SANCHITA CHAWLA D/O GULSHAN CHAWLA R/O FLAT NO.A-27,BRAHMA APARTMENT, PLOTNO.7SECTOR-7,DWARKA, DELHI-110075.CHANGED MY NAME TO KHYATI CHAWLA. 0040601417-8

I,Rubeena Qureshi,D/o MOHD Yusuf Qureshi R/o-B-107 Abul-Fazal Apartments-22, Vasundhara Enclave,East Delhi-110096,have changed my name to Rubina Qureshi,for all purposes 0040601417-4

I,Rinki Devi W/o,Achhelal Bhagat,R/o-Vill-Ramdas Majhauli,Post-Bochahan, Distt. Muzaffarpur, Bihar-843103, have changed my name to Rikki. And in some-documents my date-of-birth mentioned as-12/01/1988 instead-of correct-D.O.B-12/12/1989. 0040601417-2

I,Prajakta Goyal W/O-Chirag Goyal R/O-Apartment.14B,Elite Tower-L,Belgravia Central Park-2,Resorts Hero Honda Road,Sector-48,Islampur(97), Gurgaon Haryana-122018,Have Changed My,Name To Prajakta Bhosale For All,Future Purposes. 0040601413-5

I, Vandana Garg also known as Vandana Rani Garg w/o Shri Sudhir Garg R/o 1285, Venezia Tower, Mahagun Modern, Plot No.Gh002, Sector-78, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201301, do inform that both the names are one and same and I will be known as Vandana Garg in future. 0040601358-2

I, Sudhir Garg also known as Sudhir Kumar Garg S/o Shri P K Garg R/o 1285, Venezia Tower, Mahagun Modern, Plot No.Gh002, Sector-78, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201301, do inform that both the names are one and same and I will be known as Sudhir Garg in future. 0040601358-1

I, Shaily Dubey D/O Shakti Kant Dubey born on 05 May 2000 residing at D159A Freedom Fighters Enclave Ignou, South Delhi 110068 have changed my name to Swarnima Shaily with effect from 05 May 2007 onwards vide Affidavit dated 01 February 2022 at Saket New Delhi. 0050191367-1

I, Pooja W/o Rama Bhai, R/o 608, H2 Block, Jahangir Puri Delhi-110033, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as Pooja Devi in my minor Daughter Varsha aged 15 years in his Educational Documents. The actual name of mine is Pooja 0070771170-1

I, Divya Priyadarshini W/O Shakti Kant Dubey born on 28 November 1967 residing at D159A Freedom Fighter Enclave New Delhi 110068 have changed my name to Divya Priyadarshini Dubey after marriage with effect from 07 December 1989 vide affidavit dated 01 February 2022 at Saket New Delhi. 0050191366-1

I Twinkle Vohra D/O, Rajinder Singh Vohra R/o Wz-a-39 Sf, Gali No. 9, Krishna Park Extn., Tilak Nagar, Delhi-110018 have changed my name to Twinkle Kaur Vohra for all purposes. 0040601402-1

I Komal Bajaj D/o Sh. Ramesh Mohanani W/o Sh. Rajeev Bajaj R/o 3084, Ram Bazar, Mori Gate, Delhi-110006 have changed my name after marriage to Rajni Bajaj for all purposes. 0040601351-5

I,RAJWANT KAUR BAMMY, W/o AMARDEEP SINGH BAMMY, ADDRESS-47B, M.I.G.-FLATS, RAJOURI GARDEN, NEW DELHI-110027, Changed my name to RAJWANT KAUR. Permanently. 0040601410-1

I,Neeraj Kumar,S/O Pawan Kumar Bakshi R/O, R.G.Block 270, PKT-B, Raghubir Nagar, Delhi-110027,have changed my name to Neeraj Kumar Bakshi. 0040601413-6

I,Neelofar Moosa W/o Mohd Moosa Meer R/o H.no 1934,Gali Rajan,Kucha Chelan,Dariya Ganj,ND-2,have changed my name from Nelofar to Neelofar Mossa. 0040601413-1

I,NAVNEET S/O DEVENDER KUMAR R/O HNO.1575,PANA-MAMURPUR,NARELA,DELHI-110040.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO NAVNEET BHARDWAJ FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040601417-6

I,N. AGGARWAL,W/o Ishwar Chand Agarwal,R/o E-11,1st-Floor, GDA-Market, Patel-Nagar-II, Ghaziabad-201001, have changed my name to NIDHI AGARWAL. 40601434-5

I,Muskaan D/O Kishan,R/O B-552,Vasant Kunj Enclave Vasant Kunj,Delhi-110070, Have Changed my Name to Muskaan Reddy. 0040601410-3

I,Manjeet,s/o Sukhpal Singh,R/o 211-C, Baba Gang Nath Market, Munirka, Delhi-110067,have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Manjeet Singh,for all the purposes. 0040601410-2

I,Jitendra Singh Thakur S/o Dilip SIngh Thakur R/o-109 South Anarkali-Extension, Krishna Nagar Delhi-110051,have changed my name to Jitendra Singh Permanently. 0040601356-2

I,IRSHAD QURESHI S/o.GULAM NABI R/O-32-B, GALI KABABIYAN, JAMA MASJID, DELHI-110006,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM IRSHAD TO IRSHAD QURESHI, PERMANENTLY. 0040601410-7

I,Hitherto known Rakesh Kumar,S/o Shri.Man Mohan Lal Sharma,R/o House.No.79, Site-2,Janta-Flat,Vikas Puri, Rajouri Garden,Tilak-Nagar,West Delhi,Delhi-110018,have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as RAKESH SHARMA. 0040601410-9

I,Brahamjeet Singh S/o-Harjinder Singh R/o-18,Pratap Khand,Vishwakarma Nagar,Jhilmil, Delhi-110095.My Name is Brahamjeet Singh Bansal and correct Name is Brahamjeet Singh. 0040601438-4

I,Binita Mandal,W/o-Shri Arbind Kumar Mandal,R/o-Flat No-C3/3,Sector-13,RK Puram,New Delhi (Present Address),have changed my Name from Vinita Kumari to BINITA MANDAL.vide Affidavit dated-02-02-2022 at New Delhi. 0040601438-5

I, Samreen Azim D/o Azim Ullah R/o A-346, Gali No-14, Part-4, Pusta-0, Sonia Vihar, Delhi-110094, that name of mine has been wrongly written as Samreen Azeem in my Passport N0090388. The actual name of mine is Samreen Azim 0070771173-1

I, Prabhat Rathi S/O Ram Lal Maheshwari, R/o House Number-3, Bansal Nagar, Tajganj, Agra, Uttar Pradesh-282001, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Prabhat Kumar Maheshwari. 0070771195-1

I, Nimmy Bhandari, w/o Sri Sharad Khatri, R/o Flat No-252, Windsor Greens, F28, Sec - 50 Noida, have changed my name to Nimmi Khatri post my marriage for all purpose. 0040601397-1

I, Chander Shekhar, S/o Hariram, R/o Shaadipur, Chhidauli, Paragna, Dadri, Gautambudhnagar, Uttar Pradesh, have changed my name Chander Shekher to Chander Shekhar for all future purposes. 0070771028-1

I,Harish Kumar S/O Bodh Raj,R/O WZ-40 A, Gali No-16, Krishna Puri,Tilak Nagar, New-Delhi-110018,Have Changed my Name to Harish Kumar Khattar. 0040601410-4

I,Geetanjali Chanana D/o Rakesh Channa R/o BE-124, BE Block, Hari Nagar,Delhi-110064,have changed my name to Geetanjali Channa for all purposes. 0040601417-3

I,GURNOOR SINGH S/o-SH. SUKHBIR SINGH R/o-248, DHUDIAL APPARTMENT, PITAMPURA,DELHI-110034, have changed my name to GURNOOR SINGH CHANDHOK, for all,future purpose. 0040601413-4

I,BHAWANI SOR,S/o PREM SINGH, ADDRESS-S/O:PREM SINGH, 104/G KH NO.232/141, PHASE-5,GALI NO.1,AYA NAGAR,SOUTH DELHI-110047, changed my name to BHAWANI SHOR. 0040601417-10

I Yogesh Chand S/o Late Sh. Onkar Nath Sood R/o 4026, Naya Bazar, Chandani Chowk, Delhi G.P.O., North Delhi, Delhi-110006 have changed my name to Yogesh Sood for all purposes. 0040601351-4

I Monika Sharma D/o Vinod Kumar Sharma and W/o Dhiraj Duggal R/o House No-100, G-1, Sector-16, Rohini, Delhi-110089, have changed my name to Monika Duggal 0070771166-1

I,Deepika Vijh W/o Lalit Lumba R/o 34/14, 2nd floor,West Patel Nagar,Delhi-110008,have changed my name to Deepika Lumba for all purposes. 0040601417-1

I,Ashok Kumar S/O,Satya Narayan Sah R/O,Flat.No-630, 2nd-Floor Pocket-1,Sector-A-5,Narela,Delhi-110040,have changed my name to Ashok Kumar Sah. 0040601417-9

I,Arun Rai/Arun Kumar Rai,S/O Krishan Bahadur Rai R/O,B-42A,Black-B,Vikas Vihar Kakraula,Delhi 110078,have changed my name to Arun Kumar. 0040601413-7

I,AMAN JAINDAL S/O SURESH JINDAL R/O G-22/238,SECTOR-7, ROHINI,DELHI-110085.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO AMAN JINDAL FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040601417-7

I,Priya Kore D/O Surjeet Singh, R/O 15/34-A First-Floor Tilak Nagar New Delhi-110018,Have Changed My Name To Priya Kaur. 0040601410-5

I, Swati Bansal D/o Sham Sunder Bajaj W/o Nitin Bansal R/o-S-430, Ground Floor, Greater Kailash Part-2, Delhi-110048, have changed my name to Swati Bajaj Bansal. 40601383-1

I, Shipra D/o-Bhagat Bhushan R/o. H.No.F-63/31, Near-Hansraj College, Malka Ganj, Delhi-110007, have changed my name to Shipra Pal. 40601413-9

I, Sakshi W/o Rajesh Bhutani R/O-5P, 2 3rd-floor NH-5 Faridabad, ave changed my name to Sakshi Bhutani. 0040601356-1

I, Richa Arora,W/o Narender Kumar, H.No. 427/4 Marla, Model Town Near Gurudwara Gurgaon, (Haryana),have changed my name to Richa. 0040601438-6

I, Pradeep Kumar Syan, S/o Amrit Lal Syan R/o WZ-O-92, 2nd Floor, New Mahavir Nagar, New Delhi-18 have changed my name to Pradeep Syan. 0040601403-1

I, Pooja Thakur W/o Jitenda Singh R/o-109 South Anarkali-Extension, Krishna Nagar Delhi-110051, have changed my name to Pooja Singh Permanently. 0040601356-3

I, Nasreen W/o Kafeel Ahmad Ansari R/o C-39/1/688, Gali-No.2, Chauhan-Bangar, Delhi-110053 Have changed my name to Nasrin Ansari. 40601386-2

I, Kirti Rani R/o House No 1, Cghs Dispensary 15, Laxmibai Nagar, New Delhi 110023. have changed my minor daughter's name from Khayati to Khyati Singh for all purposes. 0040601394-1

I, Kafeel Ahmed S/o Hafiz Tajuddin R/o C-39/1/688, Gali-No.2, Chauhan-Bangar, Delhi-110053 Have changed my name to Kafeel Ahmad Ansari. 0040601386-1

I, I. C.AGARWAL, S/o Parmanand Agarwal R/o.E-11, 1st-Floor,GDA Market,Patel Nagar-II,Ghaziabad-201001, have changed my name to ISHWAR CHAND AGARWAL. 40601434-6

I, Gulshan Kumar Mehta/ Gulshan Kumar S/O Nirnjan Lal Mehta,R/O,D-5/71, Sector-15, Rohini Delhi-110089,have changed my name to Gulshan Mehta. 0040601413-2

I Babita Chopra W/o Kamal Chopra R/o B-15/177, Pharma Apartments, Plot No-88 I P Extension Patparganj, Delhi-110092, have changed my name to Babita Khanna 70771202-1

I,SUDHIR DHINGRA S/O KEWAL KRISHAN DHINGRA R/O HNO.B-1/5,RANA PRATAP-BAGH,DELHI -110007.CHANGED MY CHILD NAME DHARYA DHINGRA TO DHAIRYA DHINGRA. 40601417-5

I,VISHAL S/O-VINOD RANGAN, R/o D-201,Sector-61,Noida, GautamBuddha Nagar,UP-201301,have changed my name to VISHAL RANGAN. 0040601434-4

I Md.Aszad S/o Gyyur Hasan R/o Khasra No.147, Buradi Garhi, Burari, North Delhi, Delhi-110084 have changed my name to Aryan for all purposes. I have changed only my name not my religion. 0040601351-3

I, Avni Dhingra,D/O-Shri Neeraj Dhingra,R/O-E-3/27,Sector-7,Rohini,Delhi-110085,inform that Ria Dhingra and Avni Dhingra both are the same name and one Person. 0040601434-1

I, ALVEENA, W/o Naveen James, R/O Shop Plot-45/A, Pandav Nagar, Patparganj Road, Delhi-110092, have changed my name to ALVEENA JAMES, for all purposes. 0040601413-10

I Gomati Devi W/o Kamlesh R/o Rajapur Road, Khatwara, Chitrakoot Uttar Pradesh-210207, have changed my name to Kamla Devi 0070771198-1

I, Amit Kumar R/o B -211 Ground Floor, West Patel Nagar, New Delhi - 110008 have changed my name to Amit Anand 0070771127-1

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is publicly informed that my client. **VINOD KUMAR S/O KISHAN LAL and POONAM W/O VINOD KUMAR,** R/O A-337, BUNKAR COLONY, ASHOK VIHAR PHASE-IV, DELHI-110052 have disowned and severed all their relations with their son **NISHANT KUMAR** with his wife **REENA** & Grandson **RISHABH KUMAR** and debarred from their movable and immovable properties/ assets due to their misbehavior. If any person, organization, institution dealing with them in civil and criminal matter shall be doing at his/her/their own risk, cost and responsibility, for that my client shall not be responsible in any manner whatsoever.

Sd/-
DINESH KUMAR Advocate
Enrl. No. D-5096/17

LOST & FOUND

I have lost my Original Allocation letter, Allotment No. (B019766) Area 120 mtr. of my H.No. C-327, Beta-1, Greater Noida U.P. Neeraj Sukhija S/o Brig. KC Sukhija R/o D-161, Bathla Apartment 43, IP Ext. Patparganj, Delhi-92 0070771168-1

I Surender KUMAR Shangari lost approved map coneyance deed of A 35 kaushambi Ghaziabad property in kaushambi on 24.01.2022 If Found call 9810162692 0040601385-1

I Jagdish Chandra Ahuja, S/o Agyaram Ahuja, residence KE-87, Kavi Nagar Ghaziabad,have lost my original allotment letter and possesion letter of H.No. CE-65, Kavi Nagar Ghaziabad. If anybody receive please inform within 7 days 0070771196-1

I Prem Wadhwa S/o Sh. Mool Chand Wadhwa, A-14, Hathi Khana, Azad Market, Delhi-06 have lost my Original Lease Deed , Conveyance Deed, Sale Deed, General Power of Attorney,Agreement to Sell & other relevant documents of Property No.A-22, Hathi Khana, Azad Market, Delhi-06. Finders may contact at above address. 0040601351-6

PUBLIC NOTICE

MY CLIENTS VIRENDER SINGH AND HIS WIFE MANJU DEVI BOTH R/O PLOT NO. B-8, KHASRA NO. 750, GALI NO. 5, BHALSWA DAIRY, LIBASPUR, DELHI-42 SEVERE ALL RELATIONS AND DEBAR THEIR SON DEEPAK KUMAR FROM ENTIRE MOVEABLE/ IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES AND ASSETS DUE TO HIS HOSTILE BEHAVIOUR. MY CLIENTS SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS ANY CRIMINAL ACTS AND DEEDS IN FUTURE.

Sd/- **PRITAM YADAV** (ADVOCATE)
Ch. No. 169,
W.W. Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the Public at large that Smt. Punam Madhuri Toppo is the 'Title Holder' in possession of 'DDA LIG Flat Bearing No. 63-A, Ground Floor, Prasad Nagar Residential Scheme, Prasad Nagar, New Delhi', hereinafter referred to as 'Schedule Flat' vide Sale Deed registered as Regn. No. 5945, Book No. 1, Vol. No. 17986, pp. 99–107 on 05.07.2019 in the Office of the Sub Registrar–III, New Delhi read with Rectification Deed dated 23.08.2021 registered as Regn. No. 6456, Book No. 1, Vol. No. 18892, pp. 82–84 on 23.08.2021 in the Office of the Sub Registrar–III, New Delhi. That the Original Documents w.r.t. the Schedule Flat, i.e. (i) Allotment Letter, (ii) Offer to Possession Letter, (iii) NOC for Water & Electricity, (iv) Possession Slip (all issued by DDA in favour of Sh. Sudershan Kumar) and (v) General Power of Attorney (Sh. Shiv Kumar Arora) with Receipt (Smt. Sushma Arora) both dated 22.11.1979, have been lost/misplaced. Information Report dated 29.01.2022 bearing LR No. 80256/2022 has been filed with Delhi Police and hence this notice is issued to any Person(s), Company(ies), Authority(ies), Society(ies), Financial Institution(s), Bank(s) etc., having any Knowledge/ Information/ Possession of the lost/misplaced 'Original Documents', as mentioned above or having any claims, rights, title, interests, possession etc. in the Schedule Property, by way of Ownership, Succession, Inheritance, Sale, Mortgage, Exchange, Charge, Lien, Gift, Trust, Encumbrance etc. except that of the Title Holder, may come forward with supporting documents, to be delivered to the undersigned within 10 days from the date of this Publication, post expiration of which, any claim(s) or objection(s), if raised or received, shall be treated as null & void and such claims or objection shall be treated as waived.

Pravesh Kumar (Advocate)
[*On Behalf of*
Smt. Punam Madhuri Toppo]
Address: Chamber No.356, Saket Court, Pushp Vihar, New Delhi -17
Mobile No. 9999228185

PUBLIC NOTICE

General Public is hereby informed that my clients **Sh. Kishan Yadav S/o Sh. Ram Awadh & his wife Smt. Rajmati both R/o F-175, Vijay Vihar, Phase-II, Sec.-4, Rohini, Delhi-110085**, have severed all their connections with their daughter in-law **Smt. Sangeeta @ Sanju W/o Sh. Rampal Yadav**, non cooperative, callous attitude & intolerable conduct with my clients who are sr. citizens. Under compelling circumstances, my clients have disinherited & debarred their above said daughter in-law Smt. Sangeeta @ Sanju from their all moveable and immovable properties. Anyone dealing with her shall do at his/her own risk and consequences. My clients shall not be responsible for any act, omission or deed done by said Smt. Sangeeta @ Sanju.

Rajpal Singh (Advocate)
Chamber No. 336 Western Wing Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-110054 (M) 9811263161

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client **MR. GURDEV SINGH** S/O LATE MR. PYARA SINGH R/O I-C/129, NAMDHARI COLONY, RAMESH NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110015, have disowned and debarred his son and their family member **MR. GAGANDEEP SINGH** and his wife **SMT. SARABJEET KAUR** and his son **MASTER MANSAHAJ SINGH** from all family relation and movable and immovable properties belonging to me, and they are totally out of control of my client. My client will not be responsible for their acts. Anybody dealing with them shall do so at their own risk and responsibility and my client have no relations with them from today onward.

Sd/- **H.S. MEHTA**
(ADVOCATE)

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to notify the general public that my clients Sh. Aditya Kumar Gupta S/o Late Sh. Dwarka Prasad Gupta & Smt. Rani Gupta W/o Sh. Aditya Kumar Gupta both R/o WZ-679A, Nangal Raya, New Delhi-46 hereby severe all relations & legally debar/disown their Son Sh. Varun Gupta, his wife Smt. Damini Gupta & their minor/major children from all their moveable & immovable properties due to their non-cooperative attitude and bad behaviour, with immediate effect. If anyone deals with them, he/she shall do so at his/her own risk & responsibility. My clients shall not be held responsible for any of the act, deed & things done by them.

Sanjay Kapoor & Associates
788, Tis Hazari Court, Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to public at large that my clients Sardar Gurmeet Singh Suri S/o Sardar Baldev Singh Suri and Sardarni Harbhajan Kaur W/o Sardar Gurmeet Singh Suri both R/o House No.- BE-404, First Floor (Left Hand Side) Street No.-7, Hari Nagar, New Delhi-110064, have debarred and disowned their son Sardar Pawandeep Singh Suri and his wife Sardarni Maneet Kaur both R/o House No.- BE-404, First Floor (Left Hand Side) Street No.-7, Hari Nagar, New Delhi-110064, from all their movable and immovable properties because of their bad habits and rude behaviour towards my clients which is non-tolerable in a civilized society. If any person deals with them, will do so at his own risk, cost and consequences and my clients will not be responsible to any one in any manner for the same.

Sd/- **VINEET SHARMA** (Advocate)
F-12/31, Opp. BSES Office,
Krishna Nagar, Delhi-51

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public at large is hereby informed that our clients Sh. S.K. Singh s/o Late Sh. Ramswarath Singh and Smt. Asha Singh w/o Sh S.K. Singh R/o C-II/48, Tilak Lane, New Delhi-11001 has severed all their relations with their son namely Piyush Kumar Singh with immediate effect and also debarred/ disowned him from their entire movable and immovable properties with immediate effect since his acts and deeds are beyond control of our clients. Now our clients have no concern whatsoever with him and their son .i.e. Piyush Kumar Singh has no right or claim in their movable and immovable properties. If any person will deal with him in any manner, shall do at his/her own risk and cost and our clients shall not be responsible for his acts in any manner.

Sd/-
SHYAM SINGH CHAUHAN
Advocate
ENR NO.D/2872/2012
CHAMBER NO. 09,
PATIALA HOUSE COURT,
DELHI-01

PUBLIC NOTICE

Revocation of the Power of Attorney dated 26.10.2018

Let it be known to all men through those present that I, ANIRUDH SINGHANIA Aged about 38 years, S/o Shri Deepak Kumar Singhania, R/o A-301, MGF The Vikas, Akash Neem Marg, DLF Phase 2, Gurgaon-122001 (India) and presently residing outside India, do hereby remove and cancel all the powers and authorities given by me to my mother Ms. RAGINI SINGHANIA, W/o Shri Deepak Singhania aged about 63 years previously residing at A-301, MGF The Vikas, Akash Neem Marg, DLF Phase 2, Gurgaon-122001 (India) and presently residing at E-62, the Icon DLF Phase 5, Gurgaon-122009 and my sister Mrs. GAYATREE GUPTA aged 40 years previously residing at 1402A, The Magnolias, DLF City-V Gurgaon-122009 (India) and presently residing at 48, Coronation Road West #03-01 Astrid Meadows, Singapore-26926, by virtue of a General Power of Attorney dated 26.10.2018.

I further declare that all or any of the act done or executed by aforesaid i.e., my mother Ms. RAGINI SINGHANIA, W/o Shri Deepak Singhania aged 63 years previously residing at A-301, MGF The Vikas, Akash Neem Marg, DLF Phase 2, Gurgaon-122001 (India) and presently residing at E-62, the Icon DLF Phase 5, Gurgaon-122009 and my sister Mrs. GAYATREE GUPTA aged about 40 years previously residing at 1402A, The Magnolias, DLF City-V Gurgaon-122009 (India) and presently residing at 48, Coronation Road West #03-01 Astrid Meadows, Singapore- 26926 under or in pursuance of the aforesaid power of attorney dated 26.10.2018 after the revocation shall not be deemed to be my acts nor done in my name or on my behalf.

Sd/- **VIVEK KUMAR (ADVOCATE)**
Ch. No. 419, 4th Floor,
LC-Block Rohini Courts Delhi-110085

PUBLIC NOTICE

General public is hereby informed that my client Sh. Manvir Bhati S/o Late Sh. Buddhan Singh r/o WB-91, Ganesh Nagar-II, Shakarpur, Delhi-92, have disowned his only surviving son i.e. Mr. Sushil Bhati S/o Sh. Manvir Bhati r/o D-121, Dayanand Block, Shakarpur, Delhi-92, who is married and living separately from my client since the year-2011-12, from all of his movable & immovable assets/ properties and have severed all kinds of social relationship with him due to his misbehavior with him, his daughters and his wife and constant physical and mental torture as also physical beating caused to my client and other cumulative acts and omissions of Sushil Bhati. My client makes it clear that, he is and will not be responsible for any kinds of transactions financial or otherwise carried out by his above said son in respect of anything with anyone or institutions.

Sd/- **Ajay Kumar Porwal**
Advocate
Chamber:- G-502, Chamber Block, Karkardooma Courts, Delhi-110092

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

See Section U/S 82 Cr. P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Sanjay Kumar Sharma Purchase Officer** C/o **Shanti Fasshion 292-P Sarai Mohalla, near Quilla Road, Civil Road, Rohtak, Haryana** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **CC No. 1684/17 U/S 138 NI Act, P.S. Lahori Gate, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **Sanjay Kumar Sharma Purchase Officer** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Sanjay Kumar Sharma Purchase Officer** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Sanjay Kumar Sharma Purchase Officer** of **CC No. 1684/17 U/S 138 NI Act, P.S. Lahori Gate, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **13.04.2022.**

By Order
Ms. Neha Gupta Singh
Metropolitan Magistrate
Central Room No. 286,
Tis Hazari Court, Delhi

DP/1935/N/2022(Court Matter)

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General Public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male Namely Unknown **S/o** Unknown, **R/o** Unknown **Age:** about 60 years, **Height:** 5'4", **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Built:** Thin, **Face:** Oval, **Beard & Moustache:** white, **Wearing:** Black & Sky blue coloured Sweat shirt, Check pyjama and white coloured shoes, was found dead from Sanjay T-Point, Delhi Cantt., New Delhi. In this regard a **DD No.13 A, dated 25.01.2022 u/s 174 Cr.PC** has been lodged at P.S. Delhi Cantt., New Delhi.

If any one having any clue about deceased male may kindly inform the undersigned and contact on following numbers.

SHO
P.S. Delhi Cantt., New Delhi
Ph.: 011-25693161, 25694136
Mob.: 7065036229

DP/1025/SW/2022

PUBLIC NOTICE

DISOWN OF SON AND HIS FAMILY General Public is hereby informed that my client Shri Subhash Malhotra and Smt. Veena Malhotra Both R/o J2/1B, DDA flat, Kalkaji, Delhi-110017 have disowned all their relations with their son, Daughter in Law and Grandsons namely Amit Malhotra, Nidhi Malhotra, Anmol Malhotra and Mannat Malhotra due to bad habits. Both of my above-named clients have also disowned and debarred his said Son, Daughter in Law and Grandsons from all their movable and immovable properties. Any body dealing with them will do at his/her /their own risk and responsibilities and my clients will be not responsible for any act, deed or dealing done.

Advocate Sonu Singh Garg(D/87/2015)
Address: J-1/225, DDA Flat
Kalkaji, Delhi.
8595658415

"IMPORTANT"

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(भारत सरकार का उपक्रम / A Govt. of India Undertaking)
रक्षा मंत्रालय / Ministry of Defence
Web:www.grse.in, (CIN: L35111WB1934GOI007891)

E-TENDER NOTICE FOR ONLINE BIDDING

NIT NO. : SCC/AJK/OT(Press)/FOJ Refurbishment/005/ET-1813

SUB : Refurbishment of Stores & Shops at FOJ Unit of GRSE Ltd. Kolkata

Due date : 21 days from date of publication

1. Details will be available in e-tendering portal **www.grse.nic.in/etender** and websites **http://www.grse.nic.in/tenderhome.php** & **http://eprocure.gov.in/cppp/**
2. Any addendum/corrigendum to this tender enquiry will be published in above websites only.

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ANDHRA PRADESH MEDICAL SERVICES & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Tender Notice No.19/APMSIDC/2021-22, Dated:02.02.2022

APMSIDC invites tenders through e-procurement platform (tender.apeprocurement.gov.in) for **Equipment Wing:** 1. Identification of service provider for providing Heamodialysis in teaching Hospitals under DME (PPP Mode) 2. Procure and supply of Medical Equipment and other items under 15th Finance Grants 3. Procure and supply of Equipment and other items under ECRP II package 4.Procure and supply of Equipment and other items to various Govt. Hospitals in A.P. under different schemes of NHM Funds 5. Procure and supply of **Drugs Wing:** 1. T.No.133/APMSIDC/Medicine Wing/2021-22 - Procurement and supply of COVID Items.

APMSIDC will reserve the right to cancel the tenders at any time without assigning any reasons. **Sd/- Managing Director**

DIPR No.665PP/CL/ADVT/1/1/2021-22, Dt: 03/02/2022

DELHI JAL BOARD : GOVT. OF N.C.T. OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE ADDL. CHIEF ENGINEER (M)-5
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (M)-5
ROOM NO. 312, VARUNALAYA PHASE-I, JHANDEWALAN, DELHI-110005.

PRESS NIT No. 41 (2021-22) M-5

S. No.	Name of Work	Amount put to Tender	E/Money (EMD)	Tender Fee (Non-Refundable)	Date of release of Tender/ Tender Id.	Last date/ time of receipt of tender
1.	Replacement of AC water main from A-290 to A-770, Shastri Nagar, Sadar Bazar AC-19 **(Re-invite)**.	₹ 28,24,096/-	₹ 56,500/-	₹ 5,00/-	Dt. 02.02.2022 2022_DJB_215880_1	17.02.2022 Upto 3.00 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. 1077 (2021-22)

Sd/- **(Satya Veer Singh)**
Executive Engineer(T)M-5

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

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER, PWD BUILDING, ASSAM, GUWAHATI-3

No. CE/TB-II/31/2021/12

PRESS NOTICE(EOI)

The Chief Engineer, P.W.D (Building), Health & Education, Assam, on behalf of the Governor of Assam invites fresh bids for Technical & Financial offer as per Request for Proposal from qualified and experienced firms (criteria as per in RFP document) for providing **"Project Management Consultancy Services"** for the following work:

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Approx. Value of the project put to tender
1	PMC service for Construction of New Medical College & Hospital at Tamulpur, Assam	Rs.388.5629 Crore

- The details may be seen in e-procurement portal website i.e. **www.assamtenders.gov.in**.
- The validity period of the Bid shall be 180 days from the date of submission.
- The Bidders must be registered with the E-tendering system (ETS) of the Govt. of Assam. (website: http//assamtenders.gov.in)
- The Chief Engineer P.W.D (Building), Health & Education, Assam reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals without showing any reasons what so ever.

Sd/-
Chief Engineer, PWD (Bldg.), Assam, H&E
Chandmari, Guwahati-3.

Janasanyog/C/11437/21

POLICE HEADQUARTERS, CHHATTISGARH,
POLICE HEADQUARTERS, ATAL NAGAR, NAVA RAIPUR

Notice Inviting 2nd Tender

No. PHQ/Sec.-10/Prove-1/366/2022 **Nava Raipur, Dated: 01/02/2022**

Sealed tenders are being invited by the Director General of Police, Chhattisgarh on behalf of Governor of Chhattisgarh from original equipment manufacturers (OEM) Or authorized by manufacturer for the following items.

Sl. No.	Name of Items	Qty.	EMD in Rs.
1	**NVG Compatible Helipad Light**	**64 Nos.**	1,25,000/-

Note- Quantity will be variable.

The tender offer in the prescribed tender form along with all the relevant documents sealed and completed in all the respect, must be submitted as per the schedule below -

SCHEDULE FOR TENDER

a)	Address for submission of Tender Document:-	AIG of Police(P&P), Block no 03, Room No. 309 Police Headquarters, Chhattisgarh, Sector 19, Nava Raipur.
b)	Last Date and Time of Submission on Bids	**03/03/2022** till 03.00 pm Block no 03, Room No.309 Police Headquarters, Chhattisgarh, Sector 19, Nava Raipur.
c)	Place, Time and Date of opening Technical Bid :-	Block no 03, Room No.309 Police Headquarters, Chhattisgarh, Sector 19, Nava Raipur. **03/03/2022** at 4:00 pm
d)	Place, Time and Date of opening Financial Bid :-	Shall be intimated later.
e)	Date till which the Bid to remain valid-	120 days from the scheduled date of submission of the Bid.

Note:- 1. In case of tender opening date being declared as holiday, tenders will be opened on next working day.

2. Tender documents can be downloaded from our website **www.cgpolice.gov.in** and at the time of submission of **document tender fee of Rs. 3000/-** will be paid in the form of DD of State Bank of India/ Scheduled Bank (other than Cooperative Bank) payable at Raipur in favour of Director General of Police, Chhattisgarh, Police Headquarters, Atal Nagar Raipur Or State Govt. Challan of Rs.3000/- to be deposited in the Head of A/c- 0055-Police-

Two-phased Ranji Trophy from Feb 10

DEVENDRA PANDEY
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 3

AFTER WRINGING their hands for the last 22 months – the last time a Ranji Trophy game was played – the Indian board has decided to conduct the premier domestic competition in two phases, on either side of the IPL. The first phase of Ranji Trophy will begin on February 10 and run till March 15 while the second phase will be held from May 30 to June 26 after the IPL.

Sixty five matches will be played across nine centres: Kolkata, Chennai, Rajkot, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Guwahati, Cuttack, Trivandrum, and Haryana. The teams will be divided into nine groups – Eight Elite and one Plate. The Elite group will comprise four teams, and the Plate, six. In the league stage, each team will play three matches, totalling 57 games. Elite teams play against each other in the group while Plate Teams will play against three teams from their group.

The winner of the Plate will face-off with the last placed qualifier from the Elite in a pre-quarterfinal game. The winner of this game will join the winners from 7 Elite groups to play in the quarter-finals. "One team from each Elite Group will qualify for the quarter-final (barring one). The lowest-ranked qualified team from the 8 Elite Group will play the top-ranked team. from Plate Group in the pre-quarter final," BCCI secretary Jay Shah wrote in its letter sent to all state associations on Thursday afternoon.

"We have spread out the Ranji Trophy to 9 different venues across the country to mitigate any cross transmission risk while also ensuring that blo-secure bubbles are not overburdened," Shah further wrote.

The BCCI were earlier unsure about conducting the Ranji Trophy due to the pandemic but after many former cricketers and media raised questions about their reluctance, they have acquiesced. There was no Ranji Trophy last season due to Covid-19, however, the board did hold its two tournaments Vijay Hazare Trophy and Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (20 overs) tournament in both the seasons..

GROUPS AND VENUE:

Elite A (Rajkot): Gujarat, MP, Kerala, Meghalaya; **Elite B (Cuttack):** Bengal, Baroda, Hyderabad, Chandigarh; **Elite C (Chennai):** Karnataka, Railways, J&K, Pondicherry; **Elite D (Ahmedabad):** Saurashtra, Mumbai, Odisha, Goa; Elite E (Trivandrum): Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Services, Uttarakhand; **Elite F (Delhi): Punjab,** HP, Haryana, Tripura; **Elite G (Haryana):** Vidarbha, UP, Maharashtra, Assam; **Elite H (Guwahati):** Delhi, TN, Jharkhand, Chhatisgarh; Plate (Kolkata): Bihar, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh.

Skier Khan takes a worldly approach to win uphill battles

India's only athlete at Beijing Winter Games, overcame struggle and disappointment with zeal and his 'Englishman' ways

SHIVANI NAIK
FEBRUARY 3

Jammu and Kashmir skier Arif Khan (L) with his best friend Farhat Naik.

FARHAT NAIK, best friends with India's only Winter Games Olympian competing in Beijing Arif Khan, recalls his former classmate once rising in class to correct the pronunciation of 'asthma' - as enunciated by their elderly English teacher, Abdul Ghani. "Arif had just returned from a training stint in the USA. He confidently stood up and told Ghani Sir, that it's 'as-muh' not 'astha-maa'. Imagine this was happening in a government school at Chandi Pora village," Farhat chuckles, recalling a classmate who always stood out for his polished manners and obsession with precision. To his credit, the wise old teacher encouraged the correction, making the whole class repeat it. Though classmates in higher secondary often ribbed him for his "Amrican accent", asking him to read out paras from textbooks.

Arif might've secured a belated qualification for the Olympics in Alpine skiing slalom and giant slalom at age 31, but the J&K skier was always primed for the big league, travelling extensively to pursue his competitive passion. Funded by his father who ran a ski equipment rental shop, and self-taught since age 5 travelling to Gulmarg, Arif nailed his qualifying spot at Dubai last year.

The skier had followed in the ridge-marks of 80s zigzaggers Shabbir Wani and Gul Mustafa. But it was the lonely struggle of his skiing-lover father that helped Arif compete in the US, Canada and Europe, when the March 15 deadline hovered, and the snow conditions got too slushy to continue slaloming down Indian slopes. When his Class 12 exams clashed with a meet in Iran, Arif's father permitted him to drop school, and choose sport.

Arif had missed the Pyeongchang Games after falling short of one race in Europe four years ago. "He was bitterly disappointed. But he didn't let that demotivate him. He went and trained with double drive the next winter," Farhat recalls. Private companies the family approached for sponsorship seldom knew what slalom or skiing implied. "They would say, 'We'll see, but we don't even know the rules' and hand over Rs 10,000 or something," Farhat adds.

> **" He is obsessed with keeping calories in check. Imagine, I know him for years and have seen him have the whole of Wazwan only twice in my life, skipping it at my sister's wedding too. Him coming home for breakfast would mean not chai and girda (kashmiri roti) but half-boiled egg. No oil or spice."**
>
> **FARHAT NAIK**
> ARIF KHAN'S FRIEND ON HIS DIET

Arif started travelling alone post sub-juniors to cut down costs, lugging his 22kg equipment. "Equipment can run into 10-12 lakhs, and has to be recognised by the international federation. Sometimes specifications of the skis, padding or helmets changed every 2-3 years running into 600 Euros. Just socks could cost Rs 5,000, a helmet 2.5 lakh and shoes 50-60 thousand. It was only his father who would keep arranging funds. Last year Mr Jindal was here for skiing, so Arif finally got support," Farhat says.

The "Englishman ways" — dressed in sharp suits and carrying an umbrella — Farhat recalls amused, came from a strange recurrence when Arif travelled. "BBC, NYT would chase him as the only Indian competing. But our press didn't know about him," he says. The maximum help till 2018 came from family friends who hosted him around the New Zealand snow peaks of the Southern Hemisphere winters.

Like Harry Potter's Firebolt, Arif coveted an upgrade from Atomics to the fancier Rossignol. "Never saw him so happy when he managed to get that. But he really got emotional in Dubai after qualifying, and broke down on the phone when he qualified to represent India," Farhat recalls.

It wasn't a chance qualification either. Farhat remembers Arif hitting the high icy Gulmarg slopes alone at 5.30 a.m, as sunrise signalled melting of the snow, not conducive to training. "Then whole day he trained for physical fitness. He is obsessed with keeping calories in check. Imagine, I know him for years and have seen him have the whole of Wazwan only twice in my life, skipping it at my sister's wedding too. Him coming home for breakfast would mean not chai and girda (kashmiri roti) but half-boiled egg. No oil or spice," he recalls.

Just past his teens, Farhat remembers Arif once wondering sorrowfully why the naturally excellent slope at Gulmarg couldn't be simply cleared of boulders and levelled, so it could be certified by the international body. But he would start channelling all the frustration into getting fitter. "He loves Virat Kohli, and took his inspiration to stay fit. At village cricket games, Arif is an excellent wicket-keeper. Besides cricket, he also loves cycling. Another angrez habit he cultivated was playing golf. He had a full set of clubs."

An introvert who is deeply religious, Farhat says Arif has been so single-minded about representing India at the Olympics, that he never made time for friends. "Bas, girlfriend nahi banaayi usne (he never had time for a girlfriend)," he clucks. Scheduled to marry the daughter of their next-door neighbours last December in an arranged match, Arif postponed wedding plans when the Beijing qualification happened. "Both families will cheer for him now," Farhat says, as will the rest of the country.

A 'missing' player back in focus, a star yet to turn up

Winter has come: *Olympic spotlight is back on China, which is hosting the Winter Olympics. Some of the world's best athletes will shine on the snow even as human rights issues and diplomatic boycotts cast a shadow.*

BACH TO SUPPORT PROBE INTO PENG SHUAI CASE

Chinese tennis player Peng Shuai

THE OLYMPICS chief on Thursday pledged to support Chinese tennis player Peng Shuai if she asks for an investigation into her treatment when he meets with her inside Beijing's "closed loop" at the Winter Games. International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach promised the governing body would support an inquiry if requested by Peng, whose well-being sparked international concern when she alleged that former Chinese vice premier Zhang Gaoli had sexually assaulted her. Bach's revelation of Peng's impending appearance inside a virtual bubble created to keep Games participants separate from the public came on the eve of the opening ceremony.

"We know from her explanations ... that she is living in Beijing, that she can move freely, spending time with family and friends," Bach said.

"Now we will be able to do the next step in a personal meeting to convince us in person of her well-being and state of mind. If she wants to have an inquiry we would also support her in this. But it's her life, it's her allegations," Bach said. REUTERS

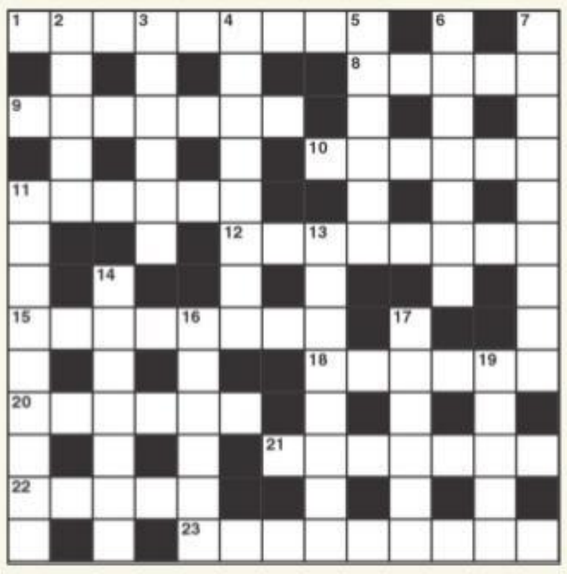
CZECH REPUBLIC SPOIL CHINA'S PARTY

The Czech Republic women's ice hockey team made their Olympic debut a winning one on Thursday, beating host China 3-1 in the Beijing Winter Games tournament opener, while the United States began their gold medal defense with a routine win. China, back in the Olympic women's competition for the first time since the 2010 Vancouver Games, were supported by a handful of delegates, VIPs, fans and energetic cheerleaders dressed in hockey sweaters at the Wukesong Sport Centre. Even in a muted atmosphere, however, China's American coach Brian Idalski said the moment rested heavily on his players. "I think anytime you feel the weight of 1.4 billion people and representing them and what that feels like, that's a lot to take in," Idalski said. "Overall they handled some of that well, I don't think anyone's preparation for this with COVID and everything else has been ideal. So for what was a very tough matchup for us, I was pleased we competed from start to finish." REUTERS

'WHERE'S HANYU?' THE MILLION DOLLAR QUESTION

As far as the Winter Olympics go there's no bigger event than the figure skating competition for many and arguably no bigger name in the sport than defending champion Yuzuru Hanyu. So it was no surprise that Chinese media and fans were on edge as Japan's double gold medallist remained conspicuously absent from the host city a day before the Games open on Friday. "A lot of people are curious, when is he coming to Beijing?" a Chinese reporter asked at a Team Japan news conference on Thursday, noting Hanyu's large local following. In response, Chef de Mission Hidehito Ito said he could not answer any questions on individual travel plans, offering only what journalists already knew: "I don't think he has been at the (competition) venue, is the only thing I can say." The 27-year-old Hanyu is scheduled to defend his men's single title, starting on Feb. 8. "It feels the entire world is looking for Hanyu," was trending on Weibo, China's equivalent of Twitter, with 30 million views over 24 hours. REUTERS

CROSSWORD 4655



ACROSS
1 Squad in one vessel start to cheer for another (9)
8 Part of the carcase the lions chewed up (5)
9 Down-payment I posted off (7)
10 A short dress, mother, to say the least (6)
11 There's some point in this system (6)
12 This year is set for emotional outburst (8)
15 The wrongdoer makes a final bid to get outside (8)
18 Wild cats in comical capers (6)
20 For each expert a pastry dish is brought in (6)
21 Lack of faith in humanity (7)
22 A doctor gets behind the plan (5)
23 A shaver of today - or tomorrow? (9)

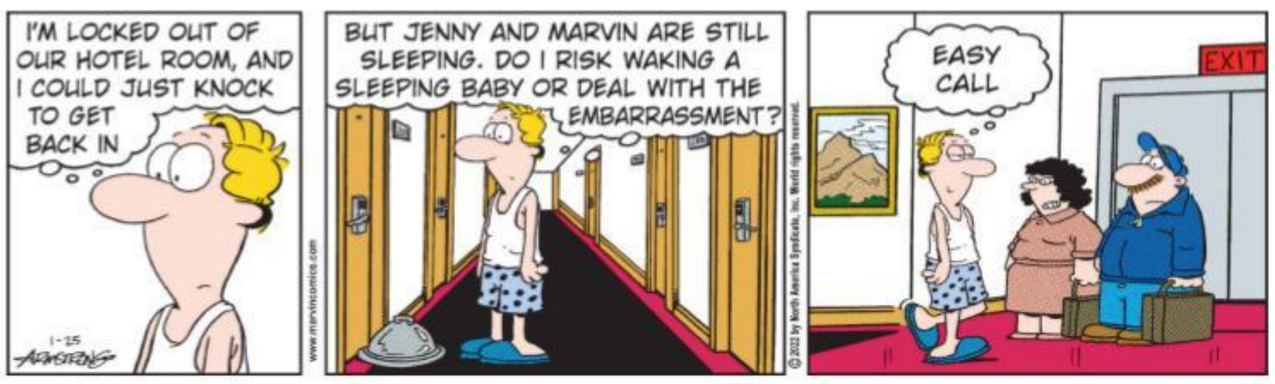
DOWN
2 Indicating the right quarter (5)
3 A piece of wood in a ship (6)
4 Good man had an urge and joined up (8)
5 Record turnover is not commonly a cause of it (6)
6 Nice area for vacations (7)
7 It provides good tips for consumers (9)
11 Norma made new notes (9)
13 Narrow gauge train set spread out (8)
14 Movie queen from the continent (7)
16 Fastidiousness for exactness (6)
17 Puts banknotes into circulation so one says (6)
19 A social class scattered over the Orient (5)

Solutions Crossword 4654: Across: 1 Honours, 4 Apron, 7 Mood, 8 Mercutio, 10 Nitric acid, 12 Radium, 13 Recess, 15 Well behind, 18 Vibrates, 19 Once, 20 Rated, 21 Samoyed. **Down:** 1 Human, 2 Noontide, 3 Seesaw, 4 Archimedes, 5 Rite, 6 Noodles, 9 Minute hand, 11 Leniency, 12 Recover, 14 Sleeps, 16 Dread, 17 Abet.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis

CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson

MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
You're approaching the end of a strenuous and stressful phase, but even though some semblance of certainty is returning, you're still not out of the woods. By next week partners will once again be ready to talk rationally, so save the facts and figures until then.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
By this evening, the Moon's position will be so much more friendly, bringing a final indication that you are moving out of the recent period of confusion and bad temper. Prospects for the weekend are therefore promising, just as long as you can sidestep a personal attack.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
By all means allow colleagues or close partners to air their feelings, but there is no reason why you should take responsibility for their grievances or complaints. You are not to blame, so don't imagine that you are. But what you can do is try to explain yourself better in the future.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
Your famous maternal qualities may be in much demand now that the dust is settling and partners are licking their wounds. On the other hand, you have cares of your own to deal with. I have a feeling that people around you will instinctively look to you to take responsibility for them.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
Pride is a strength if it is the source of your self-confidence, but humility is a virtue to be encouraged if it enables you to form a deeper bond with a particular person. At any rate, it's a time to sit down and talk, especially to people you live with.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
There may be much to be said for going over old ground, even if it does mean repeating yourself or letting yourself in for situations which may be frankly quite dull. Yet, as the old cliché says, a stitch in time saves nine. You still have some finely-judged financial decisions to make, so keep your concentration.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
The past week or so must have been challenging and emotionally trying, yet now that the planets responsible for causing such strain are drifting apart, you may move quickly to restore goodwill. Actually, you're in a much better position than you might imagine.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)
The Sun is shedding new light on aspects of your character you never dreamed existed. Little by little, fresh information is coming your way, and may cause you to alter some of your most cherished opinions. The result? You'll soon be changing some of your secret plans.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)
You are now entering a much more sociable phase and will soon be back to your normal self. Try to re-establish control over your spending, and get all your finances in proper order. You're in a tough position, but I am sure that you will be able to come out on top.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
You must now feel that your status and prestige are soaring upwards, yet there may be a price to pay. For a start you must see to it that partners are kept happy and that you fulfil all your commitments. Stay one step ahead of the game and focus on domestic and family affairs.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
Seldom have you experienced a stranger period in relation to your dreams or deepest yearnings. This is one of those times when you will see the value of being in tune with your inner self, not the easiest of tasks in this busy world. A word about love affairs, your hopes may be too high. How about being more realistic?

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
It's a day to be businesslike about your social contacts and commitments, down-to-earth about your hopes and aspirations. But don't forget to be true to your recent dreams and revelations. If there's one thing you have to remember about being intuitive, it's that you're not always right.

JUMBLED WORDS

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

If we love our country, we should also love our ____. - Ronald Reagan (10)

DHEOR

ABDTCU

UYNNT

CEIKMY

SOLUTION: HORDE, TUNNY, ABDUCT, MICKEY
Answer: If we love our country, we should also love our **countrymen.** - Ronald Reagan

SUDOKU 4735

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

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

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4734

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

Although I was alone in detention, and faced with many problems and challenges, I wasn't feeling lonely. I had huge support primarily from my family, all of the close people in my life, entire Serbian nation, many people with good intentions from the region and the world."

NOVAK DJOKOVIC,
ON HIS DETENTION IN AUSTRALIA

BRIEFLY

India start training, Agarwal in quarantine

Ahmedabad: The Indian team's playing squad save the trio of Shikhar Dhawan, Ruturaj Gaikwad and Shreyas Iyer started training at the Narendra Modi Stadium after their RT-PCR tests came negative on Thursday. While Mayank Agarwal has joined the squad, he will only be available on the match day as his mandatory three-day quarantine has started, the team management has kept Ishan Kishan in scheme of things for the ODIs. India is set to play a three-match ODI series against West Indies here, beginning February 6. "Today is a light session where the players have been accompanied by trainers," a veteran official said. It is also learnt that wicket-keeper batsman Ishan Kishan, who is a specialist opener, has been added to the ODI squad. A COVID-19 outbreak had hit the Indian cricket team on Wednesday as three main players -- senior opener Dhawan, reserve opener Gaikwad and middle-order batter Shreyas had tested positive for the virus during their mandatory isolation period before the start of Windies series. **PTI**

3 urban sports get nod for LA Olympics

Beijing: Skateboarding, surfing and sports climbing have officially been added to the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. The decision by the International Olympic Committee was expected after its executive board agreed to an initial list of 28 sports in December. Los Angles organizers have welcomed the, three iconic West Coast sports, that made their debuts at last year's Tokyo Olympics. The IOC is promoting urban sports to attract younger viewers. Boxing, modern pentathlon and weightlifting have not yet been included. They can be added next year by meeting targets set by the IOC board. Boxing, modern pentathlon and weightlifting have not yet been included. They can be added next year by meeting targets set by the IOC board. **AP**

China to face Korea for AFC Asian Cup title

Mumbai: A gritty China fought back from a goal-down twice before stunning two-time defending champions Japan 4-3 in the penalty shootout in the semi-finals to book a summit clash against Korea in the AFC Women's Asian Cup here on Thursday. Japan led twice in the match, first in the normal time and second in the extra time but China had answers each time to take the match to the penalty shootout at the Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex. As the epic match ended 2-2 after extra time, China prevailed 4-3 in the dramatic penalty shoot-out to remain on course for a record extending ninth title in the continental showpiece. The Steel Roses had won seven consecutive titles between 1986 and 1989 before adding another one in 2006. Japan, who had triumphed in 2014 and 2018, dominated the match but wasted chances to fail in their bid for a hat-trick of titles. Earlier in the first semifinals at the same venue, Korea defeated Phlippines 2-0 to make it to their maiden finals. The summit clash will be played at DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai on Sunday. **PTI**

The making of youth leaders

Young yet seasoned, forceful but patient, beating oppositions on the field and Covid-19 off it... captain Yash Dhull and vice-captain Shaik Rasheed have led India's charge to the U-19 World Cup final

PRATYUSH RAJ
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

THE CRICKET academy where Shaik Rasheed–the vice-captain of India's U-19 team at the World Cup–trained was in Mangalagiri, some 50 kilometres from his home in Guntur. But Rasheed, who scored a valuable 94 in the semifinal against Australia, rarely missed a day's practice because his father, Shaik Balisha, used to ferry him the entire distance on his scooter. Every single day.

Rain or shine, heat or dust—Guntur can be scorching hot in summers—nothing mattered to him.

He lost jobs, could hardly sustain at times, moved cities, but kept the cricket dream burning in his son's heart. He was a recovery agent for banks in Hyderabad when his friend saw Rasheed batting during a match at the academy (Prasad Cricket Academy). "He called me up and said he is gifted and I must encourage him. Unfortunately, we were not financially sound enough to support his training and academics, besides paying rent. So in 2012, I moved back to Guntur," recalls

But then kicked in more travails. Balisha had no clue what to do next. The fees of local academies were too expensive to enrol him. But driven to the extremes, he found solutions.

He started taking Rasheed to a cricket ground six kilometres from his home and started giving him throw-downs. A few months later, he came to know about ACA's residential cricket academy and took Rasheed for a trial.

Rasheed, though young, grasped the extent his father went to preserve his cricketing dream. "He never asked me to take him to a movie or a park or a toy or gadget. He was always into cricket, and I did what I could to provide him with everything,' he adds.

Coach, the saviour

The stars then began to align. Rasheed left academy coach J Krishna Rao awestruck by his technique and composure. "He must have been 7 or 8 and was facing our U-16 bowlers quite comfortably. He looked so composed. Deep down I knew that he has talent and must nurture him delicately," the coach says.

All went well until his father lost his job at a local automobile firm, as he began arriving late for work because of the 50km trips. The coach offered a solution. "His father was a bit hesitant, but I managed to convince him to let Rasheed stay at the academy," says Rao, who is also the coach of wicketkeeper KS Bharat.

Two years on, Rasheed was selected for the Andhra U-14 team. Then in the Vijay Merchant Trophy in the 2018-19 season, he amassed 674 runs at 168.50, including three centuries to file a memo of his blossoming potential. The dream run went on. In the Vinoo Mankad Trophy (2020-21), he emerged the second-highest run-getter, mustering 376 runs in six matches. Picked for the U-19 Asia Cup in December last year, he scored an unbeaten 90 off 103 balls against Bangladesh in the semi-final.

The stage was nicely set for the U-19 World Cup when he was tested positive after the first game against South Africa. A disappointed Rasheed rung up his coach Krishna Rao and broke down. "He had all the Covid symptoms. He had a high fever and severe body-ache. He called him around 2 AM and started crying, 'sir, I think my World Cup is over. I might not recover for the knockouts," says Rao.

But the coach allayed his fears. To kill the festering negativity, he distracted him. "We talked about his dismissal against South Africa. He had scored 31 and was well set before getting out. After talking about cricket for 30 minutes, I sensed new energy in him. We talked about things that we can control. I instructed him to follow the protocols, focus on his recovery, and keep negativity aside," the coach recounts.

As luck would have it, he recovered right before the quarterfinals against Bangladesh. He was rusty in his 26-run knock, but it didn't matter. He was back on the field. And when it mattered, in the semifinals against Australia, he showed why he is being rated so highly.

Reeling at 37 for 2 in 13 overs, Rasheed showed maturity that belied his age to compose a composed 94. He and captain Yash Dhull (110) put on the second biggest partnership of the tournament, adding 204 runs for the third wicket.

Rasheed played a perfect foil for Dhull, who was scoring freely. Rasheed completed his half-century in 78 balls, and once he reached the milestone, he switched to the fourth gear and started matching Dhull shot for shot. Be it the punch through cover off William Salzmann or a straight-six late in his innings off Jack Nisbet, which took him into the 90s, he demonstrated his class.

Later, his captain duly appreciated his deputy. "Rasheed is mentally very strong. We were in the bubble together after we were tested Covid-19 positive. He was always mentally prepared," he said.

Perfect No 3

Back home, Rao is pleased with his ward's knock and calls him an ideal No. 3 batter. "If I am not wrong, he has always batted at No 3, and I don't know the reason. He sets small targets in his mind, be it T20, 50 overs of four-day cricket. He can grind like a Pujara (Cheteshwar) and can smash like a Sehwag (Virender). He has got all the shots. Rasheed loves playing through the innings. In the ODI's, his target is to stay at the crease till the 40th over and after that, he will go berserk," says Rao.

It's his ward's intelligence that endears him most.

"The kid is intelligent and yesterday's knock was a perfect example of his game awareness. He loves rotating the strike. He could have scored the century too, but he lost focus after the unfortunate dismissal of Dhull," he chimes in.

"As a coach, I am glad that he is enjoying his game and is back at his best," he adds

At his home, Rasheed's family can't wait for the final and the day he returns home. "We've not met him for the past three months. We were worried when he was tested positive. I am glad everything is in the past now, and hopefully, he will return home with the cup," says Balisha. And then the father could bask in satisfaction that all the hardship he had endured was worth it.

WITH INPUTS FROM SREENIVAS JANYALA

Shaik Rasheed and Yash Dhull stitched together a 204-run partnership in the semifinal against Australia. *ICC*

Dhull's 110: Blockbuster for the world, regular viewing for coach, parents

NIHAL KOSHIE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 3

COACH PRADEEP Kochar rewinds to a Vijay Merchant match played in Delhi four years ago to highlight what those who have followed the Indian U19 team's progress to the final of the World Cup now know — captain Yash Dhull has nerves of steel.

At the Feroz Shah Kotla stadium, Dhull, then only 15, batted a little over a day for his unbeaten 183 to draw the game against Punjab. Delhi were down to their last two wickets at stumps but Dhull had shepherded the innings. The result helped Delhi qualify for the knock-outs.

Kochar of the Airliner Cricket Academy goes back to another innings, which would define Dhull. "He was 14. He batted for 90 overs and made 78. This was an Under-19 tournament in Amritsar. He wasn't intimidated facing bowlers much older than him. The calmness and maturity he showed when scoring a century against Australia after India lost two early wickets is what I have expected from him. Not from today but right from the beginning," Kochar said.

Dhull's 204 partnership with Shaik Rasheed, the vice-captain, was the cornerstone of the innings as the team were 37 for 2. Both batsmen gauged the conditions well, were mindful of early movement and only shifted gears when they had consolidated. Kochar says pacing an innings is another of Dhull's strengths.

Dhull moved from 90 to 98 with two back-to-back fours. A six, on the delivery after he got to a century, was hit from down the track, pivoting on one leg.

In a post-match interview, Dhull said he enjoyed launching the unorthodox six into the stands.

"Both Dhull and Rasheed played mature innings. Dhull hit his first boundary only after getting his eye in. Between 70 and 100 he was aggressive. Those 30 runs, I got the feeling like he was having fun, like he does during the last session at the nets in training. That six was fun to watch. He is capable of playing the T20 game and knows how to play risk-free," Kochar said.

> **"The calmness and maturity he showed when scoring a century against Australia after India lost two early wickets is what I have expected from him. Not from today but right from the beginning."**
>
> **— PRADEEP KOCHAR**
> YASH DHULL'S ACADEMY COACH

Lessons from family

His family in West Delhi's Janakpuri watched on television as Dhull captained the junior Indian team to its fourth-straight final. Dhull's father Vijay, a vice-president at a cosmetics company, says Dhull made a name for himself by delivering in crucial games in age-group cricket. However, the family ensured he is always grounded and is not obsessed with runs. They never wanted to be pushy parents.

"We never told him to score a century or a double hundred. We never put pressure on him like 'you need to score a hundred in this game' We told him that playing cricket is not about one good season but it is a long journey. He understood the importance of being patient," Vijay said.

Being a former league cricketer who played well into his 30s, Vijay had his share of setbacks. He passed on valuable advice: for every success story on the cricket circuit, there were a hundred stories of those who fell by the wayside.

"I knew he would develop the cricketing skills but he required the right mindset. I have taught him how important it is to have the right attitude. He has picked up the right lessons. When he performs on the field he is not over-excited. In a difficult situation, he knows he should not give up," Vijay adds.

Dhull had other early mentors too within the family. Dhull's grandfather Jagat Singh, an armyman, was his guide and drove him to matches. Before Jagat passed away a few years ago, he had instilled in Dhull discipline and dedication.

Comeback after Covid

Dhull's century on Wednesday was special not only because it was against Australia in a knock-out game but also because he was one of the players who tested positive for Covid in the middle of the World Cup.

"He had mild symptoms. We used to talk to him over video calls in the morning and evening. He had said he would be fine in about five days. It was good to see him back on the field and score a century and captain India to the final," the father said.

Coach Kochar believes the reins of the team are in the right hands for Saturday's final against England Under-19. There were early signs of Dhull being comfortable in a leadership role, he said. Dhull's mother, on seeing him shadow practice, decided to enroll him at Kochar's academy nearly a decade ago. Kochar spotted something more than raw talent.

"During fielding drills, Dhull would motivate others kids too. If someone dropped a catch, he would have a word of encouragement for them. On his own, he would instruct other kids. I knew he had the ability to lead a team even back then. He is a natural leader because he thinks of how to get the best out of other players and puts the team first," Kochar said.

The coach expects another special from Dhull in the final, not just as a batsman but as a captain too.

HOPES ON WHEELS

Indian sports pedals towards Olympic events that offer a bulk of medals

India's mountain bikers are set to compete in their first international tournament, other than the Asian Championship, later this month.

MIHIR VASAVDA
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 3

NEXT WEEK, a seven-member Indian cycling team will travel to Antalya, Turkey, for a 53-day, first-ever, training-cum-competition stint. A tour of this nature, routine for most sports, would usually go unnoticed but this outing for the country's mountain bikers marks a significant policy change for Indian sports that is now targeting disciplines that offer a bulk of medals. "It is a sort of an investment," Pushpendra Garg, the CEO of the government's Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) told *The Indian Express*, adding that approximately Rs 40 lakh will be spent for the 53-day tour. "If they perform to a certain level, then we can go the whole hog."

Cycling is one of the six sports which account for almost fifty percent of the medals at the Olympics, according to data crunching by Impact Analysis. In Tokyo last year, cycling had the third-highest number of gold medals on offer (22) after athletics and swimming. The high number of medals on offer means some countries have focused disproportionately on the sport to fuel their rise in the medals table, most notably by Britain which rode on the cycling wave for their rich medal hauls in the last three Olympics. No Indian cyclist, however, has even come close to qualifying for the Games, let alone challenge for a medal. The last time an Indian cyclist competed at the Olympics was in 1964, and the only time the country finished on a podium in the sport at a multi-discipline event was at the 1951 Asian Games.

The government, which funds a major portion of India's Olympic preparation, has finally begun to focus on one of the marquee sports at the Games. "Cycling is one of our priority disciplines," Garg said. "For last five years, since the starting of the cycling academy at the Indira Gandhi velodrome, we have been focusing on cycling a lot. In three years of good training, we were able to produce world junior number 1."

Garg is referring to Esow Alben, the prodigious talent from Andaman who topped the junior rankings chart in 2019 and also led the Indian team to a team gold medal at the junior track World Championship in the same year.

Esow and his teammates, Laitonjam Ronaldo Singh and Rojit Singh Yanglem, have transitioned smoothly to the senior level, with the Indian team ranked world number 20 while Ronaldo and Esow ranked inside the top-100 despite having last competed six months ago.

The junior team's exploits became a catalyst for the growth, with centres of excellence and academies now being set up in different regions. Garg and cycling federation chief Onkar Singh are confident that the track cycling team will make the cut for the 2024 Paris Olympics, the qualification for which will begin in September this year.

The track cyclists will hit the ground running from mid-February, set up a base in either Belgium or Slovenia and compete in tournaments in March and April. "In 2024, we don't want them to just participate. Our KRA for them is finals qualification in the team event and in individual, at least the second or third round," Garg said.

While those may seem ambitious, lofty targets, the expectations from the mountain bikers are modest as they take the first step into a dizzying world of where every millisecond matters. Mountain biking has been at the Olympics since the 1996 Atlanta Games. But an Indian team did not exist until six years ago.

It was only in 2016, that the country started competing continentally in the cycling event, when two cyclists took part in the Asian Championships. Even then, there were no coaches, no technicians and barely any certified competitions where they could take part – the first mountain biking race that got featured in the International Cycling Union (UCI) calendar took place only in 2019, the year when the team also had its first-ever national camp.

"Even the equipment we used was very basic; sometimes, not even that. Like when I started, many of us did not even use cleats, which is a basic requirement in the sport," says Pranita Soman, one of the seven Turkey-bound cyclists. "The scenario is changing very rapidly now." It's a sentiment echoed by the national champion, Shiven, who managed funds on his own to compete in private tournaments abroad and hire a sports scientist from Germany, in absence of any support in the past. "I knew if I continued doing my bit, work hard, perform well, things would change," he said.

"And they have." After years of neglect, it might be too soon to expect results at this year's two biggest events – the Commonwealth and Asian Games. They aren't even on the radar of the cyclists, who are looking at the long-term picture, with a focus on the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. "This year, we will just come to know the timings and other data," Garg acknowledged. "This is a long-term investment."

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