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The Indian EXPRESS

JOURNALISM OF COURAGE
SINCE 1932

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2022, NEW DELHI, LATE CITY, 20 PAGES

₹6.00 (₹8 BIHAR & RAIPUR, ₹12 SRINAGAR) WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

DAY AFTER ATTACK

Owaisi turns down Z-security, calls for UAPA on attackers

Home Minister to make statement in LS on Monday

LIZ MATHEW & DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

A DAY after shots were fired at his vehicle while he was returning to New Delhi from a poll campaign in Uttar Pradesh, AIMIM leader and Lok Sabha member Asaduddin Owaisi said he did not want the Z-category security cover offered to him by the government.

On Friday, the Ministry of Home Affairs granted Z-category CRPF security cover to Owaisi. His security detail, sources said, would have six-eight armed commandos accompanying him on his travels, apart from the security personnel at his residence.

But speaking in Lok Sabha, Owaisi said he did not want the Z-category security cover and would prefer to be an "A-category citizen".

The government said it had taken serious note of the Thursday incident and Union Home Minister Amit Shah would be making a statement in Lok Sabha on Monday.

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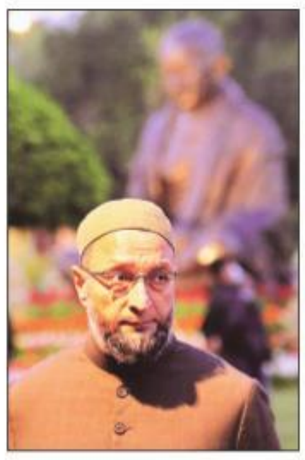

Owaisi at Parliament House on Friday. *Anil Sharma*

WINTER CHILL

The Indian contingent, including its lone competitor, J&K skier Arif Khan, at the opening of the Beijing Winter Olympics, Friday. India is diplomatically boycotting the opening and closing ceremonies over China's torchbearer pick — a soldier involved in the Galwan incident. *Reuters*

Setback to Kerala govt: Rlys rethinks, takes stand against K-Rail in court

SHAJU PHILIP & AVISHEK G DASTIDAR
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

SHOWING THE red signal to the Kerala government's showpiece K-Rail project, the Railway Board Friday told Kerala High Court it is "advisable" that proceedings of land acquisition for the proposed high-speed line be "stopped at this stage" — and that feasibility of its current alignment "has not been agreed" to by the Ministry of Railways.

The proposed Rs 63,943-crore K-Rail, officially titled SilverLine, is being promoted by Kerala Rail Development Corporation Limited (KRDCL), which is a joint venture of the state government and the Rail Ministry. The project has faced stiff opposition across the state.

The Railway Board's submission was presented in an affidavit to the High Court in

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QUARTERLY REVIEW TO BE HELD

Open to stricter social media rules, says Govt

Protecting women dignity online a fundamental construct: Vaishnaw

AASHISH ARYAN
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

MINISTER FOR Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw said Friday that the government is open to introducing "stricter" guidelines for social media intermediaries if Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha are able to build a consensus on it.

His statement in Rajya Sabha, in response to a question by Anand Sharma of the Congress, came four days after senior officials of the ministries of Information and Broadcasting as well as IT met senior executives from Google, Facebook, YouTube

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EXPLAINED

The rules and the pushback

A YEAR ago, the government notified rules to hold social media and OTT platforms more accountable for content. Monthly compliance reports on complaints, the action taken and redressal had to be published. The intermediaries have moved courts against a rule directing them to disclose the first originator of a message.

Delhi eases Covid norms: Schools open next week, 50% cap out

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

WITH A sustained decline in both Covid cases and the positivity rate, the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) on Friday decided to ease restrictions further, allowing schools, higher educational institutions, coaching institutes, gyms, spas and swimming pools to reopen in a phased manner starting February 7.

Schools will reopen for classes 9 to 12, albeit in a "hybrid mode", from Monday, and for nursery to class 8 from February 14. Hybrid mode essentially means students have the option of attending physical or online classes. Significantly, the 50 per cent cap on students in classrooms has been done away with.

DDMA has, however, directed all schools/ colleges/ institutes to take into account their available space and infrastructure facilities

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Hours before attack, accused shared video of Owaisi speech on FB

AMIL BHATNAGAR
DADRI, FEBRUARY 4

HOURS BEFORE Thursday's firing at Lok Sabha MP Asaduddin Owaisi's vehicle, the alleged shooter, Sachin Sharma, had reshared a Facebook post in which Owaisi can be heard making a speech that referred to UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

"He (Sachin) often spoke of religion, and perhaps certain things said during the elections offended him," Amit Sharma, who identified himself as a relative of the family, said.

On Friday, a small crowd had gathered outside Sachin's home in Dadri's Duryai village, discussing the previous day's shooting.

The BJP flag flew on the terrace of the house, under the Tricolour. Sachin's father is a labour contractor for factories in the area, and also handles their accounts.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Sachin Sharma

Short shrift to green nod: Experts seek SC push, revamp in compliance

JAY MAZOOMDAAR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

PUMPING IN adequate government resources; stricter enforcement of deterrent penalties; engaging communities in a "democratic" monitoring regime; setting up a statutory independent authority.

These are the key recommendations made by top experts, including current and former members of various panels of the Government and Supreme Court, after an investigation by *The Indian Express* Friday found several cases of non-compliance in six mega projects to

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
UNCONDITIONAL CLEARANCE

The report in *The Indian Express* on Friday

INSIDE

BHARATPE: AUDIT FLAGS RECRUITMENT 'FRAUD'

CHANNI NEPHEW HELD IN PMLA CASE
PAGES 17, 7

States' capex spend quicker, likely more effective, says Finance Secy

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

STATES ARE in a much better position to push capital expenditure quickly, and execute smaller ticket projects dispersed across the country, said Finance Secretary TV Somanathan.

"The Centre operates on certain big axis projects like national highways, railways, pipelines, telecom, that has its own value, but this (state-level capex) has a greater geographical spread and a greater diversity of projects. So, it has a good chance of being effective. So, we thought that in this push, some portion must be done through states,"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

T V SOMANATHAN
FINANCE SECRETARY

In UP, SP-RLD candidate faces sedition charge over poll slogans

Neeraj Chaudhary is fighting the election from Bijnor

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 4

MARKING A dubious first in the run-up to the UP elections, the sedition charge has been levelled against the Opposition SP-RLD alliance candidate from Bijnor, Dr Neeraj Chaudhary, based on a video that surfaced online of his supporters shouting slogans during a "mass contact" programme.

While the local police claimed in the FIR that the video shows Chaudhary's supporters raising slogans of "Pakistan Zindabad", the candidate denied the charge and said they were hailing a close associate Aqib Ansari, who is the husband of a corporator, with slogans of "Aqib bhai zindabad".

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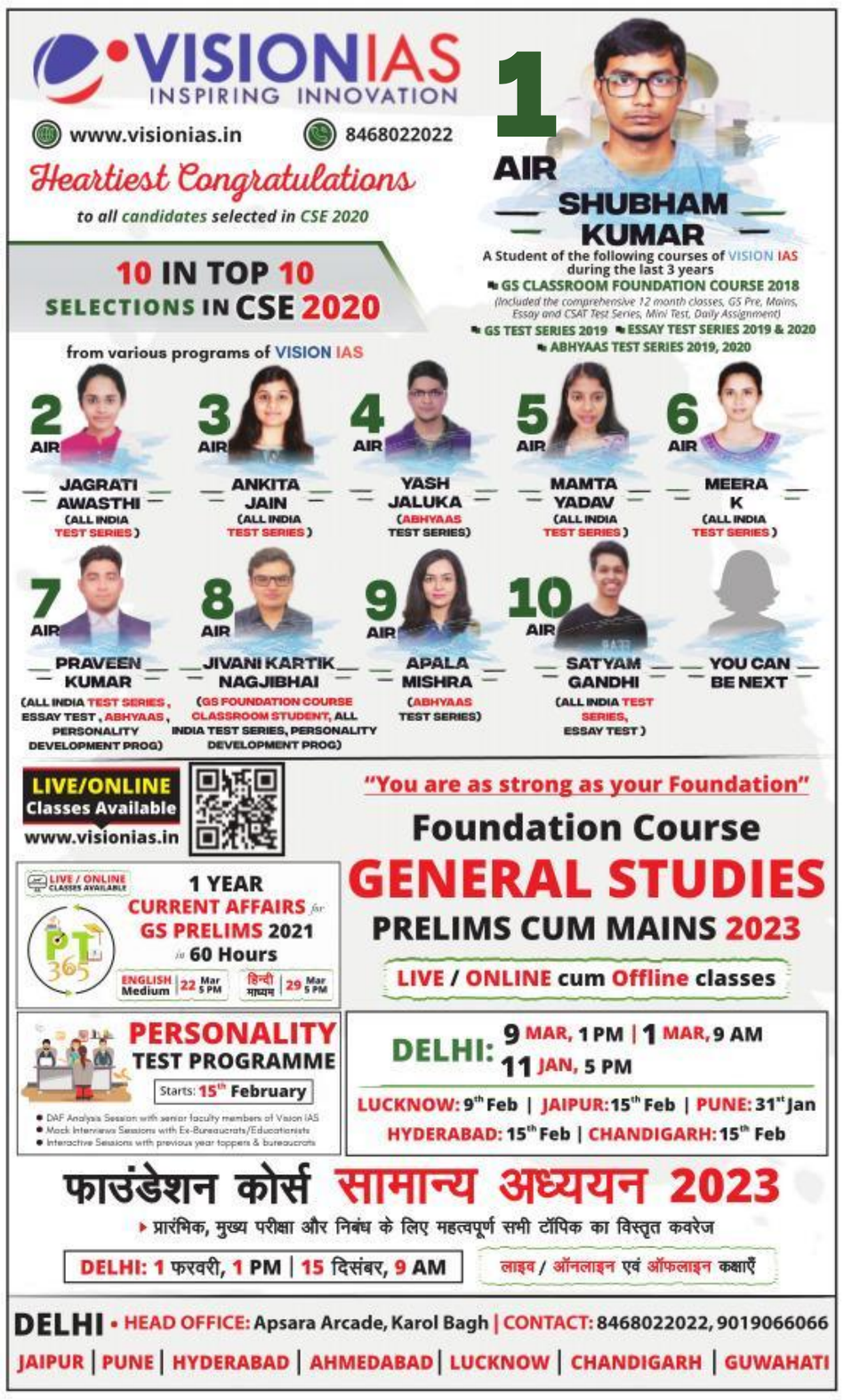
BUSINESS AS USUAL
BY UNNY



FROM PAGE ONE

Social media

and Twitter to understand the flagging, demoting, takedown of controversial content.

Those present at the January 31 meeting called by the I&B ministry said this was not a one-off meeting, and would be conducted at least once every quarter, if not more frequently, to keep the government apprised of developments in the content takedown process.

Vaishnaw told Rajya Sabha that the government is open to even more strict social media rules to hold them accountable.

"I personally believe that for the protection of our citizens, we must make the rules stricter. At this point of time, we are working within the Constitutional framework. The role of the state and the role of the Centre, both have to be seen in perspective. We have to come forward as a society and create much more accountability for social media," he said.

Replying to a question by BJP's Sushil Kumar Modi who wanted to know what action had been taken against sites which had put up defamatory photographs of Muslim women and tried to auction them, Vaishnaw said that protecting the dignity of women online was a fundamental construct, and there would be no compromise on it.

"It is our commitment. Whatever information came to us, we immediately acted upon it," he said. He said whenever the government tried to take steps to make social media more accountable, it was the Opposition which alleged that freedom of speech was being taken away.

On the January 31 meeting, a senior executive of a social media intermediary said: "The MeitY now has a process wherein they flag to us content which they think is controversial. We do our own internal review of the content and based on the outcome of that review, either take down the content, or go back and explain to the ministry our reasons for not taking down the content. Officials from Broadcasting (I&B) wanted to understand the process better."

According to officials present at the meeting, the ministry asked the social media intermediaries how they tackled fake news, anti-India content, nudity, porn and other controversial content on their platforms. They also wanted to know what the platforms were doing proactively to tackle such content and how much of it was removed every month.

"We explained to them the entire process of how, despite employing the available mechanisms for content review, some of it manages to escape the scrutiny of algorithms and machines. While we are always working on improving the process, some of the content will always have to be flagged for takedown," another social media intermediary executive present at the meeting said.

Last month, the I&B and IT ministries had flagged several handles and content to social media platforms for takedown.

The IT ministry had identified 73 Twitter handles, four YouTube channels and one game on Instagram for fake and incitement content, and asked the respective social media intermediaries to suspend them.

The ministry had issued orders to ban 35 more channels on YouTube after receiving intelligence inputs that these channel owners were based in Pakistan and were involved in spreading "anti-India fake news in a coordinated manner over digital media".

Officials said that executives from all social media companies present at the meeting agreed that the content flagged by the two ministries were indeed unlawful, and therefore were taken down swiftly.

Owaisi security

"I don't want Z-category security. Make me an A-category citizen at par with you all. I am not going to be silent… Why was UAPA not invoked against those who fired at me? I don't want security, but you apply UAPA against them," Owaisi said while speaking about the attack on him at a toll plaza in UP.

"I want to live, speak. I have to raise my voice to live. My life will be safe when the poor are safe. If the Constitution provides security to the poor, the weaker and the minorities, I will also be safe. I know there will be death for each one of us. I will not be scared of those who shot at my car… But this hatred has to be stopped," he said.

He said he had warned in 2017 that "if the plurality of the country is not respected and the right wing captures everything, such elements will get emboldened. Why are you not banning them? Why are you not doing anything to stop them from getting radicalised?". Referring to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's speech in which he referred to "two Indias", Owaisi said: "The wealth of this country is love and affection, but hatred is taking over."

He said Speaker Om Birla had called him immediately after the incident and inquired about him.

Responding to Owaisi's remarks, Union Minister Piyush Goyal said: "It's a serious matter. We thank God that he is safe and we wish him a long life. The Uttar Pradesh government has already taken action and arrested the culprits. The probe is on and the Home Minister will make a detailed statement on Monday."

Meanwhile, a senior official said that following the attack on Owaisi's convoy and a threat perception report from the Intelligence Bureau, the government decided to accord him the second highest category of security cover. An order would soon reach the CRPF, the official said.

Owaisi, whose party is contesting 100 Assembly seats in UP, had a close call Thursday when shots were fired at the vehicle he was travelling in while returning to Delhi from Meerut after campaigning. The state police arrested two persons in connection with the incident and also recovered a weapon used in the attack.

Accused on FB

The 25-year-old student who has a law degree from a college in Meerut and is now enrolled for an LLM at Royal College in Ghaziabad, was arrested at the spot where the Hyderabad MP's vehicle was attacked near Chhajarsi toll plaza in Hapur district. An alleged accomplice, Shubham, was arrested soon afterward.

Officials said Sachin told police interrogators that Owaisi's speeches had angered him. A pistol was recovered from him.

"We could not have imagined this. We have no idea where he got the gun from," Amit Sharma said.

The "talk of religion" is in evidence on Sachin's Facebook page.

In a post on December 10, 2019, he referred to Hindus being insulted by the portrayal of Raja Suraj Mal in a Bollywood film. On September 15, 2019, he complained that the absence of unity among Hindus had led to problems, and declared he was ready to "sacrifice" his life for his religion.

February 16, 2019, he requested the Prime Minister to strap RDX on him and send him into Pakistan to avenge the deaths of Indian soldiers.

In some posts, Sachin can be seen posing alongside BJP leaders, including an MP. A post from July 7, 2019 purportedly shows a membership slip of the BJP. The local unit of the party, however, denied that he was a member or held a party post.

"We came to know of the incident and we saw his pictures with the leaders. He is neither a member nor an office-bearer. He was active on his own, and would get pictures clicked with them," said Raj Nagar, district head of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha..

Finance Secy

Somanathan told *The Indian Express*.

In fact, the Union Finance Ministry consciously reached out to states as part of a nuanced strategy in the run-up to Budget 2022-23. In the meeting with states ahead of the Budget, the states' reaction was quite positive. "They said give it to us and we will use it," Somanathan said. Besides translating into quicker action on the ground, state projects benefit the small and medium enterprises more.

The Union government is expecting the thrust on public investment through states to have a greater multiplier effect given that they might spend less on health and more on capex in the coming year. The Finance Secretary said a policy choice must be made between little less of expenditure or more of fiscal consolidation or a little less of consolidation and more of expenditure. But either way, he said, private investments are not yet at a stage where interest rate sensitivities would be a key deterrent.

"If we reduce the expenditure and fiscal deficit, perhaps it will get a lower cost of borrowing. Is that going to drive a sufficient quantity of investment? Is the crowding out such that by reducing borrowing, more private funds will be available and they will invest? We were not convinced that would happen in the current scenario. Yes, there will be a marginal increase in the borrowing cost, that will filter through to the private sector also. But those projects in the private sector that are being planned, I don't think they are so interest rate sensitive that 0.25 per cent change will make them drop the project. If they were so rate sensitive, in the last two years when the rates were so low, we should have seen a surge in private investments. It was not there," Somanathan said.

Spending, according to the Finance Secretary, will create a better growth impact, even with some borrowing impact. "At the margin, we have to consolidate. There's no question of remaining at 6.9 per cent. But there is a pace of consolidation… We felt that spending will create a better growth impact, even with some borrowing impact. I don't think we are in a crowding out situation because private investment intentions are not so buoyant that they are waiting to use these funds. They are not struggling to get funds; banks are also sitting on a lot of money that they can still lend. So, crowding out is less of a risk now was the judgement. And growth will be better off with a slightly higher deficit," he said.

SC push sought

commitments made in order to obtain environment and forest clearance.

Experts were unanimous that non-compliance is one of the biggest challenges facing environmental governance.

Conservationist Valmik Thapar, who has served in various expert panels of the Environment Ministry since the early 1990s, called it the "sinkhole" in the clearance system. "What this has come to, since the laws were enacted in 1970s and 80s, is deplorable. Everything is taken for granted when lawmakers themselves undermine laws. The system needs shock therapy," he said.

Environmentalist Ashish Kothari, Thapar's former colleague in several expert panels, pointed to how "non-compliance has been defeating the very logic of the conditional clearance" process. "If the conditions are not fulfilled, logic demands that a conditional clearance should no longer be valid. But developers have been getting away with it for over three decades," he said.

As a remedy, M K Ranjitsinh, who drafted the Wildlife Act while serving as an IAS officer, wants a regulatory body in line with instructions from the Supreme Court to ensure implementation of green laws.

"The Supreme Court reiterated it several times since its Lafarge judgment in 2011. Last year, it mandated our committee to consider a permanent expert body. We recommended a National Forest Conservation Authority (NFCA), formed under the FC Act and headed by a retired Supreme Court judge, in our report last month," said Ranjitsinh, who chairs an expert panel set up by the apex court in 2021.

Former IFS officer and an expert member of the ministry's Forest Advisory Committee (FAC), Anmol Kumar, however, feels effective monitoring boils down to adequate manpower as even a statutory authority will need "ears and eyes" on the ground.

"We need better monitoring and deterrent penalties. If the Ministry's staff strength at the regional level cannot be improved immediately, third-party audits are an alternative. But these auditors cannot depend on the developers they audit for funds. The Government has to pay and that will require higher resource allocation." Kumar said.

Ecologist Madhav Gadgil, who chaired the Environment Ministry's Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel, emphasised the importance of people's participation to make the monitoring process reliable.

"While government officers may have various motives and third-party auditors are mostly interested in their fees, engaging communities not only democratises the process but makes monitoring more effective. They have a direct stake and often are better informed about local conditions," Gadgil said.

Kothari pointed to the "inherent contradiction" in one arm of the government playing regulator to other arms implementing development projects.

"We need a National Environment Commission, a Constitutional authority like the Election Commission, independent of government pulls and pressures. Our task force recommended it for the Eleventh Plan (2007-2012). We need such an authority with state-level sub-commissions to examine whether the central and state governments are actually carrying out their environmental responsibilities as laid out in law and policy," he said.

The six projects investigated by *The Indian Express* include: Ken-Betwa River Link, the flagship river-linking project in Madhya Pradesh; Dibang multipurpose project, the largest hydel plant proposed as part of the government's Act East Policy in Arunachal; Lower Subansiri hydel project on the Arunachal-Assam border; the proposed international airport in Goa; the Kulda mine in Odisha run by the world's largest coal producer; and the country's first private mega thermal plant in Tamnar, Chhattisgarh.

The Indian Express found that in each project, stringent conditions to compensate for the high environmental impact have been sidestepped, ignored or, in some cases, met only on paper.

K-Rail push

response to an appeal by the state challenging a single-bench directive on January 20 to stay survey and land acquisition proceedings for the CPM-led government's ambitious project.

In the statement submitted by Assistant Solicitor General of India S Manu, the Railway Board's Additional Member (Works) also raised concerns over how the project would affect the national transporter's expansion plans for a third and fourth lines in areas where K-Rail would run parallel to existing tracks.

Questioning the viability of the project, the statement stated: "Since the Ministry of Railways is a joint venture partner in KRDCL, a debt component of Rs 33,700 crore will finally come on the Ministry of Railways as debt servicing, which is not possible with mainly passenger traffic. This will also be examined and firmed up after finalization of technical parameters. Even if the State Government is willing to provide debt repayment guarantee, Ministry of Railways has to examine whether the project is financially viable per se."

Sources in the Rail Ministry told *The Indian Express* the statement "means the project is as good as dead in its present shape".

Ministry officials said Rail Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw had in his last meeting with Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan raised questions about various aspects of the project. "One of the main points raised by the Minister was the projected profitability of SilverLine and the prospect of it becoming a financial liability for the Railways," said a top official.

On Friday, Konkan Railway and Delhi Metro pioneer E Sreedharan, who was a BJP candidate in the Kerala polls last year, met Vaishnaw with a delegation of party leaders and expressed reservations over the project.

Vaishnaw said in a tweet later that Sreedharan "explained serious technical issues in the SilverLine project. Without FLS (Final Location Survey), land plan and sanction, land acquisition cannot be done".

Former Railways official Alok Kumar Verma, who was initially hired by KRDCL as a consultant, welcomed the national transporter's stand but questioned the in-principle approval given for the project's feasibility report three years ago.

"This (the statement) means the project will be killed slowly because the Railways will also have to explain why they gave in-principle approval to the feasibility study in 2019 when it had such glaring loopholes. The feasibility study was flawed and the Detailed Project Report that followed was also short on due diligence and ground work. Once the Railways approves the feasibility study, the project is allowed to spend up to Rs 100 crore in pre-construction activities. That's public money wasted," Verma said.

The Railway Board's statement Friday referred to the in-principle approval and said it only meant approval to go ahead with preparation of DPR (Detailed Project Report), etc. Once the details of the project, including financials, are determined, a decision is taken on whether to proceed, it said.

According to the statement, project expenditure is incurred only after the DPR is approved and the sanction is communicated. In the case of K-Rail, this approval has not been granted so far, it said.

The Railway Board also informed the court that the DPR has not yet been accepted by the Ministry and hence has not been sent to NITI Aayog for appraisal.

K-Rail aims to create a corridor for trains to clock speeds of 200 kmph between the state capital Thiruvananthapuram in the south to Kasaragod at the state's northern tip, slashing the time taken to cover the 530-km distance from 12 hours to around four.

But the project has been opposed by the Opposition Congress, civil society outfits and even some sections within the ruling alliance, with questions raised primarily over its cost, ecological impact, rehabilitation of those who will be displaced, and lack of consultation.

Covid norms

to ensure compliance of Covid appropriate behaviour. It has also directed schools to take the consent of parents before calling students.

"Several restrictions were lifted at the DDMA meeting held today, and with this, the livelihood of people will now be back on track. Schools for classes 9 to 12 will reopen from Monday," said Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia after the meeting, adding that if cases continue to decline, they will look at doing away with the hybrid mode and resuming only physical classes.

"Schools for nursery to class 8 will be reopened from February 14. Till then, all schools will make arrangements and implement Covid protocol for reopening. Teachers who are unvaccinated will not be permitted in schools," he said.

The Delhi government has also directed all higher educational institutions under it to return to offline classes completely, and stop online classes .

"All higher educational institutions, colleges, ITIs, polytechnic and skill institutes will open from Monday and will only hold offline classes. Students have been studying online for the last two years and batches have passed without even seeing their college due to Covid. Now, as cases are declining, higher institutions and colleges should discourage online classes and take only physical classes," said Sisodia.

Delhi University, a central varsity, is yet to take a call on reopening.

Schools have been directed to make all efforts to encourage eligible students to get vaccinated. All the concerned authorities have been asked to regularly monitor the health of students.

The DDMA, at its meeting, also allowed restaurants, bars and other eateries to remain open till 11 pm instead of 10 pm. Night curfew in the city will continue, but will now start from 11 pm instead of 10 pm, and be in place till 5 am.

The DDMA has also allowed all government and private offices to function with 100 per cent attendance. Private offices are, however, advised to follow work from home as far as possible.

On Friday, Delhi recorded 2,272 new cases, 20 deaths and a positivity rate of 3.85 per cent.

SP-RLD slogans

Chaudhary blamed the BJP's IT cell for "twisting the slogans". The BJP denied the allegation, terming it as "false". The audio in the 12-second video clip is partially unclear but slogans of "Aqib bhai zindabad" can be heard.

Chaudhary (51) is a popular doctor in the area and first-time candidate. Apart from IPC section 124-A (sedition), the charges against him include those under sections 295-A related to insulting religious beliefs, 153-A on promoting enmity between different groups, and various sections of Epidemic Disease Act and Disaster Management Act.

According to police, the video is from Tuesday and the FIR was lodged on Thursday "after preliminary enquiry". They have also booked Chaudhary's supporters, who have not been identified. No one has been arrested.

Reacting to the case in a series of tweets in Hindi, RLD president Jayant Chaudhary hailed his party's candidate and wrote: "Unhein yeh murkh video doctor karke deshdrohi sabit karney mein lagey hain (These fools are trying to project him as a traitor by doctoring the video)."

Asking voters to be "careful", the RLD chief wrote: "New India mein 'Aqib bhai zindabad' ko 'Pakistan zindabad' bataya jata hai (In New India, 'Aqib bhai zindabad' is being portrayed as 'Pakistan zindabad')."

The complainant in the case is Sub Inspector Puspendra Singh from the City Kotwali station, who alleged that the accused were shouting "objectionable slogans" and "trying to disturb communal harmony and law and order of the area". The candidate's supporters were also seen violating Covid protocols by moving in groups and not using masks, Singh stated in the complaint.

Additional SP (Bijnor) Dr Pravin Ranjan Singh said the case has been lodged "on the basis of preliminary enquiry". "During investigation, all allegations would be looked into. The video will also be sent to the forensic laboratory for examination," he said.

Radhey Shyam, Station House Officer at City Kotwali, said that "a video went viral on social media on Thursday in which it is seen that in the presence of Neeraj Chaudhary, his 20-25 unidentified supporters were raising 'Pakistan Zindabad' slogans during canvassing for votes".

According to Chaudhary, the police registered the case without listening to the audio in the clip. He said that he had been to the residence of Ansari in the Julahan-Kazipada area of Bijnor with his supporters on Tuesday evening.

"Then, we went out to meet the public. On the way, my associates were raising slogans of 'Jayant Chaudhary *zindabad*', 'Neeraj Chaudhary *zindabad*', 'Aqib Ansari *zindabad*' and 'Aqib *bhai zindabad*'. On coming to know that some people were trying to twist the slogans, I immediately called the police yesterday (Thursday) and sought an inquiry. I was shocked when told that police have already booked me in a case," he said.

Neeraj Chaudhary said he has filed a complaint against the police action with the Election Commission and the state poll panel. "I stated in my complaint that the district administration is working with the BJP and a fair election would not be possible. The BJP's IT cell has released the video with malafide intention and the police, without verifying it, filed the FIR.," he said.

BJP's Bijnor district president, Subhash Balmiki, said: "Neeraj Chaudhary is making false allegations. These people (SP and RLD) are trying to polarise the atmosphere of the district and trying to shift blame on others."

Scheduled to vote on February 14, the Bijnor constituency has around 3.84 lakh votes, including over 1.50 lakh from the Muslim community. The seat was won in 2017 by BJP's Suchi Chaudhary, who is the party's candidate this time, too.

FULL REPORTS ON
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WRITEBACK

RESPONDING TO the report in *The Indian Express* (Ken-Betwa to new Goa airport to Odisha mine: 6 mega projects ignored green commitments they made, February 4, 2022), Bhopal Singh, director general, National Water Development Agency, wrote:

"The article questions the decision of the government for the central support and implementation of the Ken-Betwa Link project (KBLP) pending final forest clearance. The argument is unfounded and devoid of ground realities in the Bundelkhand region which faces frequent drought conditions and migration of people.

"The stage-II forest clearance is granted on fulfilling the conditions of stage-I clearance. The progress on these conditions can be made only after approval of the project by the government and providing budgetary support. The provision of Rs 4,300 crore in the budget of 2021-22 and Rs 1,400 crore in the next year have been made primarily for land acquisition and transfer of requisite non forest land/degraded forest land for compensatory afforestation etc...

"KBLP will impact about 4,206 ha core area of PTR and and another 1,372 ha area in Panna Tiger Reserve buffer. This loss of core area of PTR is being compensated by providing equal non-forest land in the vicinity of PTR for compensatory afforestation. The loss of buffer area is also being compensated by double the degraded forest land in the vicinity...

"The government is very serious about conserving the ecosystem of the region, particularly the PTR. Apart from mitigation measures planned to be taken under Environment Management Plan, a Landscape Management Plan (LMP) is under finalization by Wildlife Institute of India (WII) under the supervision of National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), PTR department, Forest Departments of both the states and Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. KBLP will definitely bring economic prosperity to this backward area due to increased agricultural activities and arrest the migration of the people from the region."

The Indian Express replies:

The report neither questioned the budgetary support to KBLP nor the "ground realities" of Bundelkhand. It investigated records to show how the government set a deadline for completing the project even before it was granted all statutory clearances. It also contacted Bhopal Singh, DG, NWDA, on the pending clearances and quoted him accurately.

On the NWDA's plan of compensating PTR's loss with "double the degraded forest land" in the vicinity, the news report quoted the Stage-I forest clearance which said that "merely adding forest area of adjoining forest divisions…will not be sufficient to compensate for the loss as these areas are as such available for use by the tiger and other wild animals" of Panna, and that "equivalent revenue and private land" will have to transferred to the tiger reserve.

The Indian Express stands by its report.

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EXPRESS AUDIO

The Medvedev-Tsitsipas illegal coaching controversy

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

In the latest episode of the Express Sports podcast, we discuss the Tsitsipas 'sting operation' and what should be done about illegal coaching in Tennis

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100 doctors of East MCD hospital fired for strike over salary delay

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

AROUND 100 senior and junior resident doctors from the East Delhi Municipal Corporation-run Swami Dayanand Hospital have been "considered terminated" for striking work to demand the payment of backlog salaries. All other contractual doctors and DNB residents (junior doctors who work as residents while studying for their specialisation) have been marked absent for the three days that the hospital has been on a complete shutdown.

"All SRs and JRs of your department will be considered terminated WEF 9 am 04.02.22 and fresh interviews will be conducted accordingly," says the circular issued by the hospital's medical superintendent.

Dr Mohd Qasim, secretary, resident doctors' association of the hospital, said, "The order states that if we do not report to work today, we will be considered terminated. We did not report to work. There has been no fresh interview call, but the order has also not been withdrawn."

He said the doctors were assured the salary for one month only, and a general body meeting will be held tonight or tomorrow morning to decide whether the strike will continue.

All workers in the hospital, including nurses, sanitation workers along with doctors, haven't received salaries since October.

Emergency services at the hospital have stopped. *Express*

"We have been writing to the administration; partially, some of us were staying away from work in the beginning of January after which the salary for the month of October was released for all of us. But the salary for three months is still pending and even senior doctors have joined the strike now. However, the administration is looking for the weakest links and singling them out to punish them for the strike," said Dr Qasim.

Emergency services at the hospital have stopped and patients are being referred to the Delhi government-run Guru Teg Bahadur hospital nearby.

Medical superintendent Dr Rajni Khedwal, however, said the move was taken since many of the resident doctors who are protesting aren't even owed salaries: "We conduct fresh interviews each month to hire resident doctors for a contractual 44 days, and their services are thereafter extended if they want to stay based on reports of their work from the HODs. Many doctors who are striking work haven't completed one month of their service and aren't owed salaries. I know a few who joined services only five days back. If they re-join work, I can at least run the emergency services." Although some resident doctors may be new, the order does not target just them, it covers all resident doctors, even those who have been working since before October.

Staff at North and East MCD-run hospitals have gone on strike several times in the past over delayed salaries.

Dip in surgeries, delayed diagnosis, treatment: Cancer care hit since outbreak of pandemic

ANONNA DUTT
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

TWO YEARS of the pandemic have severely hampered cancer treatment, resulting in a delay in seeking care and diagnosis, surgeries being pushed back, and patients discontinuing treatment, said experts this World Cancer Day.

"When there is a surge, and related lockdowns or hospital closures for other treatments, patients who have already been diagnosed and are under treatment falter, miss schedules, and sometimes completely give up treatment. We have seen that compliance falls in such situations. Then, there are patients who have symptoms but do not or cannot seek timely care. By the time they are diagnosed, they are at advanced stages of cancer and the prognosis is poorer," said Dr Prashant Mathur, director of ICMR's National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research.

The data for the National Cancer Registry is collected and reported by the institute. They have collected data on the impact of the pandemic on cancer care over the two years, which is currently being analysed, Dr Mathur said.

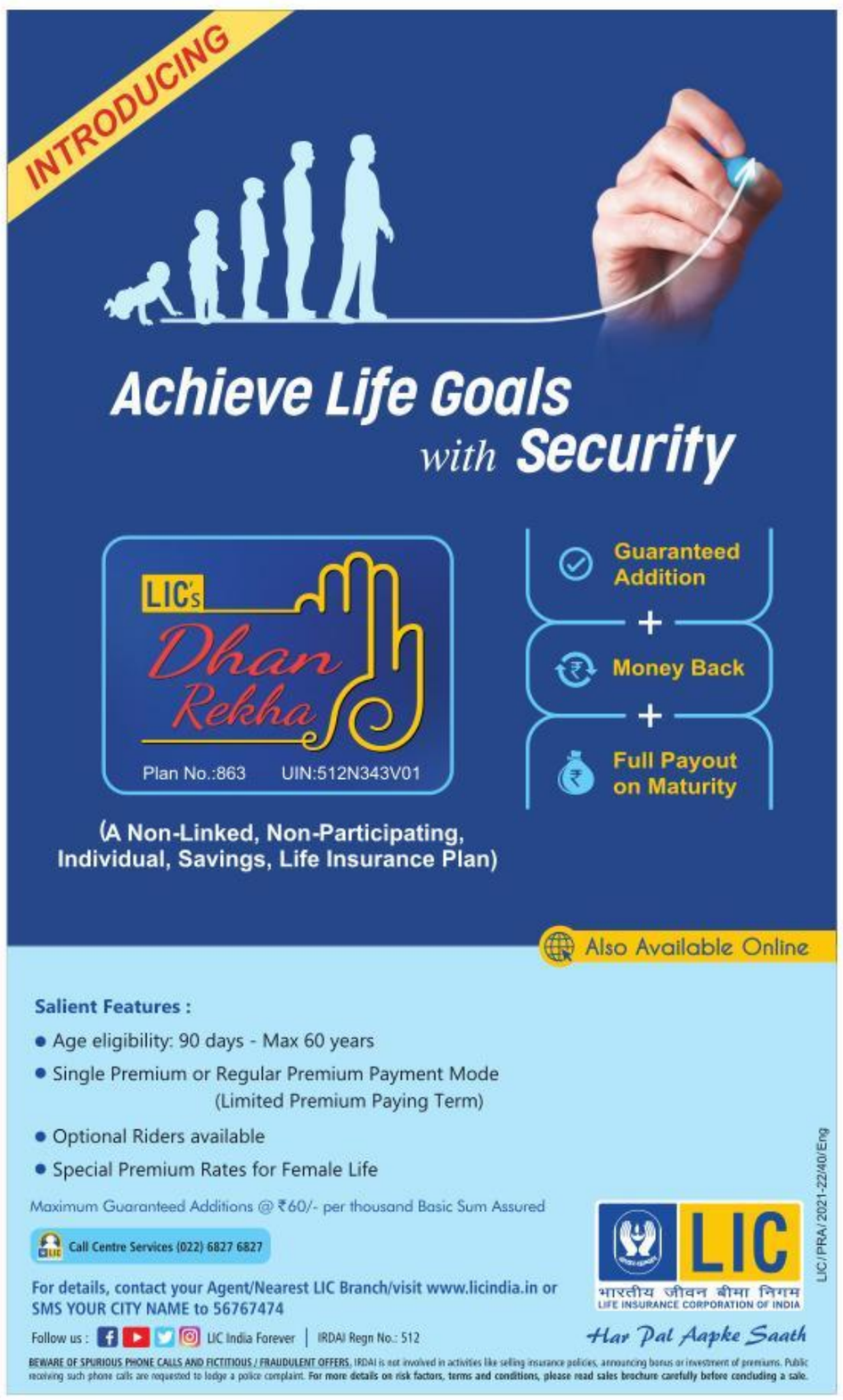
"Nowadays, telemedicine is picking up and that is benefitting people. There are efforts being made by hospitals to reach out to patients. Patients from one part of the country do not have to travel just to seek care. They can go to a nearby centre and a specialist consultation can be sought through telemedicine so that there is no delay," he said.

However, repeated closures of services have resulted in fewer surgeries and patients coming back with their disease having progressed even at a premier institute such as the AIIMS. There was a 12% to 50% reduction in the number of cancer surgeries performed for different cancer sites at AIIMS in 2020 as compared to 2019, as per hospital data.

"When those who were supposed to undergo the surgery aren't able to due to Covid-19 situation, we try to manage them with metronomic therapy (a new type of chemotherapy where lower doses are given orally repeatedly over a long period). In around 40% patients, despite being given the metronomic therapy, the disease progressed," said Dr MD Ray, professor of oncology at AIIMS.

Even though there are always queues for surgeries, the doctors before the pandemic prioritised those who needed surgeries urgently so such situations did not arise, he said.

Dr Abhishek Shankar, an alumnus of the same institute and currently an associate professor at AIIMS Patna, said that there are as many as 1 lakh cancer patients who remained undiagnosed every month during the pandemic. "The theme for this year's Cancer Day is 'Close the Care Gap'. However, the pandemic has only resulted in an increase of this gap with people facing job loss, wage loss, and decline in their incomes. The disparity in cancer care has gone up, and when there is a difference in access there will be worse outcomes. Plus, 90% of cancer treatment centres in the country are in urban areas while 75% of the country lives in rural areas. People have to go to cities for treatment and for that, they need resources. It is also difficult to do this when there are restrictions in place because of the pandemic," he said.



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NOTICE

Extract of Standalone Financial Results for the quarter/ nine months ended on 31st December 2021

₹ Crores

Particulars	Quarter ended on 31.12.2021	Quarter ended on 30.09.2021	Quarter ended on 31.12.2020	Nine months ended on 31.12.2021	Nine months ended on 31.12.2020	Financial year ended on 31.03.2021
	Audited	Audited	Audited	Audited	Audited	Audited
Total revenue from operations	31,964.25	32,686.62	23,190.31	92,340.42	56,777.49	84,132.92
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before tax and exceptional items)	10,443.66	11,730.40	6,012.27	33,611.06	8,279.58	17,868.54
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after exceptional items)	10,262.69	11,599.69	5,786.33	33,452.06	8,071.62	18,609.84
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax	7,683.39	8,708.26	4,285.36	25,171.72	8,948.32	17,077.97
Total comprehensive income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	7,836.99	8,871.26	4,302.30	25,518.93	8,995.85	17,489.38
Paid-up equity share capital [Face value ₹ 10 per share]	1,222.33	1,203.46	1,146.13	1,222.33	1,146.13	1,198.78
Reserves excluding revaluation reserves						93,211.34
Securities premium reserve				31,286.48	27,780.28	30,964.76
Net Worth	117,244.17	109,379.71	84,982.00	117,244.17	84,982.00	95,185.12
Paid-up Debt Capital				13,648.17	17,387.26	13,567.60
Net Debt Equity Ratio	0.27	0.32	0.39	0.27	0.39	0.32
Basic earnings per share of ₹ 10 each (not annualised) - in Rupees (after exceptional items)	62.88	71.30	36.38	206.19	75.58	145.00
Diluted earnings per share ₹ 10 each (not annualised) - in Rupees (after exceptional items)	62.85	71.25	36.38	206.00	75.57	144.99
Debenture Redemption Reserve	2,046.00	2,046.00	2,046.00	2,046.00	2,046.00	2,046.00
Debt Service Coverage Ratio	16.06	18.19	4.87	16.00	2.72	3.60
Interest Service Coverage Ratio	23.16	22.29	7.39	21.45	3.75	5.81

Extract of Consolidated Financial Results for the quarter/ nine months ended on 31st December 2021

₹ Crores

Particulars	Quarter ended on 31.12.2021	Quarter ended on 30.09.2021	Quarter ended on 31.12.2020	Nine months ended on 31.12.2021	Nine months ended on 31.12.2020	Financial year ended on 31.03.2021
	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited
Total revenue from operations	60,783.11	60,387.13	41,935.21	174,635.67	106,449.03	156,477.40
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before tax and exceptional items)	12,358.98	13,603.61	5,746.74	38,221.67	4,538.86	14,886.85
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after exceptional items)	12,165.58	14,119.57	5,593.19	38,361.90	4,486.83	13,843.69
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax	9,598.16	12,547.70	4,010.94	31,914.20	1,027.88	8,189.79
Total comprehensive income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	10,485.46	11,832.68	2,204.20	32,701.00	(5,152.25)	978.78
Paid-up equity share capital [Face value ₹ 10 per share]	1,221.17	1,202.28	1,144.95	1,221.17	1,144.95	1,197.61
Reserves (excluding revaluation reserves) and Non controlling interest						75,535.84
Net Worth	104,182.71	91,518.46	66,891.57	104,182.71	66,891.57	74,238.77
Net Debt Equity Ratio	0.68	0.79	1.18	0.68	1.18	0.98
Earnings per equity share:						
Basic earnings per share ₹ 10 each (not annualised) - in Rupees (after exceptional items)	79.10	99.16	31.86	252.48	6.08	63.78
Diluted earnings per share ₹ 10 each (not annualised) - in Rupees (after exceptional items)	79.06	99.08	31.86	252.24	6.08	63.78
Debenture Redemption Reserve	2,046.00	2,046.00	2,046.00	2,046.00	2,046.00	2,046.00
Debt Service Coverage Ratio	9.37	11.41	3.59	9.02	1.38	2.23
Interest Service Coverage Ratio	12.57	14.90	4.84	11.83	1.95	3.39

Note:
The above is an extract of the detailed format of Standalone and Consolidated financial results for the quarter/nine months ended on 31st December 2021 filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 and Regulation 52 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Standalone and Consolidated results for the quarter/nine months ended on 31st December 2021 are available on the websites of the Stock Exchanges (www.nseindia.com/www.bseindia.com) and the Company's website (www.tatasteel.com).

T V Narendran
Chief Executive Officer &
Managing Director

Koushik Chatterjee
Executive Director &
Chief Financial Officer

Mumbai: February 04, 2022

TATA STEEL

CORONAVIRUS IN THE CAPITAL

VACCINATIONS IN LAST 24 HOURS	OMICRON CASES
59,575	549

PATIENTS IN HOSPITAL: 1,133

OXYGEN SUPPORT	304
VENTILATOR SUPPORT	94

DELHI: TOTAL CASES 18,40,919

	Total	Vacant
HOSPITAL BEDS	15,426	14,280
ICU BEDS	4,462	4,011

	Cases	Recoveries	Deaths	Tests
Feb 3	2,668	3,895	13	61,992
Feb 4	2,272	4,166	20	59,036
Total	11,716*	18,03,251	25,952	3,51,40,306

*Total active cases in Delhi

NOIDA	Feb 3	Feb 4
Cases	345	217
Deaths	1	0

GURGAON		
Cases	896	814
Deaths	3	3

CLASSES RESUME FOR STUDENTS OF IX-XII FROM MONDAY

City schools say want to go entirely offline, but option of hybrid mode an impediment

SUKRITA BARUAH
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

SCHOOLS ARE set to reopen again on Monday, without the 50% cap on classroom capacity this time. While some schools see this as paving the way back to "normalcy", others think it will be limited by the continuation of the "hybrid mode" of teaching-learning.

Students of classes IX to XII will be back in school from Monday, and nursery to class VIII from February 14. Following the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) meeting on Friday, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said that while they will reopen in the hybrid mode, the aim is to move towards doing away with it as cases decline further.

Though the Union Ministry of Education has left it to states and union territories to take a call on the need for parental consent, an education department official said that a nod from parents will continue to be a prerequisite for children attending physical classes. However, the earlier cap of education institutes being allowed to function at only 50% of classroom capacity is being done away with.

Some schools have taken this a go-ahead to head back to only offline classes. Sudha Acharya, principal of ITL Public School, said that she held an interaction with students of classes IX to XII and found that they are all enthusiastic to get back to school and parents are on-board too. "We will be resuming offline classes as normal from Monday, starting with practicals. When younger children get back the week after that, we will resume school bus services as well. We're no longer going to have online classes, and there will be no more hybrid mode," she said.

However, others think that the prerequisite of parental consent means this will not be a possibility for them. "No matter how much we've been saying that we want to move completely to the offline mode, I think we'll find that the status quo from the last time we reopened will continue. There will still be parents who will say 'let kids get the second vaccine' or 'they're actually okay learning from home'. Hybrid mode is the problem — it needs to go, and we will of course continue with safety protocols. When we opened last time, only 35% parents of class VI students had given consent," said Tania Joshi, principal The Indian School.

This was echoed by Minakshi Kushwaha, principal Birla Vidya Niketan. "Children are definitely not going to be present in full strength if the option is given. One reason is lethargy. Second, since we're moving into exams now, there is a fear of taking the exam in offline mode. It's time to move away from the option, even if we can only call them every alternate day, that would also make a difference," she said.

The hybrid mode has also been taxing for teachers. "A teacher might wake up at 6 am to do household work, then come to school by 8 am and conduct offline classes for a set of students till 2 pm, and then have online classes for another small set in the afternoon and evening, and field calls and messages with doubts and queries by students. It doubles the burden on them. We're happy that we can reopen and hope that we can move into completely offline classes in a week or so," said Awadhesh Jha, principal of Sarvodaya Vidyalaya, Sector 5, Rohini.

School transport, another crucial factor in getting back to normalcy, is also likely to be limited at the outset. L V Sehgal, principal of Bal Bharati Public School, Ganga Ram Hospital Marg, said this might be introduced later once confidence builds among parents and they approach the school for this. "In November, we had asked parents how many of them would be willing to avail of school bus services since we wanted to plan our routes. Out of more than 5,000 students, parents of only about 300 said they were willing. That was too few for us to consider restarting bus services. With fewer users, the transport fees per head will also be much higher," he said.

FROM FEBRUARY 7

Class 9 to 12 students can come to school with parental consent; nursery to class VIII from Feb 14. Learning to continue in hybrid mode

All higher educational institutes can reopen; physical classes to be held

Gyms, yoga centres, spas, swimming pools can reopen with protocol in place

Sanitisation underway at a school ahead of reopening, Friday. *Praveen Khanna*

■ Night curfew to begin from 11 pm instead of 10 pm

■ Restaurants & bars can stay open till 11 pm instead 10 pm

DU may consider reopening, Delhi govt varsities to go offline

SUKRITA BARUAH
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

WITH COVID restrictions being eased in higher educational institutions, Delhi University might be looking at finally opening its campus to its students for physical classes.

Following Friday's DDMA meeting, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said that all higher educational institutions, colleges, ITIs, polytechnic and skill institutes will be directed to only conduct offline classes from next week. This means that Delhi government-run campuses such as Ambedkar University, Delhi Technological University, colleges under Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University will be opening for physical classes for all their students.

Crucially, an education department official said the requirement for institutes to maintain 50% of classroom or laboratory capacity at any given time will be done away with. So far, DU officials have been citing the DDMA's 50% requirement as the primary reason for it not having resumed offline theory classes since the pandemic.

DU Vice-Chancellor Yogesh Singh told *The Indian Express* that the university will be examining the possibility of reopening with this change. "We will examine the guidelines and if it enables reopening without any conditions, we will certainly do so. Since we have students from all around the country, if we find that we can reopen, we would want to give them some notice period — perhaps 7, 10 or 15 days," he said, adding that the university would look at restarting physical classes for students of all years.

So far, the limited reopening of the university has been restricted to access to the library and to labs for practicals for final-year students, while all theory classes have been held online throughout the pandemic.

AUD PRO Anshu Kumar said that while the university is still awaiting the DDMA's order, they have begun preparing the campus for reopening. "We need to see the order to know exactly what is expected of us but regardless, we have begun sanitising the campus for reopening and we will abide by the guidelines and directives issued by the government," she said.

While JNU authorities did not respond to queries on its reopening plans, those at Jamia Millia Islamia said that they will wait for directions from the University Grants Commission. "We will wait for UGC guidelines and instructions, following which the Executive Council will take a decision accordingly on this," said PRO Ahmed Azeem.

In bid to encourage malls to install EV chargers, govt launches guidebook

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

THE DIALOGUE and Development Commission (DDC) of Delhi launched an electric vehicle (EV) charging guidebook for shopping malls in the capital Friday. According to a communication from the government, representatives of shopping malls have expressed their support to install EV chargers in at least 5% of their parking space over the next six months.

Prepared in collaboration with the World Resources Institute, India (WRI), the guidebook provides pointers on planning, installing, and managing EV charging infrastructure in malls.

Jasmine Shah, DDC vice-chairperson, said, "Every city in the world that made a mass-scale jump towards e-mobility, did so on the back of strong charging infrastructure. Besides this, we need to ensure that every place that a vehicle stops at has a charging point, be it offices, residences or malls."

"In addition to incentives and the step-by-step guidebook launched today, the Delhi government will also provide handholding support through the state EV Cell to all malls that commit to achieving the target of installing chargers for 5% of their parking slots in the next six months," Shah said.

The guidebook states, "Apart from their home and office, people spend significant hours at malls which makes them a perfect avenue for EV charging. An EV charging station can provide a differentiator to a shopping mall and add another revenue stream for mall owners, while also providing convenience to the EV owners." It goes on to offer suggestions on understanding customers' requirements based on whether they are shop owners, retail customers or fleet operators.

"We encourage mall owners to equip 20-25% of their parking space for EV charging by providing appropriate charging infrastructure," the guidebook reads. It also says malls under construction should account for EV charging requirements, and malls could also meet their energy requirements for EV charging stations through renewable energy sources.

The EV Policy, notified in 2020, states that the government shall provide a grant of 100% for the purchase of charging equipment up to Rs 6,000 per charging point for the first 30,000 charging points. It adds, "Grants shall be available on purchasing AC 001 chargers and LEV AC chargers through the Delhi government."

Malls have expressed their support to install EV chargers in at least 5% of their parking space over the next 6 months, said the govt

BRIEFLY

Routine admissions, surgeries resume at AIIMS, GTB

New Delhi: With Covid cases declining, government hospitals such as AIIMS, Lok Nayak, and GTB hospitals have resumed routine hospitalisations and surgeries. Services at all three hospitals were curtailed at a time when several healthcare workers were testing positive in one go, resulting in staff crunch. There were 2,272 fresh cases of Covid-19 reported on Friday, with a positivity rate of 3.85%.

Wildlife census in Haryana to resume

Gurgaon: Haryana is set to resume the wildlife census next month, said officials of the state wildlife department Friday. The census, covering protected forest areas and areas outside protected forests, was put on hold indefinitely due to Covid last year. The 2021 Wildlife Census in Haryana had kicked off in April 2021. **ENS**

BRAVING THE COLD

Homeless people on the banks of the Yamuna, Friday. The city witnessed a cloudy morning and its minimum temperature was recorded at 10.4 degrees Celsius, two notches above normal, the IMD said. *Abhinav Saha*

Intellectually disabled teenager raped by guard at shelter home; accused arrested

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

A 16-YEAR-OLD intellectually disabled girl was allegedly raped by a security guard at a shelter home where she was staying. Police said they were made aware of the incident after the girl got pregnant and complained of stomach ache. The accused has been arrested and police are speaking to other girls at the home to ascertain if the accused had targeted any of them too.

DCP Gaurav Sharma said the incident came to light on January 31 after a manager at the centre filed a complaint. "He stated that a girl in the care centre complained of stomach pain and was taken to hospital for examination, where doctors said she was pregnant. The complainant told police that she had made allegations against the security guard posted at the centre. We lodged an FIR and arrested him," he said.

An officer said the accused was produced before a Delhi court, which sent him to 14-day judicial custody. Police said his phone has been sent for a forensic examination.

The girl had been staying at the centre for the past three years, after her parents abandoned her. "During initial probe, police found that the centre had women employees and just one male security guard. As per rules, he was not allowed to enter two floors of the premises," an officer said.

When contacted by *The Indian Express*, Women and Child Development director Rashmi Singh said they have sought a report of the incident. "The matter is currently under examination of the Child Welfare Committee and police. It has not yet come to the department level but we have also asked for a report. We will be able to comment once the full facts come out," she said.

Delhi riots: HC to hear pleas seeking probe into hate speeches

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

AFTER A hiatus of many months in the matter connected to the Northeast Delhi riots, the Delhi High Court Friday said it will hear PILs seeking an SIT investigation into the violence and action against various political leaders for alleged hate speeches from February 8.

The division bench of Justice Siddharth Mridul and Justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani, to which the matter was transferred last week from the division bench headed by Chief Justice D N Patel, asked the counsel to collate the prayers in the petitions to allow it make a determination on which of the reliefs sought still survive and which have become infructuous over time. "The first step would be to figure out which of the prayers in which of the petitions survive. We don't want to flog a dead horse. If something is already over, done with, on the rails, then we are not to interfere in that," said the court.

After hearing a plea filed by three riot victims, the Supreme Court on December 17 had asked the High Court to decide the matter, particularly the one seeking registration of a case against BJP leaders Kapil Mishra, Anurag Thakur and others, expeditiously.

'It's shocking... will protest': Smriti targets CM over liquor policy

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

UNION MINISTER Smriti Irani Friday targeted the Delhi government's new excise policy and said it was "shocking that liquor vends were being opened near schools and religious places".

Speaking at a virtual rally organised by the Delhi BJP, she claimed that Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, "the leader who talked of Swaraj and wrote in his book about picketing liquor shops and shutting them down, was now exploring opportunities to open liquor shops in each ward".

Months before the MCD elections in the capital, the Delhi BJP has been protesting against the new liquor policy.

Irani said that the BJP would continue its protest until the policy is withdrawn. "The Kejriwal government has given a message to the society, that it is ready to go to any lengths for profit. I want to ask the AAP government who will be answerable for families that will be destroyed in this quest... if money earned through liquor can ever help in development," she said.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia had earlier said that liquor shops have not increased in Delhi — in 2015 there were 850 liquor shops, and under the new excise policy, only 501 were opened.

Irani claimed liquor stores were opened close to gurdwaras in Tilak Nagar and that they jeopardised safety of women.

The new policy has seen the Delhi government exit from the business of selling liquor, redistribution of stores across the city, and upfront collection of excise revenue. The three MCDs, ruled by the BJP, have meanwhile closed down several liquor shops over alleged violations of the Master Plan and other norms in the past few months.

Hitting back, the AAP alleged that there was a "nexus" between the BJP and liquor mafia through which it used to earn Rs 3,500 crore. "The back of the liquor mafia has been broken due to the new policy and the illegal earning of BJP has stopped. Rattled by this, BJP leaders are pedalling lies...," it said in a statement.

The minister was speaking at a virtual rally

PROBE HITS ROADBLOCK

Mystery of 3,005 logs found buried at Delhi Golf Club remains unsolved

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

THE CRIME Branch's probe into the alleged illegal cutting of trees at the Delhi Golf Club (DGC) appears to have hit a dead end, after the Forest Research Institute (FRI) in Dehradun said the number of trees that were cut down and their age can't be determined based on the 3,005 logs found buried on the premises.

On July 19, 2019, police registered a case against the club for alleged tree felling, under sections 8, 23, 24 of the Delhi Preservation of Trees Act, after receiving a complaint from range forest officer Satyender Prakash, who was posted with the South forest division in Tughlakabad. Then Delhi Police chief Amulya Patnaik transferred the case from Nizamuddin police station to the Inter-State Cell of the Crime Branch.

Over the past three and a half years, police have questioned the club's president, captain, and secretary who, in their statements, told police they were not aware of where the logs came from.

"Police requested the forest department to seize and take custody of the recovered logs. They were told by the department that as per Section 17 of the Delhi Preservation of Trees Act, they had directed the secretary (DGC) to execute an indemnity bond of Rs 1 crore with their department for safe custody of the recovered logs. However, the club refused to execute the bond," an officer said.

Police then decided to approach the forest department.

Police registered a case against the club in 2019. *Archive*

"The investigation officer (IO) sent a letter to the department, asking it to ascertain how many trees were cut and how old they were. But they said this cannot be determined based on the recovered logs as no such technology was available with them," a senior police officer said.

Police also approached several dendrologists, but they too could not ascertain the age. "The IO later visited the FRI and sent a letter to its director to find out the age of the recovered logs and the time period during which they were felled. A few days ago, the FRI conveyed that this can't be ascertained by them, but they can ascertain the species and the charge will be Rs 30,000 per log," the officer said.

The case first came to light in 2016, when a complaint against the club for allegedly felling at least 100 trees had been forwarded to the forest department. According to sources, the club had applied for permission to cut trees to expand a golf course, which was turned down.

Government officials had said an inspection of the site was ordered after CM Arvind Kejriwal received a complaint from club members. Officials in the forest department said a final report was filed with the Delhi Environment Ministry by Tree Officer (South) S K Muan Guite after an inspection. He had said logs of different sizes were being dumped in pits and covered with soil.

As per the Delhi Preservation of Trees Act, 1994, no one can cut trees without permission from the forest department and paying for compensatory plantation.

Delhi Budget
Swaraj Budget

दिल्ली सरकार
आप की सरकार

For the Financial Year 2022-23
Be a part of the budget making process.
Send your valuable suggestions

Your suggestions should be related to the following topics:
Schemes/programs that:

- Help Delhi's traders and businessmen in growing their businesses
- Attract Buyers from all over the world to purchase from Delhi's markets
- Boost Delhi's economy
- Increase the income of Delhiites
- Create new jobs
- Reduce pollution
- Focus on beautification of Delhi
- Enable women to feel safe
- Provide access to healthcare and education to everyone

"We have initiated the process of preparing the budget for the financial year 2022-23. We want to know your views and suggestions on what new schemes should the government introduce and what improvements should be made to the ongoing schemes using your tax money. These will be included in the next year's budget."

-Arvind Kejriwal, Chief Minister, Delhi

You can send your valuable suggestion to the Finance Department through the link available on the following website

https://delhi.gov.in

Last Date: 15th February 2022

Finance Department, Government of NCT of Delhi

DIP/Shabdarth/D/0202/21-22

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DECISION 2022

UTTAR PRADESH • UTTARAKHAND • PUNJAB • GOA • MANIPUR

AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi during door-to-door campaigning in Meerut on Thursday. *PTI*

In UP, 100 seats and a long shot for Owaisi party

ASAD REHMAN
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 4

THURSDAY'S ATTACK on All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) chief Asaduddin Owaisi has put the spotlight on the Hyderabad-based party that is attempting to make inroads into Uttar Pradesh.

The party has been active in UP since the 2020 Bihar elections, where it surprised many by winning five seats. For the coming elections, the party has formed a "third front", the Bhagidari Parivartan Morcha, along with the Jan Adhikar Party led by former UP minister Babu Singh Kushwaha and the Bhartiya Mukti Morcha headed by Waman Meshram.

The AIMIM, which is likely to contest around 100 seats, has so far announced candidates on 66 seats, most of them with a sizeable population of Muslims. The party has also fielded eight Hindu candidates.

In the run-up to the election, Owaisi, an MP from Hyderabad, has been a regular visitor to the state, holding meetings with several senior Opposition leaders, including SBSP chief Om Prakash Rajbhar, Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party chief Shivpal Yadav and Azad Samaj Party chief Chandrashekhar. The talks, however, didn't materialise.

In almost all his speeches so far, Owaisi hit out at both the BJP and the SP, inviting the oft-repeated charges of the AIMIM being the "B-team of the BJP" for cutting into the Opposition's minority votes.

In September, Owaisi had hit out at the SP chief, saying "when the Muzaffarnagar riots happened, if Akhilesh Yadav [as CM] had started the cases, the Yogi government would not have been able to withdraw the 77 cases".

He has also repeatedly said the SP doesn't want an "independent leadership of Muslims in UP".

A senior AIMIM leader said the party is hopeful of putting up a "tough fight" on at least 10 seats in the state. "The seats are spread across the state," he said, naming Nanpara in Bahraich, Ruadauli in Ayodhya, Domariyaganj in Siddharth Nagar district, Saharanpur Dehat, Sahibabad in Ghaziabad and Siwal Khas in Meerut as some of the seats where it sees a fighting chance.

While the party is still finding its feet in the state, Owaisi's popularity went up during the anti-CAA protests in December 2019. While Owaisi's fiery speeches make him a natural crowd puller, it remains to be seen if he can convert this popularity into votes this election.

The party made its debut in UP in 2017, when it contested 38 seats and lost all of them with an overall vote share of 0.24 per cent. Its best performance that election was in Sambhal, where its candidate Ziaur Rehman came third with 59,336 votes, behind the BJP's Dr Arvind (59,976 votes) and the SP's Iqbal Mehmood (79,248 votes). The AIMIM also won 23 zila panchayat member seats in the panchayat polls held last year.

While the AIMIM has little to lose in UP, if the party does end up doing well, it will be at the cost of the SP, which relies on its Muslim-Yadav votebank to see it through.

A senior SP leader calculates that even if the AIMIM gets 10,000 votes on each of the seats it contests, it will be from Muslims, who form the SP's votebank. "This can make or break several seats, and help the BJP," says the leader.

Dismissing the Opposition's charge of the AIMIM being the "BJP's B-team", the party's State Executive Committee member Mohammad Salman says, "How can anyone say we are the B-team of the BJP? This tag goes away when we do well. Now, no one calls us the B-team in Bihar. Also, what about places like Karnataka where Congress governments are toppled by the BJP? Is the Congress going to blame us for that too?"

ADITYANATH FILES NOMINATION FOR GORAKHPUR URBAN SEAT

In BJP show of strength, Shah says Yogi govt restored rule of law in UP after 25 yrs

LALMANI VERMA
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 4

WITH LESS than a week to go for voting in the first phase of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's nomination filing on Friday for Gorakhpur Urban seat was turned into a big show of strength by the BJP, with its allies and Union Home Minister Amit Shah present. The Gorakhpur Urban constituency votes on March 3 in the sixth phase.

In a public meeting before the nomination was filed, Shah said that only the BJP, under Adityanath's leadership, could make UP the top state in the country. Leaders of BJP allies Apna Dal (Sonelal) and Nishad Party were also at the meeting, along with sitting Gorakhpur Urban MLA Radha Mohan Das Agrawal.

The sitting MLA had reportedly been unhappy at being denied the BJP ticket from Gorakhpur Urban this time, but Shah said Agrawal had taken a pledge to ensure Adityanath's victory. Both Shah and Agrawal accompanied the UP Chief Minister when he went inside the collectorate to file his nomination.

Shah expressed confidence that the BJP would win the Assembly elections, saying that the Adityanath government in the state had laid the foundation for good governance in its first two years (2017 to 2019), and the party won by a big margin in UP in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections despite the opposition forming a 'grand alliance'.

The Adityanath government has made the state free of mafia, Shah said, adding, "I believe that it is the BJP's contribution and Yogi Adityanath's success as chief minister that they have restored the rule of law in the state after 25 years."

Shah also said that the UP government under Adityanath effectively implemented schemes launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Central government for the poor and deprived sections of society, including schemes for housing, electricity, ration distribution and free vaccination.

"Today, the Opposition has no issue. They feel it is better that there are restrictions on public meetings due to Covid pandemic because they don't have to reach out to people," Shah said. Addressing the Opposition, he added, "Do whatever propaganda you can, but the people of UP are with the BJP, and the party will cross 300 seats."

Attacking the Samajwadi Party, Shah said Azam Khan, Atiq Ahmed and Mukhtar Ansari were behind bars. Addressing SP leader Akhilesh Yadav, Shah said, "Akhilesh babu, there is no possibility (for them)."

Shah said that Adityanath has represented Gorakhpur in the Lok Sabha for five consecutive terms and has also delivered as UP Chief Minister. He added that Gorakhpur was once known as a hideout for criminals of UP and Bihar, but its image has changed in past five years.

Now, Shah said, GORAKHPUR is: G for Ganga Expressway, O for organic farming, R for roads, A for AIIMS, KH for *khaad ka karkhana* (fertilizer factory), PU for Purvanchal Expressway and R for Regional Medical Research Centre.

Adityanath, in his address, called the coming Assembly elections an *agnipariksha* of his government. He claimed that apart from political comments, no one from across Uttar Pradesh and the country was saying anything negative about the BJP and its governments.

"There should be trust that every BJP worker will work... to get the BJP's desired result of winning the elections," the UP Chief Minister said.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with Union Home Minister Amit Shah after filing his nomination for the coming UP Assembly elections, in Gorakhpur, on Friday. *PTI*

I HEREBY DECLARE

YOGI ADITYANATH
BJP, Gorakhpur Urban
TOTAL ASSETS: ₹1.5 CRORE
MOVABLE ASSETS: Self: ₹1.5 crore (includes a revolver and a rifle)
IMMOVABLE ASSETS: Nil
LOANS FROM BANKS OR OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS: Nil
CRIMINAL CASES: Nil
SOURCES OF EARNING: Salary and remunerations as a legislator and a former MP
EDUCATION: BSc (1992)

BABY RANI MAURYA
BJP, Agra Rural
TOTAL ASSETS: ₹2.8 CRORE
MOVABLE ASSETS: Self: ₹1 crore Husband: ₹16.5 lakh
IMMOVABLE ASSETS: Self: ₹89.5 lakh Husband: ₹75 lakh
LOANS FROM BANKS OR OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS: Nil
CRIMINAL CASES: Nil
SOURCES OF EARNING: Agriculture
EDUCATION: BEd (1980)

RAJESHWAR SINGH
BJP, Sarojini Nagar (Lucknow)
TOTAL ASSETS: ₹13.8 crore
MOVABLE ASSETS: Self: ₹78 lakh Wife: ₹1.1 crore
Child: ₹35.9 lakh
IMMOVABLE ASSETS: Self: ₹3.4 crore Wife: ₹8.1 crore
LOANS FROM BANKS OR OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS: Nil
CRIMINAL CASE: Nil
OCCUPATION: Former joint director of ED
EDUCATION: PhD (2011)

Buzz growing around Baby Rani, BJP's Jatav face in UP polls

AMIL BHATNAGAR
AGRA, FEBRUARY 4

A CAVALCADE of about 15 cars stops in a narrow lane in a Dalit colony in Agra's Brahm Nagar. It is a day of hectic campaigning for Baby Rani Maurya. She steps out of a vehicle, garlands some local residents and politely seeks their votes. Within minutes, the cars, adorned with BJP flags, start rolling on the dirt road to make it in time for a public gathering in Akbarpur.

Former Uttarakhand governor and prominent Dalit leader, Maurya is the ruling BJP's candidate in Agra Rural, where the party dropped its sitting MLA Hemlata Diwakar to make way for her. She exudes confidence about her electoral prospects.

Maurya, 65, has been associated with the saffron party for three decades. In 1995, she was elected as Agra's first woman mayor on the BJP's ticket. She went on to work under then BJP leader Ram Nath Kovind in the party's SC wing. She became a member of the UP Social Welfare Board and also served as a National Commission For Women (NCW) member.

Her elevation in the BJP dispensation continued as she was appointed Uttarakhand governor in 2018. And days after her resignation from this position in Sept last year, she was appointed the BJP national vice president.

Maurya is from the Dalit community's dominant Jatav sub-caste, to which BSP supremo Mayawati also belongs. Seeking to wrest the SC votes, especially Jatav votes, from the BSP, the BJP has projected Maurya as its Jatav face in its campaign for the upcoming UP Assembly elections. She had contested from Etmadpur in the 2007 polls but lost to a BSP candidate though.

"I was governor for a brief period, but I have been active on the ground since the beginning. I became the Agra mayor and have been working for people since then. The BJP is dedicated to the cause of Dalits and other backward sections. Our slogan 'sabka saath, sabka vikas' represents this idea. I am confident people here will repose their faith in us," said Maurya.

Her supporters and campaign workers feel the BJP has "bigger plans" for her. They believe that she might be appointed the Deputy Chief Minister if the party retains power. Such a buzz around her has attracted people from other parties to her camp.

Kali Charan Suman, the ex-BSP MLA and runner-up from Agra Rural in the 2017 polls, is actively campaigning for her. "We have no doubt that Baby Rani will emerge as the winner… She is one of us and has always worked for the community. We hope to see her as the next Deputy CM. It is our sankalp (resolve) to see her victorious," he said.

However, the loyalties of this belt's Dalit residents seem to be divided between the BSP and the BJP, as they point out that for them this election will also be about their identity, security and future.

The BSP has pitted a local leader Kiran Kesri against Maurya, while the SP-RLD alliance has fielded Mahesh Kumar Jatav here.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

Baby Rani Maurya campaigns in Agra on Tuesday. *Abhinav Saha*

TRACKING COVID IN ELECTION-BOUND STATES

	UTTAR PRADESH	PUNJAB	UTTARAKHAND	GOA	MANIPUR
Deaths	23,286	17,392	7,596	3,727	2,057
Deaths Today	9	32	15	10	3
Cases (Jan 26 → Feb 4)	10,876 → 3,766	4,990 → 1,281	2,904 → 1,183	1,465 → 595	388 → 277

SP bastion heads for another *kaante ki takkar* as former cop takes on SP old hand

ASAD REHMAN
KANNAUJ, FEBRUARY 4

ONE OF the biggest stories to have come out of Kannauj in recent times are the raids on two perfume traders — SP MLC Pushpraj Jain "Pampi" and Peeyush Jain. Yet, this poll season, despite Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath taunting the Samajwadi Party with his "*itra waale mitra*" line, a reference to the perfume trade that is loaded with communal overtones, in Bada Bazaar, Kannuj's perfume hub, the raids hardly evoke any interest, with people dismissing it as "just a story for the media".

At Gauri Sugandh shop in Bada Bazaar, Nishish Tewari, 42, and Nadeem, 40, both fourth-generation perfume traders and friends for years, sit together and chat as they usually do to fill out the afternoon hours. As the conversation veers round to elections, Nadeem says he doesn't want to discuss politics and leaves.

Tewari then says, "I will definitely vote for the BJP because goons from a particular community and party have been reined in. Everyone knows that."

Back at his shop, Mohammad Daud Yakub Perfume Sellers, Nadeem says, "I don't understand this. People voted out the SP government which had brought in so much development for the state and the region. People only want religious politics."

Bada Bazaar falls under Kannauj Sadar, a reserved seat where the BJP has fielded former IPS officer Asim Arun, who surprised everyone by taking voluntary retirement to join the BJP on January 8. The SP has fielded its sitting MLA, Anil Kumar Dohare, a three-time winner from the seat. The BSP has fielded first-time candidate Samarjit Singh.

The seat, part of the Kannauj parliamentary seat, has around 70,000 Dalits, 65,000 Muslims, 35,000 Yadavs, and around 65,000 non-Yadav OBCs like Pals, Lodhs and Kushwahas, among others. Among the forward castes are Brahmins (40,000), and Thakurs (10,000). While Akhilesh's wife Dimple Yadav was elected MP in 2014, in 2019, she lost to the BJP's Subrat Pathak.

With the BJP banking on the forward-caste and non-Yadav OBC votes, and the SP on the Yadav and Muslim votes. the 70,000 Dalits will be a crucial factor. The seat goes to polls in the third phase of voting on February 20.

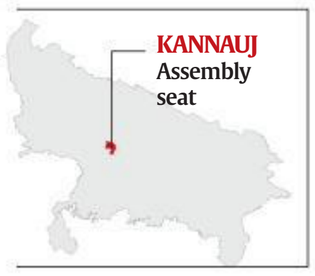
Though Arun is a new face in Kannauj, he hopes his record in the IPS -- he was Commissioner of Police in Kanpur — and the fact that he represents the BJP will see him through. "The BJP has worked for security, respect and development. It is there for everyone to see. I have almost no experience in politics, but have a lot in administration. The difference between the SP and BJP is clear. *Fark saaf hai* (the difference is clear) between the past government and ours," he told *The Indian Express*.

In the 2017 election, Dohare defeated BJP's Banwari Lal Dohare by a narrow margin of 2,454 votes. Many predict another "*kaante ki takkar* (close election)", with all eyes on the BSP candidate and if he will end up splitting Opposition votes.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

SEAT WATCH

2017 RESULTS
Anil Kumar Dohare (SP) Votes: 99,635 (40.44%)
Banwari Lal Dohare (BJP) Votes: 97,181 (39.45%)
Anurag Singh (BSP) Votes: 44182 (17.93%)



DIFFERENT ARENA

Unique fight in Punjab's Atam Nagar: Accused MLA vs rape case advocate

DIVYA GOYAL GOPAL
LUDHIANA, FEBRUARY 4

WHILE HEARING a case against him Friday in connection with rape allegations, the Supreme Court said: "Have you seen (his) activities?... Is this the way to behave?" Few expect Simarjeet Singh Bains to bat an eyelid though. The two-time legislator, and founder-cum-president of the Lok Insaaf Party, is not just contesting the Atam Nagar seat in Ludhiana again, but is also confident that all his opponents would lose their security deposits, including the advocate of the woman who has accused him of rape.

As per the woman's FIR, 52-year-old Bains raped her multiple times in 2020, when she approached him for help in a property dispute case. Her advocate, Harish Rai Dhanda, is the Akali Dal candidate from Atam Nagar.

On Friday, amidst scathing observations against Bains, the Supreme Court stayed his arrest for a week as well as all the cross-FIRs filed against the woman, while directing the Punjab government to file a status report. Rapping the MLA's counsel, the court said: "He (Bains) is a public representative, MLA for two times... How many cases did he file against that lady, and now he wants anticipatory bail and he wants the lady to go to jail." Bains called the case "political vendetta".

Bains, whose elder brother Balwinder Singh (63) is also an MLA and seeking re-election from Ludhiana South, is known in Punjab as much for his firebrand politics as his bitter rivalry with the Badals, and the long list of cases against him (Bains declared 15 in his poll affidavit). In 2016, in perhaps the only such case, the two brothers were thrown out physically from the Punjab Assembly, during a discussion on river waters.

Police chargesheet in the rape case against Bains, which also names his two other brothers, businessmen Karamjit Singh and Paramjit Singh, says "the mobile tower locations of the accused and the victim were found matching with the areas and timings provided by the victim on those particular dates". The FIR was registered on July 10, 2021, on charges of rape, assault, criminal force, sexual harassment, and conspiracy.

More than six months later, police have not arrested either Bains or other accused named in the FIR. Presenting the chargesheet in a local court in November last year, the Ludhiana police said that "arresting MLA Simarjeet Bains can create a law and order problem as his supporters might get agitated". It also argued that being a public representative, "he could not flee, and neither could the other accused who were his party members". It urged the court to instead issue summons to him, and subsequently non-bailable warrants have been issued against him multiple times.

The basis for Bains's confidence is the "pro-people" image he has built over the years, largely with populist gestures such as thrashing a government official in public in 2009, and 'raiding' government offices to catch "corrupt" employees on camera. While there are cases against him over this, Bains says people love him for being undaunted. "Other parties are afraid of us because they know that nothing can stop the Bains brothers from fighting for the rights of the common people. If someone takes a bribe, we will expose them, by hook or crook. We are not professional but passionate politicians," says Bains.

Ahead of the 2017 Punjab polls, the Bains brothers floated their own 'Lok Insaaf Party', which entered an alliance with AAP. Of the five seats it contested, the Lok Insaaf Party won the two where the brothers stood. Bains walked out of the alliance soon after, over Arvind Kejriwal's apology to Akali leader Bikram Majithia.

The Lok Insaaf Party is contesting 42 seats this time.

Advocate Dhanda, one-time MLA from Ludhiana West, says Bains has been allowed a free run. "Look at his confidence that, despite multiple non-bailable warrants against him, he hasn't applied for bail. But justice can be delayed, never denied."

Bains says the fact that the advocate is in the fray shows the rape allegation is politically motivated.

Of the other contenders in Atam Nagar, Congress's Kamaljit Singh Karwal was an aide of Bains from his Youth Akali Dal days.

Bains says neither is any competition. "There were at least 25 FIRs against me... but not a single conviction so far, proving that the cases are false."

Lok Insaaf Party MLAs Simarjeet Singh Bains (*right*) and Balwinder Singh Bains in Ludhiana. *Gurmeet Singh*

VOTING ON FEBRUARY 20

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL

TERRIFYING THURSDAY

THURSDAY WAS a scary as well as eventful day for AIMIM leader and Lok Sabha member Asaduddin Owaisi. In the evening, shots were fired at his car in western UP when the Hyderabad MP was on his way to Delhi from Meerut. Owaisi, who had promised to take his wife out for dinner, and being busy campaigning in Uttar Pradesh elections had specifically asked her to be in Delhi on Thursday, arrived home and found her all set to go out. Owaisi told her about the shooting incident, but she didn't believe him — she thought he was making up a tale to avoid going out. "New story," she is learnt to have commented. Owaisi then asked for the TV to be switched on, but his daughter called her mother at that moment to find out about him, which made her realise that he was indeed telling the truth. Owaisi had this to say: "*Goli se bach gaya, lekin biwi ki tirchhi nazar se bachna mushkil hain* (Survived the bullet, but it is very difficult to escape wife's suspicious glances)."

CRITIQUE OF CRITICS

IN A first, the Defence Ministry this year introduced public voting to select the best tableaus and marching contingents for the Republic Day parade as a popular choice category. This was in addition to awardees selected by the panel of judges, as is the convention. Interestingly, none of the winners selected by the panel won the popular choice awards. The judges selected the Indian Navy and the CISF as best marching contingents for the armed forces and CAPF; people voted for the Air Force and the CRPF's contingents. Similarly, while the panel selected tableaux from Uttar Pradesh from among states, and ministries of Education and Civil Aviation jointly for the Ministries/Departments category, people voted for the tableaux of Maharashtra and the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communication from those categories. For the popular choice, people voted through the MyGov platform between January 25 and 31.

Illegal sand mining: ED arrests Channi's nephew in PMLA case

ANJU AGNIHOTRI CHABA
JALANDHAR, FEBRUARY 4

JUST OVER two weeks before Punjab votes to elect its new Assembly, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) arrested Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi's nephew Bhupinder Singh alias Honey on charges of money laundering linked to an alleged illegal sand mining case of 2018. The central agency claimed that Honey has admitted that Rs 10 crore in cash recovered during raids last month "pertained to him" and were "generated through mining related activities including clearance of mining files and transfer of officials".

Honey, the son of Channi's sister-in-law, was arrested in the intervening night of Thursday and Friday under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after several hours of questioning at the ED office in Jalandhar. He was produced in the court of Additional district and sessions Judge Manjinder Singh, which remanded him in five-day custody of the ED. The ED had sought his custody for 14 days.

PTI

ED officials take Bhupinder Singh to a Jalandhar court, Friday.

Meanwhile, Channi said that the illegal sand mining case in which his nephew has been arrested was being unnecessarily linked to him. "The matter is now in the court. We will accept whatever the court decides. But it is unnecessarily being linked to me," Channi said.

The central agency on January 18 and 19 had raided multiple locations in Punjab, including the premises of Honey, in connection with money laundering linked to an illegal sand mining case registered at Rahon police station of Nawanshahr district in 2018. The agency had claimed to have seized Rs 10 crore, including about Rs 8 crore cash and "incriminating" documents pertaining to sand mining business, and property from Honey's premises.

In its plea presented in the court, (a copy with *The Indian Express*) for seeking Honey's custody, the ED mentioned that during the course of searches, "statements of Kudratdeep Singh, Bhupinder Singh, Santokh Singh (father of Bhupinder Singh) and Sandeep Kumar were...recorded under section 17 of PMLA, whereby it has been established that the aforesaid cash (Rs 10 crore) actually belonged to Bhupinder Singh".

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

75% quota in pvt jobs: SC to hear Haryana's appeal on February 7

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

THE SUPREME Court will hear on Monday Haryana's plea challenging the Punjab and Haryana High Court order staying its law that mandated 75 per cent reservation in the private sector for those who have domicile in the state.

On Friday, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Haryana government, told Chief Justice of India N V Ramana during mentioning hours — when urgent matters are brought to the notice of the CJI — that the state had challenged the HC order and urged that it be taken up for hearing on February 7.

Mehta submitted that the HC passed Thursday's interim order, staying the law, after hearing the state for only 90 seconds.

He added that the HC "order has not come out yet" and requested the appeal be listed "on Monday subject to placing the order on record". The CJI agreed to the request.

The High Court order came on Thursday on a plea 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.

The law was opposed by industry associations on the ground that it would affect their business and make them less competitive.

If voted to power, 'fake samajwadis' will corner farm welfare benefits, says PM

MAULSHREE SETH
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 4

"FAKE SAMAJWADIS" will not only corner welfare benefits of farmers but also re-establish the rule of "mafias and rioters" in Uttar Pradesh, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday.

Virtually addressing voters of Ghaziabad, Meerut, Aligarh, Hapur and Noida from New Delhi, he urged people to repose their faith in Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in the seven-phase UP assembly polls so that criminals don't become powerful. These districts vote in the first phase on February 10.

"When you go out to vote this time, you would have to be very careful. Remember if they get the chance, these fake samajwadis and pariwarwadis will stop the financial help worth crores to farmers; they will corner the direct transfer benefit for MSP being given to farmers; and they will stop free ration that you are getting since the Covid time period to fill the stomach of your families and will keep you hungry," the PM said in his second virtual poll address since the election dates were announced on January 8.

"Always remember, they will rob the middle class to fill the pockets of the real estate mafia, ration mafia, mining mafia. Fake samajwadis and pariwarwadis are ready to appear in their former avatar," Modi said, listing various government schemes that will be stopped if the SP-RLD alliance is voted to power.

In his bid to woo farmers, the PM claimed that previously closed sugar mills have been reopened under the BJP government and over Rs 1.5 lakh crore dues paid to sugarcane farmers. In the first phase on February 10, all 58 assembly seats have considerable farmer voters. BJP leaders have been facing backlash in the region over the three controversial farm laws, which now stand repealed.

Alluding to SP leader Akhilesh Yadav's apparent misgivings earlier over the Covid vaccine, Modi claimed that the opposition was spreading misinformation over MSP.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Those at the top want a weak CM, says Sidhu

KANCHAN VASDEV
CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 4

AMID INDICATIONS that the Congress, following a tele-survey, is set to name Charanjit Singh Channi as its chief ministerial face ahead of the Assembly polls in Punjab, party's state unit president Navjot Singh Sidhu triggered a row saying that those at the top want a "weak CM " who will toe their line.

Sidhu, who returned from Vaishno Devi shrine Thursday evening, was addressing a public function in Amritsar. His remarks were widely perceived to be directed at the Congress high command, even though Sidhu's media advisers denied it.

"The top wants a weak CM. They want a CM who will sing their tunes. *Naach meri bulbul tujhe paisa milage* (Dance, my bulbul, you will get money)," Sidhu said as his supporters raised slogans, "*Hamara CM kaisa ho, Navjot Sidhu jaisa ho*." Sidhu's media adviser Surinder Dalla, however, said his statement was being unnecessarily twisted and that Sidhu was, in fact, referring to the Centre when he said that "they" wanted a weak CM in Punjab.

Army building credible, balanced posture to deter escalation: Vice Chief

KRISHN KAUSHIK
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

A DAY after Army Chief General M M Naravane said disputed borders with nuclear neighbours and proxy wars are stretching the country's security apparatus and resources, his deputy, Vice Chief of Army Lt Gen Manoj Pande, said such legacy issues are becoming more complex, as the character of wars is changing.

Lt Gen Pande, who took over as the Vice Chief on February 1, also emphasised that India needs to build credible deterrence to succeed in wars.

Speaking at the Pragyan Conclave, organised by the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), Lt Gen Pande said, "Legacy challenges of our unsettled and disputed borders have become more complex in the face of changing character of future wars…. new tools of aggression, riding on disruptive technologies, and hostile actions that exploit the ambiguous Grey Zone of traditional war and peace, have transformed the battle-space."

To succeed in war, Pande said, "we will have to be proactive in building a credible deterrence," to defeat "the adversary's efforts to achieve its strategic goals and deterring military escalation".

"We are cognisant of these requirements," he added.

Vice Chief of Army Lt Gen Manoj Pande

He said that for building capabilities and capacities to fight in a multi-dimensional war, the Army is "actively involved in modernising and evolving, keeping the future of conflicts in mind". At present, it is "building a credible and balanced force posture to deter escalation towards an armed conflict", Pande said.

It is high time, he said, for the Indian security establishment to "decipher the changing dynamics and respond accordingly".

Pande also mentioned that "techno-social realm" such as social media also needs to be addressed in order to evaluate the rise of current and emerging trends and arrive at measures to counter information and influence operations, such as deep fakes and bots, with a focus on perception change and policy safeguards.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in Goa on Friday. *Express*

Fight is between Congress and BJP, don't waste votes on others: Rahul in Goa

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
PANAJI, FEBRUARY 4

SENIOR CONGRESS leader Rahul Gandhi said on Friday that the electoral contest in Goa was between his party and the BJP and voters should not "waste" their vote on other parties.

Rahul arrived in Goa on Friday morning for a day-long visit ahead of the Assembly polls on February 14.

"The fight is between the BJP and the Congress, not between other parties. So don't waste your vote. If you waste your vote, the loss will be yours. We want the Congress government to be formed with a full majority," he said in a virtual rally he addressed from Sanquelim constituency.

With him in attendance, 37 candidates of the Congress party and three from its alliance partner Goa Forward Party swore loyalty to their parties and pledged not to defect after being elected. Thirty-six Congress candidates had already been administered an oath by priests in a temple, church and a dargah on January 22. While the first pledge was taken with God as witness, the pledge of loyalty taken on Friday was on an affidavit that Rahul would take to Congress president Sonia Gandhi. The loyalty pledge was taken at the International Centre in Dona Paula, Panaji.

Rahul also released the party's manifesto and announced that the Congress will introduce its NYAY scheme in Goa under which poor families will receive Rs 6,000 a month.

EXPRESS explained.Live

Russia vs the West on Ukraine: What does it Mean for the World and India?

Dr. C Raja Mohan
Visiting Research Professor, National University of Singapore

In conversation with

Shubhajit Roy
Associate Editor
The Indian Express

As Russia and the West led by the US up the rhetoric, a worried international community is watching the situation with concern. New Delhi is caught in between, as it has strategic stakes on both sides.

What are the risks involved, will it escalate, what are the windows of opportunity for de-escalation and what are its implications for India?

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SEXUAL ASSAULT CASE

SIT files closure report against Jarkiholi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, FEBRUARY 4

A SPECIAL Investigation Team (SIT) of the Bengaluru Police on Friday filed a closure report before a magistrate's court in Bengaluru regarding a sexual assault case filed against BJP MLA and former minister Ramesh Jarkiholi. Police sources said the SIT found no evidence to support the allegations raised by a woman against Jarkiholi.

A closure report, or a B report, is filed when the police find no proof of the alleged crime to finalise a charge sheet.

The move, if confirmed, may pave the way for Jarkiholi to return to the Karnataka cabinet, with a reshuffle expected soon.

Ramesh Jarkiholi

Jarkiholi resigned as state water resources minister on March 3, 2021, after a video, purportedly involving him and containing explicit content, was broadcast on television channels. A woman then filed a police complaint, accusing him of sexual assault.

The former minister denied the accusation, saying the video was fake and filed an extortion complaint against unnamed persons over the video recording. Later he admitted that the recordings were genuine and that a gang, which included the woman, tried to extort from him over the video.

The SIT's closure report – filed only in the sexual assault case – on Friday said it found no evidence to prosecute Jarkiholi, police sources said on the condition of anonymity. There is also no proof to establish the woman's allegation that the minister offered her a government job to coerce her into a sexual relationship, the sources said. Instead, they said, the woman had approached the former water resources minister in 2021, saying she is part of a studio that wants to shoot videos of dams in the state. The SIT investigation's findings also indicated that every time the woman met Jarkiholi, there were two other suspects in the vicinity to record their meetings, the sources added.

The SIT was constituted by the Karnataka government to investigation three FIRs — sexual assault case against Jarkiholi, counter complaint of extortion by the BJP MLA, and a third of abduction filed by the woman's father. The SIT also filed a closure report in the abduction case on the basis of a statement given to a magistrate by the woman.

FROM THE GALLERY

FROM THE CHAIR

RAJYA SABHA

"After a long time, the Rajya Sabha witnessed disruption-free proceedings yesterday (Thursday). It was a delight to watch the quality debates on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address

RAJYA SABHA CHAIRMAN M VENKAIAH NAIDU

LOK SABHA

"The question was dedicated to woman minister and women MPs. So others can be called later."

SPEAKER OM BIRLA, over a question on integrated child development scheme.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I'm surprised that Pakistan doesn't fight elections in our (India's) name, but our elections are in Pakistan's name... World history is witness that whoever has tried to mess with the texts of the past, tried to change them, ended up in the footnotes of history. History didn't change."

MANOJ KUMAR JHA, RJD MP

5 QUESTIONS

NPP MP **AGATHA SANGMA** ON FRIDAY DEMANDED THE REPEAL OF AFSPA FROM THE NORTH EAST. SHE SPOKE TO **SOURAV ROY BARMAN** ABOUT IT:

Why did you demand the repeal of AFSPA in Lok Sabha?
The President, in his address, spoke about the efforts being taken to ensure peace in the North East... In that context, I spoke about AFSPA since it is one of the major causes of conflict in the North East. We saw the unfortunate incident of the killings of innocent civilians in Nagaland.

How can peace be restored in the restive areas?
Negotiation and dialogue should be the way forward. Looked at from any human rights perspective, AFSPA is being misused.

What about the argument that security forces deployed in volatile areas need AFSPA cover?
There are Naxal areas in the country as well. But why does AFSPA apply only to J&K and the North East?... I understand the needs of the security personnel but it cannot come at the cost of human rights.

Your party is a part of NDA. Have you raised the demand in other official forums?
Yes, I have. But such forums offer very limited scope of dialogue.

So you believe dialogue should happen?
Yes, certainly. For any such decision to be taken, dialogue has to be initiated.

Centre to form panel on MSP after elections: Tomar in RS

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

THE GOVERNMENT will form a committee to look into encouraging crop diversification, natural farming, and making minimum support price (MSP) effective and transparent, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar informed Rajya Sabha on Friday.

Toimar also said that as intimated to the ministry by the Election Commission of India, the committee will be set up after the Assembly elections in the five states are over.

Replying to a starred question in the Upper House, Tomar said, "*Sarkaar Pradhaan Mantri-ji kee ghoshana ke prati pratibaddh hai. Yeh kaayavaee mantraalay mein prachalit hai* (The government is committed to the announcement made by the Prime Minister. The process is going on in the ministry."

He stated: "Since (Assembly) elections are going on, we had written to the Election Commission to seek its consent. The EC has replied in this regard — it has said that action should be taken to form the committee after the election process is over."

Tomar was responding to a supplementary question asked by Samajwadi Party member Sukhram Singh Yadav.

Yadav had asked, "Farmers' movement has been in discussion not only in the country but even abroad. The government has assured that a committee will be formed on MSP, and this committee will decide on ensuring farmers get justice. I would like to know the composition of that committee and when that committee will give its report."

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar outside Parliament, Friday. *PTI*

Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Kailash Choudhary, initially replied: "As far as the committee is concerned, the Prime Minister had announced on November 19 that we will form a committee which will decide on the farmers' issues, or the MSP. We have written to the Election Commission regarding the committee. Whatever proposal we receive (from EC), we will take further action."

"Since elections are going on in several states, the committee will be formed after we get permission from there [EC]," Choudhary said.

As Yadav asked another question on MSP, Tomar subsequently clarified.

Earlier, Yadav had asked the government whether it has formed a committee for providing legal guarantee of MSP for agricultural crops, as assured to the Samyukta Kisan Morcha, the farmers' outfit that led the protests against the three farm laws, in December 2021.

In a written reply to this, Tomar had stated, "As per the changing requirements of the country to change the cropping pattern, to make MSP more effective and transparent, and to encourage natural farming, the process of setting up a committee is under process. At present, in view of the Assembly elections in some states, the process of concurrence of the Election Commission for the formation of (the) committee is under progress."

Announcing the government's intention to repeal the three farm laws, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had last November announced that the government will constitute a committee to promote zero budgeting farming and to make MSP more effective and transparent.

Adhir in LS: India is in danger, BJP govt trying to make it 'Hindu Raj'

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

QUESTIONING THE government's performance on the law and order front and border management, and citing "bogus representation of history" and attempts to "break" institutions, Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury on Friday said in Lok Sabha that the country is in "danger".

He also accused the government of trying to transform India into a "Hindu Raj".

In an address made in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Lok Sabha, Chowdhury accused the government of distorting history through its "bogus representation" and by "breaking" institutions.

"We need to constitute India into a sovereign, socialist, secular democratic Republic... Some people believe Hindus are in danger; some believe Muslims are in danger... You take off the glasses of religion and you will realise…(that) India is in danger," Chowdhury said while participating in the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address.

He accused the government of trying to erase the memory of late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by merging the flame of Amar Jawan Jyoti at India Gate with that of the National War Memorial. "What is written on paper can be erased; what is written on stones also can vanish. But if people have written someone's name in their hearts, it cannot be removed," he said.

The Congress MP targeted the government's functioning and governance record: "You have added new adjectives with democracy — ethnic democracy and electoral democracy — to transform India into a Hindu Raj. The BJP's populist politics and promises made to the poor during election campaign did not translate into policies."

He accused Modi of creating "toxic cocktail of Hindutva with populism".

Taking a swipe at the Prime Minister for calling his predecessor Manmohan Singh "Maun Mohan Singh", Chowdhury said Modi has spoken on fewer occasions in the House than former PMs Atal Bihar Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh.

Chowdhury's address was made in the presence of PM Narendra Modi on Friday. *PTI*

Modi sat through the Congress leader's address, and left the House soon after Chowdhury concluded his speech.

Citing reports, including those by the Pentagon, Chowdhury alleged that the government did not admit incursion by Chinese troops into Indian territory. "Don't we have the right to know what China has done to Indian territory," he asked. "Eighteen friction points still exist. These junctions can directly influence Indian movement on roads."

He was referring to the nearly two-year-old standoff with China along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), and the 2021 report by US Pentagon, which mentioned China building a village inside "disputed territory". The government had denied any transgressions into Indian territory by China.

"China has been trying to break India," Chowdhury said. Law Minister Kiren Rijiju then asked Chowdhury if he trusted the Indian Army or foreign reports.

The Congress leader also accused the government of "breaking" institutions for personal gains and said taxpayers' money was used to buy the Pegasus spyware for surveillance.

The remark comes days after a report in the New York Times stated that the government bought Pegasus spyware from Israel in 2017 as part of a $2 billion defence deal.

SPOTTED IN PARLIAMENT

'Metro Man' E Sreedharan outside Parliament House. Sreedharan on Friday met Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, who tweeted that the senior technocrat and former politician explained to him the "technical issues" with the Kerala government's controversial SilverLine rail corridor project. *Anil Sharma*

BJP MPs absent, Bills on UCC, amending Constitution Preamble not taken up

MANOJ C G
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4:

TWO CONTROVERSIAL private member Bills— one on the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and the second on amending the Preamble of the Constitution — were not introduced in Rajya Sabha on Friday, even though they were listed, since BJP members who had given notices for moving the Bills were not present in the House.

The Opposition had objected to the introduction of both Bills in the past.

BJP's K J Alphons, who had given notice for moving the Bill to amend the Preamble of the Constitution, was not present in the House when his name was called. Alphons was seen in the House after some time.

The Bill seeks to amend the Preamble of the Constitution to make certain changes — such as substituting the word "Socialist" with "Equitable", and rephrasing the sentence "Equality of status and of opportunity and to promote among then all" with "Equality of status and of opportunity to be born, to be fed, to be educated, to get a job and to be treated with dignity".

The Opposition had objected to the introduction of the Bill during the Winter Session.

On Friday, Deputy Chairman Harivansh gave a ruling in favour of its introduction.

EXPLAINED

Why Bills were not introduced

CLEARED FOR introduction by the Chair, the Bills were not introduced since Treasury benches were not in full strength, it is learnt. The Opposition would have sought voting, a source said, but ruling party MPs were not present in full strength, since most are campaigning in Assembly election-bound states.

"Preamble is part of the Constitution, and as per Article 368 of the Constitution, Parliament may, in exercise of its constituent power, amend by way of addition, variation or repeal any provision of the Constitution," he said. "A Bill for the purpose can be introduced in either House." Harivansh said there are many instances from the past when "Private Members' Constitution (Amendment) Bills to amend the Preamble have been introduced in both Houses, and they are on record".

He said if introduction of a Bill is opposed on the ground of legislative competence of the House, the House will decide on that, and not the Chair.

Citing several past rulings in this regard, Harivansh said, "The Bill has been listed in today's agenda for introduction. The House may decide about the manner of disposal of the motion when the motion for introduction... is moved by Alphons."

Objecting to its introduction, Congress deputy leader Anand Sharma said, "I do not think the House itself has any mandate, or is competent to amend the Preamble to the Constitution. It means neither the Council of States nor the House of the People. Sir, it is very clear what is enshrined there. It is not the question of tinkering with the basic structure. There are umpteen judgments of the Supreme Court on that." Trinamool Congress's Sukhendu Sekhar Ray supported Sharma.

The private member Bill on UCC was also contentious. CPI(M) member Elamaram Kareem had earlier in the day written to Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu opposing its introduction by BJP's Kirodi Lal Meena.

But Meena, too, was not present in the House. The Bill on UCC was listed on the agenda of the House in February 2020, too. Even then, Meena was found absent from the House when his name was called to introduce the Bill.

DAY AFTER MAHUA'S PROTEST

Speaker condemns comments on Chair, Opp members agree

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

WITH SPEAKER Om Birla taking strong exception to TMC MP Mahua Moitra's vociferous protest in Lok Sabha on Thursday for "not allowing" her to complete her speech on the Motion of Thanks debate, and her comments on the Chair on social media thereafter, the entire House on Friday termed it as "unfortunate" and said the "prestige and dignity of the Chair" should be protected.

But Moitra was unfazed. Talking to *The Indian Express*, she said Opposition leaders were "bound to agree with the Speaker by protocol of Parliamentary system". That, she said over telephone from Goa, "does not mean they rallied behind him (Speaker)."

In Lok Sabha on Friday, Birla said lawmakers should see that dignity of the House and the Chair is protected both inside and outside the House.

"This is the dignity of Parliamentary democracy and I hope you all will agree with this. I have taken serious cognisance of incidents that had happened in the past few days. I want to request all members that commenting on the Chair, especially outside the House using social media and media, is not right," Birla said in a statement in Lok Sabha, without naming Moitra.

Leaders from all parties, including TMC, agreed and pledged their support to the Speaker. TMC leader Sudip Bandyopadhyay said, "We are certainly of the opinion that prestige of the House should always be kept at a level where we should all remain committed to principles, ideas and philosophy of this House."

On Thursday, Moitra had protested vehemently when BJP MP Rema Devi, who was in the Chair at the time, asked her to wind up her speech. When Rema Devi called the next

Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra. *File*

speaker's name, Moitra rushed to the well of the House. Later, she tweeted: "LS Speaker had allotted AT LEAST 13 mins to me, when confronted in his chamber he claimed he was not in chair hence can't be blamed. When further cornered he said "It was my greatness that I even allowed you 13 mins in 1st place."

"Unbelievable," she tweeted. "And who is Chair to interrupt me (taking up MY valuable time) to lecture me on whether I should speak with *gussa* or *pyar*? None of your business Madam. You can only correct me on rules. You are NOT the moral science teacher for LS." Rema Devi told her: "Mahua-*ji*, *thoda sa prem se boliye. Itna gussa mat kariye. Achchhe se boliye* (Please talk in a mellow manner. Don't get angry; say it in a good way)."

On Friday, Moitra told *The Indian Express* from Goa: "I believe the Speaker is pained. As an MP, (I feel) nobody would disrespect the Chair. However, I only wish the Speaker's pain is also reserved for Opposition MPs, who were heckled, abused, not given their time, and not allowed to speak..." She said, "I would hope that any impartial Chair of the largest democracy in the world would remember that the House belongs to the Opposition, and that the Speaker is there to guarantee rights of the minority of even one, and not flow with the majority." Moitra said her party leader had to agree, as "he had no option".

RAJYA SABHA DISCUSSES PRIVATE MEMBER BILL ON POPULATION CONTROL

BJP MP pushes Bill, party colleague wants removal of penal clauses; Opp questions

MANOJ C G
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

RAJYA SABHA on Friday began discussing a private member Bill moved by a BJP MP seeking to enforce a two-child norm by giving incentives for those adopting the small family practice and penalties for those contravening it. While the BJP members supported the Population Regulation Bill moved by Rakesh Sinha, the Opposition objected to it strongly, arguing that it has been brought with an "ulterior motive".

Incidentally, BJP MP from Maharashtra Vikas Mahatme, even while supporting the Bill, demanded removal of penal clauses from it arguing that such provisions will lead

BJP MP Rakesh Sinha moved the Population Regulation Bill

to increase in female foeticide. Besides, he said, "If we penalise any family after two children, then there is a problem because the child who is born (after that) will always feel that he is an unwanted child. This can be a very dangerous thought for the nation... you cannot punish a child for the mistake of his parents."

Sinha forcefully argued in favor of regulating population growth, drawing a relationship between population growth and resource consumption. "We have 17 per cent of the world's population but 2.4 per cent of land and 4 percent of water," he said.

Sinha said there had been "deliberate attempts" to divert the debate on regulation of population in the past and even given a communal angle. He said the analysis on population growth has even been termed as saffron demography. "I am unable to understand what saffron demography means," he said.

BJP MP Mahesh Poddar said the Bill should not be viewed from a religious prism.

Arguing that some people see demographic dividend in rising population, Sinha said, "They say 65 per cent of our population is below 35 years of age. They see demographic dividend. What dividend? That our people go to America, Australia and Saudi Arabia and work as labourers...."

Sinha argued that some of the capitalist countries peddle the theory of demographic dividend because they want cheap labour and look for it in "what they call 'third world'" countries

Opposition members like Congress MP Amee Yajnik questioned the motive of the Bill. Yajnik said the population growth-resource depletion correlation is a good argument but "when a Bill is brought with an ulterior motive, when with some kind of motive, you want to control population, you want certain sections of society, certain people of this world, to stop giving birth... I think it does not stand on its feet."

While NCP's Fauzia Khan said the Bill carried the "potential to systematically alter India's social fabric itself", RJD's Manoj Kumar Jha said the government had in an affidavit filed in Supreme Court in December 2020 on a petition seeking implementation of two-child norm said that international experience shows that any coercion is counter-productive.

Muslim League MP Abdul Wahab said the government should educate the present generation to adopt small family norms instead of enforcing it by force. "If this (Bill) is to control Muslims or whoever it is... she (Yajnik) was not telling the ulterior motives openly..."

Congress's L Hanumanthaiah said there is a "propaganda" that a "particular religion or a community is producing more... That is why this is called saffron thinking."

DMK, CONG MPs WALK OUT OF RAJYA SABHA OVER NEET ROW

Delhi: Protesting against Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi's decision to return the NEET exemption Bill, DMK and Congress MPs walked out of Rajya Sabha on Friday. The MPs wanted to raise the issue during Zero Hour but Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu did not agree, and asked them to raise the matter later in the session. Naidu also said later that 14 Zero Hour mentions were taken up in 30 minutes, and if "others had cooperated" the remaining 3 would have been taken up as well. **ENS**

JAMMU & KASHMIR

Journalist held for anti-national social media posts: police

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 4

A JOURNALIST was arrested on Friday for social media posts that allegedly glorified terrorist activities and caused "dent to the image of law enforcing agencies besides causing ill-will and disaffection against the country", the J&K Police said.

Fadad Shah is the editor-in-chief of the online news magazine, 'thekashmirwalla'.

A statement issued by the district police in Pulwama stated that "some Facebook users and portals have been uploading anti-national content, including photographs, videos and posts with criminal intention to create fear among public and the content so uploaded can provoke the public to disturb law & order".

The police said that during the course of investigation into the matter under FIR No. 19/2022, Shah was arrested and placed in police remand. "The investigation into the matter is in progress" the statement said.

Shah was called for questioning by the police on February 1. On Friday, he was called to record his statement at the Pulwama police station after which the police issued the statement confirming his arrest.

Former J&K Chief Minister and PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti said on Twitter, "Standing up for the truth is deemed anti-national. Showing the mirror to a deeply intolerant & authoritarian government is also anti-national. Fahad's journalistic work speaks for itself & depicts the ground reality unpalatable to GOI. How many Fahads will you arrest?"

The digital magazine, started in 2011, reports on news and other socio-cultural issues from J&K.

Last month, Sajad Gul, a trainee reporter with thekashmirwalla, was also arrested for posting tweets allegedly aimed at "provoking the people against Govt and to spread animosity." Gul has since been booked under provisions of the Public Safety Act.

JNU V-C appointed new UGC chairperson

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

Mamidala Jagadesh Kumar

Jawaharlal Nehru University Vice-Chancellor Mamidala Jagadesh Kumar was on Friday appointed chairperson of the University Grants Commission (UGC).

A notification issued by the Ministry of Education said the appointment has been made for a period of five years, or until he turns 65, whichever is earlier.

Kumar's five-year term as JNU V-C had ended in January last year, but he was asked to stay on till his successor is picked. The process to pick a new JNU V-C is underway.

Pune University vice-chancellor Prof Nitin R Karmalkar and director of Inter-University Accelerator Centre (IUAC) Prof Avinash Chandra Pandey were also shortlisted for the UGC chairperson post, which fell vacant last December after Prof D P Singh resigned on turning 65.

In a statement issued after his appointment, Kumar said, "As Chairman, UGC, this is a great opportunity for me to work for the young minds of our country in Higher Educational Institutes. My immediate focus is going to be speedy implementation of the National Education Policy, enabling research and innovation ecosystem in HEIs and making higher education more inclusive and accessible using technology. I look forward to working with students, teachers and heads of higher educational institutions across the country."

Kumar's appointment comes at a time when the government has been struggling to launch the Higher Education Commission of India, envisaged in the National Education Policy 2020. The Higher Education Commission is expected to subsume existing regulatory bodies such as the UGC and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

Kumar, an alumnus of IIT Madras's electrical engineering department, presided over a tumultuous tenure as JNU V-C after then President Pranab Mukherjee appointed him to the post in Jan 2016. Kumar was then serving as professor in IIT-Delhi's Department of Electrical Engineering.

Days into his appointment, JNU landed in a major controversy with the Delhi Police booking and arresting a group of student leaders accusing them of raising allegedly seditious slogans during an event on February 9 to mark the hanging of Parliament attack convict Afzal Guru.

In October 2017, protests broke out in JNU as Najeeb Ahmed, an MSc student, went missing from the campus a day after he allegedly had a scuffle with some students from the RSS-affiliated ABVP.

In November 2019, then HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhrial was stranded for over three hours on the campus during the university's convocation ceremony as protests raged on campus against a fee hike.

In January 2020, with protests continuing, the JNU campus was the site of unprecedented violence as masked men and women launched an assault on students, leaving many seriously injured.

NEET-PG to be postponed by 6-8 weeks, says Centre

ANONNA DUTT
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

THE UNION Health Ministry on Friday said it was delaying by six to eight weeks the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET-PG) for post-graduate medical courses — scheduled for March 12 — on appeals made by MBBS students to do so.

The postponement of the test will allow MBBC students to complete their one year-mandatory internship in time for post-exam counselling; there were delays in the final exams for MBBS due to the pandemic and consequently students' internship across states.

The move will likely also help candidates — who did not get a post-graduate seat in counselling for the 2021 batch — to appear again for the test.

"…a lot of representations were being received from medical doctors regarding the request to delay NEET PG-2022 examination date … since it is clashing with the NEET-PG 2021 counselling. Also, many of the interns would not be able to participate in the PG counselling 2022 by the month of May/ June 2022… Keeping the above facts in view, the Hon'ble HFM has taken the decision to postpone NEET PG 2022 by 6-8 weeks or suitably," read a letter by Dr B Srinivas, assistant director general (medical education) at the Directorate General of Health Services, to the National Board of Examinations, which conducts the test.

The ministry's decision was made at a time the Supreme Court is hearing a petition by six students who contended that many MBBS graduates will not be able to appear for NEET-PG due to non-completion of the mandatory internship period.

The NEET-PG examinations are normally held in January every year. However, last year's test were held in September on account of the pandemic. NEET counselling for the 2021 batch was then delayed again although the results were announced because of pending pleas in the Supreme Court over reservation of economically weaker section. Counselling began only in January this year, and it is likely to extend to March-April.

D S Sakhani appointed new NCERT director

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

D S SAKHANI, a professor of history at the HNB Garhwal University, was appointed director of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) for five years on Friday. He succeeds Hrushikesh Senapaty, who finished his term over a year ago.

NCERT is an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Education (MoE) that is tasked with advising the central government on school curriculum and drafting school textbooks. NCERT textbooks are taught in all schools affiliated to CBSE and also adopted by over 20 states.

As the Council's new head, Saklani will oversee the drafting of the new National Curriculum Framework (NCF) that will lay down the broad guidelines for changes in the curriculum. The last NCF was prepared in 2005 under the UPA government, and before that, it was revised in 1975, 1988 and 2000.

The framework, for school education, early childhood care and education, teacher education and adult education, will be revised based on the recommendations made by a Centre-appointed 12-member National Steering Committee headed by former ISRO chairman K Kasturirangan.

Saklani is currently a professor in the department of ancient India history, culture and archaeology and has authored three books, including one on the ancient communities of the central Himalaya region and one titled *Ramayana Tradition in Historical Perspective*.

Appoint officers to expedite Covid-19 compensation, SC tells states, UTs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

REITERATING THAT no application for payment of ex-gratia for Covid-19 deaths should be rejected on technical grounds, the Supreme Court on Friday directed states and Union Territories to appoint a dedicated nodal officer to coordinate with the Member Secretary of the State Legal Services Authority (SLSA) to facilitate the payment.

A bench of Justices M R Shah and B V Nagarathna also directed states/UTs to furnish to the SLSA, details like name, address and death certificate within a week so that compensation due to the children, who were orphaned, can be processed.

The bench also asked them to make all efforts to pay the compensation within a maximum period of 10 days from the receipt of the claim.

During the last hearing on January 19, the bench, referring to the data uploaded on the Bal Swaraj Portal of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), had said that approximately 10,000 children had lost both the parents during the pandemic and that it will be very difficult for them to make an application for compensation.

The top court had also asked the states to share the particulars regarding the information they had uploaded on the portal regarding the status of children affected by the pandemic.

On Friday, the bench noted that: "The particulars with respect to orphans are not given" and warned the states/UTs that if the requisite information as directed is not provided to the SLSA within one week, the court will view it very seriously.

The bench also said that despite its earlier direction to state governments to provide full particulars of Covid-19 deaths registered with them and the number of persons to whom the ex-gratia payment is made, "most of the states have given only statistics and no full particulars".

The SC said that legal services authority should endeavour to reach out to those who have yet not approached for compensation for whatever reasons.

"We also direct the concerned state governments to appoint a dedicated officer, not below the rank of deputy secretary...who shall be in constant touch with the member secretary of the state legal service authority so that he may coordinate with him and see to it that the applications are received from eligible persons", it ordered.

An installation aimed at creating awareness about vaccination against Covid-19, on the occasion of Maghi Ganeshotsav, in Mumbai on Friday. *Ganesh Shirsekar*

States ease Covid-19 curbs

As Covid-19 infections saw a dip over the past few days, several states further relaxed Covid-19 restrictions. A lowdown:

RAJASTHAN

No night curfew from February 5. The night restrictions were in place in the state since December last year.

A maximum of 250 people allowed to participate in public programmes including political, religious and cultural events. All religious places allowed to open as per their timings.

NEW DELHI

Offline classes for standard 9 to 12 to restart from February 7 along with higher education institutions and coaching centres. Also, nursery to class 8 to resume offline classes from February 14.

Gyms allowed to reopen with certain restrictions

Night curfew to continue but from 11 pm instead of 10 pm

KARNATAKA

Cinema halls, multiplexes, theatres, swimming pools and auditoriums allowed to operate at full capacity from Saturday

KERALA

Offline classes for classes 10, 11 and 12 students and colleges to start from February 7

Offline classes for children from standards 1 to 9, creche and kindergarten to start from February 14

Emergency use authorisation nod for Sputnik Light vaccine

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

THE SUBJECT expert panel on vaccines has recommended the drug regulator to grant emergency use authorisation (EUA) to Russia's Sputnik Light single-dose vaccine, sources said on Friday.

Sputnik Light is developed by Russia's Gamaleya Center, built on a human adenovirus vector platform.In October last year, the government had approved the export of Sputnik Light, manufactured in India by Hetero Biopharma Limited.

The Sputnik is the same as component-1 of the Russian Sputnik V vaccine that has been used in India's vaccination drive. India has administered close to 12 lakh doses of Sputnik V during the adult vaccination drive.

The company had earlier said that the single-shot vaccine has demonstrated 70 per cent efficacy against infection by the Delta variant.

"A preliminary study of the Gamaleya Center has found Sputnik Light significantly increases virus neutralizing activity against Omicron based on sera 2-3 months after revaccination with 100% of individuals revaccinated with Sputnik Light as a booster having developed neutralizing antibodies against this variant," the Russian Direct Investment Fund had said earlier.

APPOINTMENT FOLDERS MISSING

90k Bihar teachers may lose job

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, FEBRUARY 4

AROUND 90,000 of the 3.53 lakh contract teachers in Bihar, appointed between 2006 and 2015, face the prospect of losing their jobs as their appointment folders are missing.

This comes even as the Patna High Court continues to monitor the state vigilance bureau's investigation into the fake degrees scam in Bihar since 2014.

State Education Minister Vijay Kumar Choudhary told *The Indian Express*: "We are unable to find the folders of about 90,000 teachers. It was the responsibility of the respective Niyojan (placement) units to keep teachers' records..."

Asked if these teachers are on the verge of losing their jobs, Choudhary said: "We will go by the high court order..."

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

THE ADMINISTRATION OF UNION TERRITORY OF LADAKH
Industries & Commerce, Department

JOB OPPORTUNITY : PMFME — Date: 05-02-2022

Applications are invited for the following positions under the Prime Minister's Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprise Scheme (PMFME Scheme) in the UT of Ladakh. Interested candidates may apply through the recruiting agency **M/s Xeam Ventures Pvt Ltd.**

S No.	Description	Positions
1	State Lead Project Manager	01
2	Manager Marketing	01

- Resume should be submitted to sanjay.dhiman@xeamventures.com
- Interview shall be conducted in Leh, Ladakh. **(In physical presence)**
- Last date for applying is **13-02-2022**.
- For detail advertisement please visit www.ladakh.nic.in
- For any queries, kindly contact on **+91 9212107744 / +91 9622974983**

Advertisement issued by Information Technology Department, Ladakh

SAVITRIBAI PHULE PUNE UNIVERSITY
(Formerly 'University of Pune')

RECRUITMENT FOR THE POST OF 'FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS OFFICER'

Applications are invited in the prescribed form for the post of **'Finance and Accounts Officer'** of the Savitribai Phule Pune University as per section 18 of The Maharashtra Public University Act, 2016 from **Saturday, 05/02/2022 to Friday, 25/02/2022.** All details regarding qualifications and other related information is available on the University website: **http://admin.unipune.ac.in/recruitment.**

Advt No.: 04 — **(Dr. Prafulla Pawar)**
Date: 05/02/2022 — Registrar

"FORM NO. INC-25A"
Before the Regional Director, Ministry of Corporate Affairs Northern Region
In the matter of Companies Act, 2013, Section 14 of Companies Act, 2013 and rule 41 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014
AND
In the matter of
Manimaya Marketing Limited
(CIN : U51909DL2015PLC332207)
having its registered office at 1524, 15th Floor, Hemkunt Chambers, 89 Nehru Place, New Delhi South Delhi 110019 India
.....Applicant

Notice is hereby given to the general public that the company intending to make an application to the Central Government under section 14 of Companies Act, 2013 read with aforesaid rules and is desirous of converting into private limited company in terms of the special resolution passed at the Extra Ordinary General Meeting held on 29th day, January, 2022 to enable the company to give effect for such conversion.

Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed changes/ status of the company may deliver or cause to be delivered or send by registered post of his objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his interest and grounds of opposition to the Regional Director, Northern Region at the address B-2 Wing, 2nd Floor Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex New Delhi–110003, India within fourteen days from the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant company at its registered office at the address mentioned below:

Manimaya Marketing Limited
1524, 15th Floor, Hemkunt Chambers, 89 Nehru Place, New Delhi South Delhi 110019 India
Sd/-
VEDANT KHAITAN
(DIRECTOR)
DIN : 00535224
Date : 04.02.2022
Place : Delhi

Debts Recovery Tribunal-I, Delhi
4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001

O.A. No. 116/2019
STATE BANK OF INDIA — Applicant
Versus
Praveen Kumar & Ors. — Defendants

To,
1. Shri Praveen Kumar S/o Shri Ram Kumar, R/o House No. 1/127, Old Rajinder Nagar, Delhi-110060, **Also at:** WZ-20 FF, Sant Nagar, Tilak Nagar, Delhi-110018 **Also at:** The Mobile Street, 35/8, Old Rajinder Nagar, Shankar Road, New Delhi-110060 **Defendant 1**
2. Smt. Anushika W/o Shri Praveen Kumar, R/o House No. 1/127, Old Rajinder Nagar, Delhi-110060, **Also at:** WZ-20 FF, Sant Nagar, Tilak Nagar, Delhi-110018 **Defendant 2**
3. M/s Global Mega Venture Pvt. Ltd., Through its Director, Global Park City, Sector-2, Katara Hills Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh **Defendant 3**

Whereas the above named applicant has instituted a case for recovery of **Rs. 39,15,632/- (Rs Thirty Nine Lacs Fifteen Thousand Six Hundred Thirty Two Only)** against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way. Therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance before Ld. Registrar on **14-03-2022 at 10.30 A.M. (for further details kindly visit DRT website www.etribunal.gov.in) Phone No. 011-23748473)**

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

Due to ongoing Pandemic Situation, all the matters will be taken up through Video Conferencing and for that purpose:-
(i) All the Advocates/Litigants shall download the **"Cisco Webex"** application / Software;
(ii) "Meeting ID" and "Password" for the next date of hearing qua cases to be taken by 'Registrar/Recovery Officer-I/ and Recovery Officer-II shall be available one day prior to the next date at DRT Official Portal i.e. **"drt.gov.in"** under the Public Notice Head.
(iii) In any exigency qua that, the Advocates/Litigants can contact the concerned official at Ph. No. 011-23748473.

Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal on this 3rd **February, 2022**
by order of this Tribunal
for Registrar

Respondent may contact under mention phone number for further enquiry.
Amit K. Dar, Ld. Registrar, DRT-I, New Delhi, Phone.: 011-23748473
E-mail: drt1delhi-dfs@nic.in

Apex court approves revised protocol for disposal of bodies of Parsi Covid-19 victims

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

THE SUPREME Court Friday approved a revised protocol for disposing bodies of Parsi Covid-19 victims. This came after the Centre and community members reached an agreement according to which the "Tower of Silence" will be covered with an iron grid so that birds and animals cannot come into contact with the corpses placed inside.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta placed the agreed upon standard operating procedure before a bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and Surya Kant. According to this, the bodies of the Parsi Zoroastrians who die of Covid-19 will be brought to the funeral parlour in the Tower of Silence complex and will only be handled by fully vaccinated Nassasalars — professional corpse-bearers — in PPE kits and other safety equipment. The family and friends will not be permitted to touch the body and will always remain 10 feet away.

The SoP also recorded the assurance of the petitioner Surat Parsi Panchayat Board. "Since the principal mode of disposal at the Tower of Silence is through strong and powerful rays of the Sun, and hence to deal with the problem of birds of prey, the Petitioner undertakes to install as soon as possible, a metallic bird net over Dokhma-No 3 - which is exclusively reserved for the dead Parsi COVID-19 victims; this will eliminate contact with birds and animals and will avoid any intrusion by vultures. Hence, there will be no exposure of the body to birds, etc. once the metallic net gets installed over Dokhma-No 3".

Approving the scheme, the bench lauded the efforts of Senior Advocate Fali S. Nariman and the Solicitor General in reaching the settlement.

The Board had earlier approached the Gujarat High Court seeking to declare the 2020 Covid-19 guidelines on body management, as ultra vires the Constitution as it impeded the rights of the Parsi community which disposes of bodies by letting them decay in the Tower of Silence.

The High Court dismissed the plea on July 23, 2021 following which the Board approached the SC.

In the top court, the Union Health Ministry initially highlighted concerns about the possibility of the virus spreading to animals if not cremated or buried properly.

On January 17, the bench said the petitioners had submitted a draft protocol saying they would take care of the health concerns and asked the SG to see if any additional safeguards can be introduced to make it foolproof.

On Friday, accepting the revised SOP for the community, the SC set aside the HC order.

SAINIK SCHOOL CHANDRAPUR (MAHARASHTRA)
RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

1. Sainik School Chandrapur (Maharashtra) functioning under the aegis of Sainik School Society, invites applications for PGT (English, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Computer Science), TGT (Hindi) and Lab Assistant (Physics, Chemistry & Biology).
2. For further details applicants can visit Sainik School Chandrapur website **www.sainikschoolchandrapur.com.** Eligibilly applicants can submit their applications in online mode by paying the requisite fees through our online recruitment portal. The last date for submission of online application shall be **28 Feb 2022.**

क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय
उ०प्र० प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड
6–बी, नई मण्डी, मुजफ्फरनगर (उ०प्र०)

पर्यावरणीय अनापत्ति हेतु लोक सुनवाई के लिए संशोधित आम सूचना

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि मै० शामली स्टील्स (प्रा०) लि०, इण्डस्ट्रियल इस्टेट, ग्राम कण्डेला, तहसील कैराना, शामली–पानीपत रोड, शामली द्वारा पूर्व से कार्यरत् इकाई में प्रस्तावित क्षमता विस्तारीकरण 28,800 मी०टन/वर्ष से बढ़ाकर 1,44,000 मी०टन/वर्ष बिलेट्स/इंगट्स के उत्पादन एवं 27,000 मी०टन/वर्ष से बढ़ाकर 1,98,000/– मी०टन/वर्ष रोल्ड उत्पादन तथा 2x12 MT/Heat की मौजूदा भट्टियों के स्थान पर 2x20 MT/Heat भट्टियों में बदलने के साथ रोलिंग मिल के मॉडिफिकेशन किये जाने के लिए उ०प्र० प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड में लोक सुनवाई हेतु सम्बन्धित प्रपत्र प्रस्तुत किया गया है। राज्य बोर्ड द्वारा भारत सरकार के पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार द्वारा जारी अधिसूचना संख्या–एस.ओ.–1533 दिनांक 14/09/2006 के अनुपालन में, इस इकाई को अनापत्ति प्रमाण–पत्र जारी करने से पूर्व जिलाधिकारी, शामली की अध्यक्षता में लोक सुनवाई हेतु **दिनांक 08.02.2022 को समय 4:00** बजे नियत की गयी थी, जो विधानसभा सामान्य निर्वाचन 2022 हेतु अधिसूचना जारी होने के कारण सक्षम अधिकारी की अनुमति से स्थगित की जाती है। लोक सुनवाई पैनल की संरचना पर्यावरणीय अधिसूचना संख्या–एस.ओ.–1533 दिनांक 14.09.2006 के अनुरूप होगी एवं उक्त उद्योग के प्रस्ताव से सम्बन्धित अभिलेख निम्नलिखित कार्यालयों में उपलब्ध हैं :–
1– जिलाधिकारी कार्यालय, शामली।
2– उपायुक्त, जिला उद्योग एवं उद्यम प्रोत्साहन केन्द्र, शामली।
3– कार्यालय, जिला पंचायत, शामली।
4– पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार के क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, सी.जी.ओ. कॉम्प्लैक्स, पुरनिया चौराहा, अलीगंज, लखनऊ।

अतः सर्वसाधारण को इस नोटिस के माध्यम से सूचित किया जाता है कि उक्त लोक सुनवाई की कार्यवाही संशोधित **दिनांक 14.03.2022 को प्रातः 10:30** बजे जिलाधिकारी, शामली की अध्यक्षता में इकाई मै० शामली स्टील्स (प्रा०) लि०, इण्डस्ट्रियल इस्टेट, ग्राम कण्डेला, तहसील कैराना, शामली–पानीपत रोड, शामली (उ०प्र०) के परिसर में सम्पादित की जायेगी। लोक सुनवाई में जनसामान्य उपस्थित होकर अपनी आपत्तियां प्रस्तुत कर सकते हैं। परियोजना के सम्बन्ध में कोई सुझाव, विचार, टीका–टिप्पणी अथवा आपत्ति लिखित रूप में प्रकाशन की तिथि से 30 दिन के अन्दर इस कार्यालय में दे सकते हैं।

क्षेत्रीय अधिकारी

Bihar Nal Jal scheme: HC hears PIL, asks petitioner to approach govt for redressal

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, FEBRUARY 4

A DIVISION bench of Patna High Court on Friday heard a public interest litigation petition regarding alleged discrepancies and corruption in bidding, contract allotment and implementation of Bihar government's flagship Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal scheme. The court asked the petitioner to approach the districts' government authorities concerned for redressal of grievances.

The PIL was filed and admitted following a series of reports published in The Indian Express in September 2021, a set of RTI replies and other reports.

Based on the bidding and contracts in over 20 Bihar districts, the three-part series published in The Indian Express revealed how politicians from the BJP, JD (U) and RJD had been awarded the contracts under the scheme.

Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal scheme provides tap water to 1.14 lakh wards in more than 8,400 panchayats across the state.

Petitioner Sanjay Mehta's advocate Alka Verna told *The Indian Express*: "The division bench of Chief Justice Sanjay Karol and Justice S Kumar heard our petition at length. The matter was disposed of with liberty to the petitioner to approach the competent authorities for redressal of grievances." The written order is yet to be uploaded on Patna High Court's website.

TATA
TATA POWER
The Tata Power Company Limited
Registered Office : Bombay House, 24, Homi Mody Street, Mumbai 400 001. Tel: 91 22 6665 8282 Fax: 91 22 6665 8801 CIN: L28920MH1919PLC000567
Email : tatapower@tatapower.com Website: www.tatapower.com

NOTICE OF RECORD DATE

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to Section 91 of the Companies Act, 2013 that Tuesday, 8th March 2022 has been fixed as the Record Date for the purpose of payment of annual interest to the holders of:

a) 7.77% Series I Unsecured Redeemable Rated Listed Taxable Non-Convertible Securities in the form of Non-Convertible Debentures (ISIN: INE245A08232);
b) 7.77% Series II Unsecured Redeemable Rated Listed Taxable Non-Convertible Securities in the form of Non-Convertible Debentures (ISIN: INE245A08224);
c) 7.77% Series III Unsecured Redeemable Rated Listed Taxable Non-Convertible Securities in the form of Non-Convertible Debentures (ISIN: INE245A08240)

all due on 24th March 2022.

For The Tata Power Company Limited
H. M. Mistry
Company Secretary
(FCS: 3606)
Place : Mumbai
Dated : 4th February 2022

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE

NEVER SUCCUMB TO THE TEMPTATION OF BITTERNESS.

— MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

SAYING NO

As India talks to China, it must be prepared to lay down the red lines — as it has done with the boycott of Beijing Games

INDIA'S DECISION TO boycott the opening and closing ceremonies of the Beijing Winter Games was the right response to an unseemly provocation by China. Fielding a People's Liberation Army soldier who was involved in the August 2020 Galwan clash in which India lost 20 soldiers as an Olympic torchbearer was a deliberate finger in Delhi's eye. Resort to this low tactic after India readily lent its support to the games at a Russia-China-India foreign ministers' meet just two months ago, at a time that the US-led diplomatic boycott was taking shape, has only hurt Beijing's own interests. The February 4-20 Winter Games are being held in an atmosphere of unprecedented tensions across the world. Underlying the decision last year to add "together" to "faster, higher and stronger" to the motto of the Olympic Games is the world's aspiration for peaceful co-existence, though the event itself is never free of international realpolitik.

As host, China had the extraordinary opportunity to rise above the unpleasantness and reiterate a message of peace to the world, especially to those nations in its neighbourhood with which it has territorial problems that it attempts to resolve unilaterally by the use of military force. But the PLA torchbearer episode has done the opposite, even if Beijing was dealing with domestic compulsions arising out of a belated acknowledgement of the casualties on its side. India is now the 10th country to announce a diplomatic boycott, which means that it will send no official delegation or diplomatic representative to the Games. The boycott does not extend to the sporting events at the Games but it has marred President Xi Jinping's efforts to tell the world that the Covid pandemic has not affected China's ability to put up a perfect show.

Though not of Delhi's making, the boycott is certain to add to the tensions between the two countries. While Delhi is engaged in military-level talks with the PLA for disengagement and de-escalation in Eastern Ladakh, whatever little progress has been made has been offset by the massive Chinese build-up of infrastructure and war-like preparations on its side, particularly in areas opposite the strategic Depsang Plains, where Indian soldiers have been stopped from patrolling upto the Indian claim line since April 2020. Army chief General M M Naravane has acknowledged that "disputed borders with nuclear neighbours, coupled with state-sponsored proxy war" was stretching the country's security resources and apparatus. The government's work is clearly cut out. As India talks to China, it must be prepared to lay down the red lines in this difficult relationship, as it has done with the Games boycott.

WORDS AND ACTIONS

Attack on Owaisi on UP campaign trail points to disquieting link between bigotry and violence. It must be probed quickly

THE FIRING ON AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi's vehicle in Hapur district, Uttar Pradesh, in the run-up to an assembly election, is extremely disturbing. In the aftermath, the UP police have detained the alleged shooter, Sachin Sharma, and his accomplice, Shubham. The Union Home Ministry has accorded Owaisi "Z-category" security — which Owaisi has reportedly refused — sending out the signal that when it comes to grave matters, politics can still stop at the water's edge. The UP police has said that Sharma was "angry" over Owaisi's speeches, while the AIMIM chief wants an independent probe by the Election Commission to look into the "conspiracy". Beyond the law-and-order response, however, the attack could point to a worrying form of radicalisation among a section of the population.

Sharma, on his social media profiles, claims to be a member of the BJP — he has shared a membership card to that effect and posted photographs with senior BJP leaders as well as a video of Yati Narsinghanand, arrested recently for giving a hate speech at the Haridwar Dharam Sansad. On Facebook, Sharma has expressed sympathy and admiration for Ram Bhakt Gopal, who opened fire at anti-CAA protesters in Delhi in 2020. The probe will answer all the questions, but at first glance, the incident serves as a warning — an act of crime influenced by a larger climate of manufactured insecurity and othering. In the internet age, indoctrination and radicalisation need not take place only through the concerted efforts of organisations. People, apparently acting of their own will, are shaped by the world around them, where there now exists an unofficial, poorly-monitored information network — made of public speeches, social media posts, WhatsApp forwards — that can influence the disenchanted and the impressionable. While it may be difficult to establish a direct causal link between hate speeches and violence, it may also be naive to think there are no dots to be joined between the two.

It is incumbent on the BJP government and its leadership to condemn the attack on Owaisi by those who seek to invoke its name. In fact, all mainstream political parties need to unequivocally distance themselves from those who advocate bigotry and violence. As the assembly election campaigns pick up speed in Uttar Pradesh and elsewhere, the political class needs to remember that the vitriol that has become common on the campaign trail, if allowed to grow unchecked, has consequences.

VOTE FOR THE FISH

In Odisha, panchayati raj candidates take their poll symbols seriously in an old-fashioned and heartwarming way

WHERE THERE'S a will, the politician will find a way. In Odisha, where pandemic restrictions have grounded large gatherings in the run-up to the elections to panchayat bodies, candidates are making the most of intimate, door-to-door campaigns. To help brand recall, they have also been lugging around real-life versions of their poll symbols. That might not create much of a ripple if the candidate's symbol is a lantern or a book, humdrum enough objects. But what if the Election Commission, in all its wisdom, has decided to identify you with an LED TV? For a candidate in Koraput's zilla parishad elections, who has been making a spectacular entry into villages, gleaming flat-screen in tow, this is just the kind of attention she was hoping for. In Nabarangpur district, Bhagavati Bhotra makes a different kind of splash — accompanying her on her campaign trail is a freshly-caught fish, expertly held in the crook of her hand. That's not as easy as it looks. Ask Shashi Tharoor, whose composure was visibly ruffled when he was handed the big catch of the day during a campaign visit to a fish market in Thiruvananthapuram two years ago. Attempts to fish for sympathy on Twitter, when he described himself as a "squeamish vegetarian", did not wash.

What would our elections be without poll symbols? Early on in the life of a democracy that had gambled on giving the right to vote to all, these minimalist ideograms became a way for a largely non-literate population to identify political candidates and parties. For that reason, they have always been drawn from the unremarkable objects of ordinary life — from bicycles to brooms and fruits and vegetables.

Technology has transformed, some would say distorted, the scale and speed at which parties now take their message to the voter. The Odisha campaign is, perhaps, a reminder of old-fashioned politics as persuasion and legwork. And of the voter's choice — if she isn't impressed with the candidate at her door, there are always plenty of other fish in the sea.

Making of Ganna Pradesh

Next government in Lucknow should work at making sugarcane part of a 'circular economy'

HARISH DAMODARAN

SUCCESS STORIES ARE those that have definitive, durable and widespread impact. Uttar Pradesh's sugarcane industry qualifies as one, on all counts. The state has overtaken Maharashtra to be India's top sugar producer in the last five seasons (October-September) from 2016-17. It has also become the largest ethanol producer and the only state to achieve 10 per cent blending in petrol in 2020-21, one year ahead of the target for all-India. These are not overnight accomplishments. Every regime over the last two decades has built on the work of its predecessor, generating a cumulative and durable impact.

Till 2003-04, UP's sugar mills together could crush barely 4,00,000 tonnes of cane per day (tcd). The Samajwadi Party government's Sugar Industry Promotion Policy of 2004 induced large investments, both in new mills and brownfield expansions. By 2006-07, aggregate crushing capacity had crossed 7,00,000 tcd. The state's 120 sugar factories today have a combined crushing capacity of 7,87,275 tcd, much of it coming up during Mulayam Singh Yadav's term from late-2003 to mid-2007.

What Mulayam's SP did for sugar, the present BJP administration under Yogi Adityanath has done in ethanol. Between 2016-17 and 2020-21, UP's ethanol output has more than doubled from 43.25 crore to 107.21 crore litres, and is projected at 160 crore litres this year. The number of distilleries, too, has risen from 44 to 75. Mayawati's BSP government of 2007-12 can take credit for cumulatively hiking cane prices by Rs 120 per quintal — as against Rs 65 and Rs 35 by the succeeding Akhilesh Yadav-led SP and Adityanath dispensations — and also ensuring timely payment to farmers. In sum, UP's sugarcane success story is a product of the effort of all three ruling regimes.

As for widespread impact, sugarcane is cultivated on about 2.5 million hectares in UP. The whole of northern UP is a ganna pradesh. That includes the districts in north-west (from Saharanpur to Moradabad down to Bulandshahr and Badaun), north-central (Rampur-Bareilly, Shahjahanpur-Hardoi right up to Lakhimpur Kheri-Sitapur) and north-east (Bahraich-Gonda-Ayodhya till Kushinagar-Deoria) UP. Cane is grown mostly in the Upper Doabs — the lands between the state's south-flowing rivers. The north-west ganna belt ("West UP") covers the riverine plains between the Yamuna, Ganga and Ramganga; the north-central Doab between the Ramganga, Gomti and Sharda-Ghaghara; and the north-east between Sharda-Ghaghara, Rapti and Gandak extending to Bihar.

> There's a lot that the government taking charge after March 10 can do for ganna. UP can take the lead in enforcing 12 per cent and 15 per cent ethanol blending in petrol, for which mass emission standards have already been notified. Mills should be paid in time for the renewable electricity they are supplying to the UP Power Corporation. Such dues now stand at over Rs 300 crore, even touching Rs 1,500 crore at times.

The impact of sugarcane isn't only geographic. Taking an average one-hectare landholding, UP would have 2.5 million cane farmer families. The state produces 200 million tonnes-plus of cane annually. A single labourer can harvest one tonne daily at best. Assuming 150 workdays during the crushing season from November to April, harvesting will engage nearly 1.5 million labourers. Another half-a-million would be employed in the mills, distilleries, gur-making and the transport of cane, sugar, molasses and alcohol.

All in all, some 4.5 million families in UP are directly dependent on sugarcane. Inclusive of their members, they add up to 20 million persons — one in every 12 of UP's total estimated 240 million population!

The creation of new milling and distillery capacities isn't the sole factor, though, for ganna pradesh's transformation. No less important has been Co-0238, the blockbuster cane variety bred by Bakshi Ram. From virtually zero till 2012-13, it now accounts for over 85 per cent of UP's cane area. Co-0238 has boosted both average ganna yields and sugar-to-cane recovery in the state — from 60 tonnes per hectare and 9.25 per cent to 80 tonnes and 11.5 per cent, respectively.

Yet, ganna has suffered bad press because of its apparently high water requirement — roughly twice that of paddy and four times of wheat. This analysis ignores the fact that sugarcane is grown over 11-12 months, compared to 4-5 months for the latter crops. Further, the worst ganna grower harvests 40 tonnes per hectare, whereas the best wheat and paddy farmers' yields are 7-9 tonnes. Sugarcane consumes less water per day and even less for every unit of biomass produced. Its green top leaves, moreover, fill the fodder needs of animals through the winter and spring months.

Proponents of the "water-guzzler" theory may also not know that cane contains around 70 per cent water, 15 per cent sugar and 15 per cent fibre. Sugar mills require no supply of external power or water. The baggase fibre used as boiler fuel and the water that is heated to produce steam are both present in the cane itself. Also, hardly two-fifths of the resultant electricity generated is consumed by the mill; the rest is exportable power. A fifth of the water in cane is similarly rendered surplus, even after use for steam generation and processing in the mill.

While water-guzzling concerns are valid for sugarcane in Marathwada or Vidarbha, these do not apply to Uttar Pradesh. The lands between its confluent rivers have extremely fertile alluvial soils and no dearth of water, augmented by a network of canals: The Eastern Yamuna and Upper Ganga Canal irrigating the north-west districts, the Sharda Canal in north-central and the recently inaugurated Saryu Canal project of north-east UP. Mother Nature has already made ganna highly efficient at carbon sequestration and a prolific biomass producer. And with its abundant water resources, there is no state better poised to realise the full potential of this champion crop.

The next government in UP should look at how to make sugarcane part of a "circular economy" wherein it gives back to nature what it takes. For farmers, ganna is both a cash and fodder crop. For mills, it is an energy crop producing sugar, ethanol and power. Many of them are also treating their surplus water for irrigation purposes, besides supplying press mud — the residual cake after clarification and filtration of cane juice — for use as compost fertiliser. More recent initiatives involve use of press mud as a feedstock for producing bio-CNG and recovery of potash from distillery effluent after burning in incineration boilers. For a country importing the bulk of its natural gas and potassic fertiliser requirements, this isn't a small thing.

There's a lot that the government taking charge after March 10 can do for ganna. UP can take the lead in enforcing 12 per cent and 15 per cent ethanol blending in petrol, for which mass emission standards have already been notified. Mills should be paid on time for the renewable electricity they are supplying to the UP Power Corporation. Such dues now stand at over Rs 300 crore, even touching Rs 1,500 crore at times.

Last but not least is the need for transparent cane pricing. This should be formula-based, linked to mills' realisations from sugar and all byproducts, and any price above that paid from the state budget. With forward-looking government policy, Uttar Pradesh can better Brazil!

The writer is National Rural Affairs & Agriculture Editor of The Indian Express *and Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi*

NOT SO HEALTHY

The Union budget's provisions on medical care are disappointing

SHAILAJA CHANDRA

THERE WERE MANY expectations of the Union budget for the health sector. The big-ticket items — the digitally managed health ecosystem and provisions for mental health — veer away from the prevalent systems. They rely on the power of technology to bypass the need to undertake physical visits to doctors, carry prescriptions and wait in queues. The digital experience could be a game-changer, but only if the facility, doctors, patients, and systems work in tandem.

When it comes to Covid vaccinations, the digital platform has been a runaway success, primarily because the COWIN platform was simple and slick, and the citizen could choose between public and private facilities. Online medical consultations have started in metros and people are setting up appointments with doctors easily. But the management of hospital beds across the country is a different story. Of the 19 lakh beds in India, 62 per cent are in the private sector. Nearly 95 per cent of them are operated by small hospitals or nursing homes — the first port of call for most citizens seeking medical care. The setting up of a National Digital Ecosystem which "will maintain digital registries of health providers and health facilities," is welcome, but one must be clear whether it will encompass both the public and private health sector and include smaller hospitals and nursing homes. And, what about consent, compliance and cost?

> The other big-ticket announcement relates to the mental health sector. It serves one purpose straightaway — making society aware that such conditions can afflict anyone, but the disease can be treated, and patients should not be stigmatised. With IIT Bangalore and the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) in the driver's seat, we can expect professionalism and results

The other big-ticket announcement relates to the mental health sector. It serves one purpose straightaway — making society aware that such conditions can afflict anyone, but the disease can be treated, and patients should not be stigmatised. With IIT Bangalore and the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) in the driver's seat, we can expect professionalism and results. But the budget speech did not mention if the mental health strategy will focus on all psychological problems or only those that have arisen in the wake of Covid. Many mental health conditions encompass disorders that are not amenable to teleconsultation.

While the budget has provided some financial leg up to the National Health Mission and more to the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (under which AIIMS-type of hospitals and government medical colleges are being established or upgraded) these are programmes that have been in progress since 2005. Four announcements were expected but did not come.

First, the need to substantially raise the overall budgetary contribution to the health sector. It is currently pegged at 1.8 per cent of the GDP and the push in the budget appears very small.

Second, during the pandemic the unorganised middle class was caught without adequate (or even any) health insurance. After excluding insurance coverage for the organised sector (both government and private), and those covered by Ayushman Bharat and state-level health security schemes, a whopping 26 crore people had no health insurance when the pandemic started. They found hospitalisation costs staggering. One of the biggest expectations from the budget was that the lower end of the "missing middle" would get some handholding.

Third, there was an expectation that Ayushman Bharat would be expanded to cover the outpatient costs faced by the poor. The Economic Survey has recognised that such expenditure is huge.

Fourth, there was a need to address the crisis of non-communicable diseases — hypertension, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases largely caused by unhealthy lifestyles. During Covid, people with comorbidities constituted the largest segment that succumbed. Fiscal measures, incentives, and disincentives have reduced the incidences related to lethal consequences of smoking. A repetition of the prevention of smoking story was called for.

The health sector outlay leaves many expectations unfulfilled. People I spoke to said "not everything needs to be announced in the budget." We live in hope.

The writer is a former Health Secretary. Views are personal

FEBRUARY 5, 1982, FORTY YEARS AGO

INDIAN EXPRESS

Speaker's vote saves Karunakaran Govt

SPEAKER SAVES GOVT

THE 39-DAY-OLD UNITED Democratic Front Ministry, headed by Congress (I) leader K Karunakaran, survived its first trial of strength in the Assembly, defeating a no-confidence motion with the help of the casting vote of the Speaker and the vote of a nominated member. In the voting which followed 12 hours of acrimonious debate spread over two days, the ruling side and the opposition were tied at 70 each. A G Jose, who belonged to the Congress (S) until his election as Speaker on Wednesday, then exercised his casting vote against the no-confidence motion. Two members of the Janata Party voted against the government, while three others who were suspended from the party, voted for it. The lone independent member of the House, K K Nair, also voted for the government.

KAPIL DEV'S 100

KAPIL DEV SCORED a breezy 116 and added 169 runs with Yashpal Sharma (55 not out) in 178 minutes for a record 7th wicket stand at the Green Park stadium in Kanpur. India, 193/3 overnight, came within two runs of overhauling England's 378/9 (declared) when the sixth and final Test ended in an insipid draw. With the draw — the fifth in a row — India regained the rubber against England 1-0 after losing in England in 1974. Kapil Dev was awarded the well-deserved man of the series award.

KENNEDY TAPES

JOHN KENNEDY HAD a secret taping system to record his conversations with associates, friends and foes and visiting foreign leaders, *The Washington Post* reported. Kennedy's secret, known only to Evelyn Lincoln, his personal White House secretary, and some secret service agents, is quite embarrassing to his admirers. Theodore Sorensen, who is regarded as among one of Kennedy's closest aides, said: "I am dumb-founded."

THE IDEAS PAGE

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"The combined effect of energy price hikes, higher taxes and continuing inflation means that, for Boris Johnson, April may indeed be the cruellest month."

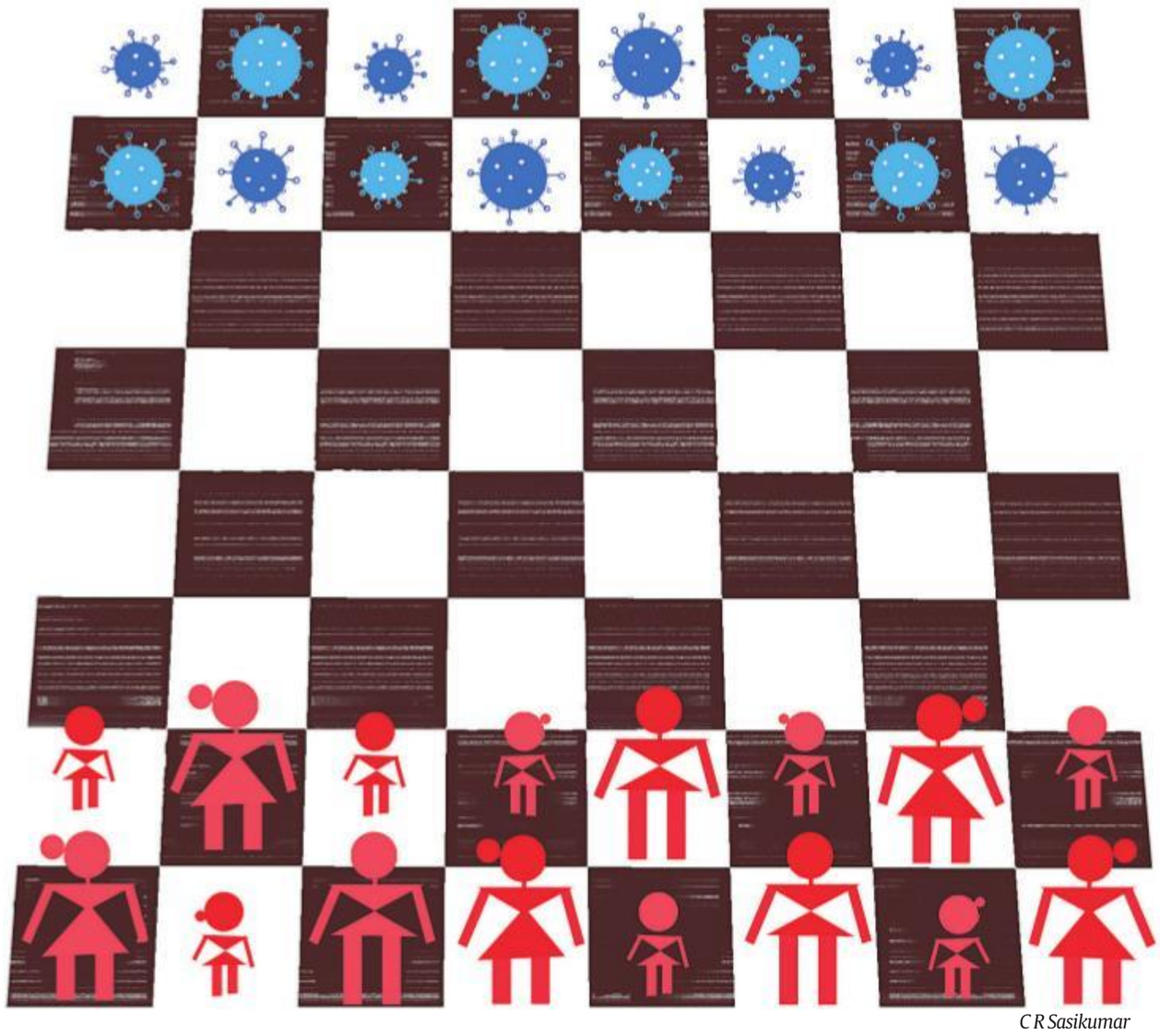
— THE GUARDIAN

The moves that matter

Much like in chess, in life, the rules of the game are simple, but playing is a complex art. It has an opening, middle and end game

OPENING ARGUMENT

BY MENAKA GURUSWAMY



C R Sasikumar

MY FATHER INTRODUCED me to chess when I was eight years old. Almost 40 years later, I know that many of the skills and qualities learnt from the game stand one in good stead in life and in litigation. Indians are believed to have invented the game in the 6th century CE, in the era of the Gupta Empire. It was known as "chaturanga" at the time. The word "chaturanga", which in Sanskrit means four limbs, refers to the four arms of the army — infantry, cavalry, elephants and chariots.

During the Gupta era, the game was played on an 8x8 grid, much like the modern chessboard of today. By the 11th century, it spread to Persia where it was known as "chatrang" or "shatranj". From Persia, it went to China and Japan before arriving in Europe via North Africa. In Europe, by the 16th century, some cosmetic changes were brought to the game, including the renaming of the pieces after medieval European figures like knight, bishop and rook (or fort).

The rules of the game are simple, but playing it is a complex art, necessitating concentration, a calm mind and the ability to sit still and shut out the world. These are necessary qualities for any discipline or art form, especially advocacy in a courtroom. First, a little more on the rules for those who don't play. Essentially, when your king is captured or checkmated, you lose. Perhaps in a reflection of real life, the female piece, or the queen, is the most powerful and hardworking piece, while the pawns are committed foot soldiers. Bishops move diagonally, rooks vertically and horizontally, while the horse-headed knights move in an L-shape.

Each piece has its own role, but all must work together to be utilised most effectively by the force that runs them — much like any army, bureaucracy or state institutions. The handling of any crisis — whether Covid or war — reflects how effectively the ruling regime deploys the limbs of the state. Each institution is but a piece on the larger board that is the state. Much like in chess, the constitution describes the role or function of each institution and sets the rules.

Chess has meant different things to me at different points in my life. As a bored teenager, the establishment of the school chess club was an outlet for my restless mind, which was not engaged by the curriculum taught in class. Soon this led to participating in state and national level competitions for junior players. This was in the late 1980s, when I heard of an exciting player named Viswanathan Anand from Chennai who became India's first Grandmaster.

In my final years of school, I was invited to attend the Pioneer Artek camp in Yalta, Ukraine, then still part of the Soviet Union. Yalta, a resort town, was surrounded by the Black Sea and hosted a camp for young people from all over the world. There I would encounter talented and highly trained chess players who would dismantle my game quickly. At the time, a politician called Mikhail Gorbachev was talking about "glasnost" and "perestroika". The Soviet Union would soon come undone in 1991.

I was excited to be in the mothership of chess — the Soviet Union. For long, chess had been used to settle ideological wars and issues of national pride. At the peak of the Cold War years, a challenger from the US, Bobby Fischer, and the defending champion Boris Spassky of the Soviet Union, played at the World Chess Championships in Reykjavik, Iceland. From July 11 to August 31, 1972, spanning 21 games, the two players competed for themselves and their countries. Symbolically, capitalism took on communism. Both Fischer and Spassky were under tremendous pressure to win.

The Soviets had dominated world chess till this point, winning the world championships for the past 24 years. The eccentric Fischer, critical of his government, brilliant and unpredictable, asked for the prize money to be increased, refused to attend the opening ceremony, threatened not to play and, finally, had to be persuaded by Henry Kissinger to compete. He would go on to win the championship and break Soviet domination.

I found chess again during this time of relative isolation, with the pandemic and the resultant lockdowns and curfews. In the land of its birth, chess has witnessed a renaissance over the past decade. Abhijit Nair writes in *Bridge.in* that as of 2021, India has 72 Grandmasters, having tripled the number in the last decade. In the last three years alone, from 2018 to 2021, India has produced an astonishing 22 Grandmasters.

During the pandemic, one could still play in the online world of chess sites. Rumour has it that the former world champion and Russian dissident Garry Kasparov often plays anonymously on these sites. If that's not to one's liking, then chess programmes on laptops are designed to entertain or destroy as per the level of proficiency selected. I played furiously during the loneliest of the lockdowns, used it to bury grief as friends and colleagues at the bar were felled by the brutal second wave of Covid. As migrant labourers starved or decided to walk to their far-off homes, I wondered what kind of "middle game" our rulers had in mind?

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As Omicron entered India, I re-watched Satyajit Ray's only Hindi language film, 'Shatranj ke Khilari'. Set in 1856, shortly before the revolt of 1857, the movie revolves around two noblemen living in Awadh. Obsessed with the game, both spend all their time playing and neglecting their families and businesses, until they are completely ruined. Starring Amjad Khan, Sanjeev Kumar, Shabana Azmi and Richard Attenborough, the movie is based on a short story by Munshi Premchand. Both the short story and the film are intended to capture the selfishness and cowardice of India's ruling classes at the time, who did not put up a fight against the small group of British soldiers who threatened the grand old kingdom of Awadh. In due course, Awadh would fall and India soon after.

How one lives life is a series of choices. Chess games are divided into opening, middle and end games. In life, the opening moves are determined by the values one decides to live by, the middle game entails honing the craft of one's choice, contributing to one's community, finding love, taking care of family, mentoring the young and speaking up against the powerful when demanded by circumstances. For the end game, you must look at the legacy you leave behind as you walk into the sunset. You may win or lose, but you have played the game by your rules.

The writer is a senior advocate at the Supreme Court

The blurred battle-lines

In a Punjab election teeming with old cynicisms, new breakaways and mixed messages, alliances may prove to be key

PRAMOD KUMAR

A PREPONDERANCE OF politicians with fickle loyalties. A battle of false claims and empty promises to entice voters. Entertainment, Sidhuisms and theatrics garnished with the Delhi model of governance. The Punjab election has everything in it, except seriousness, to bring about an urgently needed paradigm shift in the state's development path.

The election will see a three-cornered contest between the Congress, the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD)-Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-Punjab Lok Congress (PLC)-Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD Sanyukt) putting up some semblance of a fight in some targeted constituencies. The entry of the Sanyukt Samaj Morcha (SSM), a conglomerate of 22 farm organisations, may change the architecture of Punjab elections.

The new electoral alliances have ironically liberated the political parties and leaders from the shackles of ideology, principled positions and consistent normative behaviour. The BJP has entered into a pre-election alliance with the breakaway parties, the PLC and the SAD (Sanyukt). It has elevated itself as a dominant partner by contesting 65 seats — the PLC has 37, and SAD (Sanyukt) 15 seats. This alliance may not improve the BJP's electoral performance but may adversely affect the chances of the Congress.

The SAD has not entered into an alliance with its traditional ally, the BJP, due to their disagreement on the three Acts on agriculture. It has allied with the BSP after two and a half decades. This may give an advantage to the SAD, as in the previous elections, the BSP had acted as a mega-spoiler for the SAD in over 15 seats.

There are blatant efforts to polarise Punjab on religious and caste lines, with arguments that say Punjab can only have a Sikh Chief Minister or a Scheduled Caste Chief Minister. On the contrary, multi-cornered contests and demographically different electoral alliances have evolved to place the urban Hindus and Dalits as game-changers. There are only 10 Jat-majority, two Dalit-majority and three non-Jat general category majority constituencies in Punjab. The composition of more than 102 constituencies is diverse. As a result, historically, religious and caste fault lines have tended to blur in Punjab's electoral politics, unlike other states.

The appointment of Charanjit Singh Channi who belongs to the Ravidassia sub-caste has posed a question: Will the 32 per cent Schedule Castes continue to vote for all the political parties as in earlier elections? The answer is, perhaps, yes. Caste has been weakened at the behavioural level by the Sikh religion. Among Scheduled Castes, sub-castes like Mazhabis, Valmikis, Ravidassia and Adharmis may continue to respond differently from each other. These sub-castes are also intermeshed with the deras associated with babas or saints. For instance, a majority of the Ravidassias are affiliated with the Dera Ballan, and a section of the Mazhabis are affiliated with the Dera Sacha Sauda. So, it would be the Dera establishment that may continue to barter its support in elections. Channi may only exercise a limited influence.

Unfortunately, elections have been reduced to a ritual of democracy, as political parties promise freebies and doles and selectively target political adversaries. A party's menu card offers something for everyone – from farmers, traders, students, Dalits, industrialists to women. The "menu-festo" replaces the manifesto which is, by definition, a declaration of principles, policies, intentions and ideological commitment. The credit for this infamous invention goes to the AAP. Divisive politics, issueless campaigns, doles and invoking religious deras — all this constitutes the subtext of this election.

Alliances are likely to be key. The SAD looks to gain from its alliance with the BSP, the AAP might be at a disadvantage due to its failure to enter into alliance with SSM. The vote share of the AAP declined from 24 per cent in 2014 to 7 per cent in the 2019 elections. Is it a sign of the decline of the AAP in Punjab? Perhaps no. There is a visible undercurrent for the AAP in many constituencies. But around 11 out of its 20 MLAs elected in 2017 and three of the four elected members of Parliament in 2019 have deserted the party. The AAP has an advantage as it has not located itself on any fault lines of caste, religion or region. The SAD has a baggage of unresolved sacrilege cases, but it has the advantage of having a regional flavour, a stable and socially acceptable leadership across various fault lines, and an experienced leader in Sukhbir Badal as compared to Bhagwant Mann of AAP and Navjot Sidhu and Charanjit Singh Channi of the Congress.

The Congress is in a self-destructive mode. Metaphorically, the Punjab Congress is divided into five Misals (to use Maharaja Ranjit Singh's governance model) — the Sidhu Misal, Channi Misal, Bajwa Misal, Jakhar Misal and Randhawa Misal. Unfortunately, there is no Maharaja Ranjit Singh to coordinate these warring confederates. So, they work overtime to outmanoeuvre each other and are bound to adversely affect the winning chances of the party.

With the three main parties in a close contest, there are indications that Punjab is heading for a hung assembly. The margins of victory are likely to be small. It would be a political misadventure to predict the outcome in favour of or against a political party. But it can be safely concluded that in a hung-assembly-like situation, the SAD may be part of government formation — whether it includes the BJP or the AAP or even the Congress.

The writer is director, Institute for Development and Communication, Chandigarh

Unseeing the real problem

Budget offers little to meet needs of farmers and other rural citizens

A R VASAVI

BUDGET 2022 HAS assured us a comfortable passage from the "achhe din" initiated in 2014 to an "amrit kaal" until 2047. From now onwards, there will be no poverty, deprivation, unemployment, ill-health or pandemics. For rural India, much is promised via the "amrit" (nectar) that digital technologies, interlinked rivers, world-class infrastructure, super-fast trains, and new-age start-ups can enable. In this "amrit kaal", the rural poor will receive free rations to satiate their hunger (but not meet their nutritional needs), children will attend schools improved via the digital PM e-Vidya, youth will attend ITIs to gain skills in the new digital technologies or have access to the new "digital university", healthcare access will be assured via the digital health platforms, and farmers across India can learn about organic farming from the model farms that will be developed along the banks of the Ganga.

Applauding the budget and its sacred visions (blessed by a citation from the Shanti Parva), the Prime Minister himself has told the nation that this budget heralds, "vikas ka naya vishwas" (new hope for progress) and has assured us the plenitude of "more infrastructure, more investment, more growth and more jobs". Water, gas, toilets are what everybody will get and "garib ka kalyan" (welfare of the poor) — that vexatious and persistent national goal —will be achieved.

Most of our budgets over the past decades have not factored in the real needs of the people, especially that of rural citizens, and have been instruments that have largely served the interests of the ruling political class. Yet, this budget stands out for extending the cultural ideology and political strategies of the BJP. In what is an audacious assertion of overconfidence, this budget is positioned as a blueprint for realising a BJP-reconstructed India in 2047. The strategy to realise this, the Economic Survey claims, is to shift from the previous dominant "waterfall" (or detailed study) approach to an "agile" approach in which "feedback loops" and "high frequency indicators" related to data from GST collections, power consumption, mobility, digital payments, satellite imagery, toll collections etc. are drawn on to make budgetary allocations and plans. Overlooked, significantly, are data and the pressing responsibilities to address the complex structural deficits of rural India (the caste-class skewed distribution of land and natural resources, the inadequate public institutions of health and education, the persisting problems of malnutrition etc.), the impact of demonetisation from which many are yet to recover, the pandemic's most vulnerable victims, and the now full-blown manifestations of climate emergency. Nor is there any interest in articulating and deploying a vision in which the strengths of India's biodiversity, rich agricultural and ancillary crafts industries can be revived and strengthened. Instead, as has become all too common since the 1990s, budgetary allocations for rural India are marked by a combination of economic neglect and political rescue. Sufficient funds are not allocated to enable a decent living standard for the majority. Instead, there are allocations that reap political dividends by catering to the interests of a narrow class of people — primarily large-farmers, who are now also emerging as regional satraps and entrepreneurs.

In a budget that is suffused with the promotion of digital technologies, the failure to envisage that the basic services of health and education cannot be met via technology indicates the callous treatment of rural citizens. As public sectors that have sharply declined over the years, both health and education require not remote and technology-enabled access but brick-and-mortar institutions, with real and human personnel to cater to health and learning needs.

The pressing problem of unemployment, made all the more severe by poor-quality mass education, should have received attention via the creation of learning, skilling and employment opportunities for rural natural resource restoration, agricultural and agri-processing cooperatives, and for a range of new services and skills that now form part of the rural service economy. Instead, this "amrit" budget postulates the possibilities of training youth in ITIs for employment in the digital economy, and assumes that the availability of 5G networks and fibre optics will resolve the myriad problems of rural India.

The sheer insouciance towards farmers is best highlighted in the fact that the allocation for MSP of crops is not substantial and is a slap in their faces for forcing the BJP to recall the three farm acts. In co-opting the call to transit to organic agriculture, there is no assurance that the diverse agri-cultures of rural India, including the millet-growing belts, will be sustained or enabled to grow to a sustainable and profitable level. One grain of hope in all this is that, like all budgets and their promises, much of this will not be translated into efforts on the ground.

The writer, a social anthropologist, is with the Punarchith Collective

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CURRENCY DOUBTS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, "The digital rupee" (IE, February 4). The idea of a Central Bank Digital Currency(CBDC) needs to be translated to reality. It negates the ills of cryptocurrencies and welcomes the benefits of digital currencies. While the uncertainty and speculation associated with the former are absent, the stability and legality of the latter are present in CBDC. But to adequately leverage the utility of CBDC, efforts to bridge the digital divide in the country are needed. Improving the financial literacy of the citizenry and bolstering privacy settings of CBDC should not be overlooked either. If so, CBDC can be a game-changer in the post-Covid economy with minimal physical transactions.

Anjali Bhavana, *Thiruvananthapuram*

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, "The digital rupee" (IE 4 February). A digital rupee may have enormous consequences for the banking sector, including implications for the sector's very existence, depending on the model chosen by the Reserve Bank of India. Banks could well become superfluous and expendable if customers start to transact directly with the RBI for their deposit and credit needs. The RBI would then become a very powerful institution. Moreover, with its autonomy under question, it could well become a willing tool of the government. These are serious implications which will have to be carefully considered and thought through before the final architecture of the digital rupee is framed.

Hemant Contractor, *Pune*

COURT STEPS IN

THIS REFERS TO the news report, "HC stays Haryana law on 75 per cent quota for locals in private sector jobs" (IE, February 4). The High Court has taken the right step in this matter. Reservation for locals in jobs would not be prudent given the fact that it is an onerous task to find locals with the requisite skills. Furthermore, such a law would discourage industries from taking up any greenfield and brownfield projects in the state. Such a law would also act as a deterrent for the non-locals in taking up jobs in the state even if they are qualified for them. In any case, a 75 per cent quota is too high.

Aanya Singhal, *Noida*

UNSCIENTIFIC ACTS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, "Tryst with unreason" (IE, February 4). It is regrettable that reputed institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology have been observed to support the government in its pseudoscientific ventures. The obsession with historical revisionism, particularly with a thrust on doing justice to "neglected" personas, reviving a purported Indian "golden" age, and attempts to erase all traces of our multicultural past are the hallmarks of the current ruling class,which is eager to promote the ideology of a uniform India. Far more worrying is the fact that this blatant pseudoscience has made its way into the public sphere and is seeking to control young minds. The scientific community must condemn all such ventures.

Ila Railkar, *Mumbai*

BRIEFLY

Sherlyn Chopra gets protection from arrest

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday granted protection from arrest to actor Sherlyn Chopra in a case registered by Mumbai Cyber police in 2020 in connection with the porn films racket expose. A bench of Justices Vineet Saran and Aniruddha Bose issued notice to Maharashtra government on the appeal filed by Chopra challenging the Bombay High Court's November 25, 2021 order rejecting her anticipatory bail application. "Issue notice... In the meanwhile, no coercive action shall be taken against the petitioner," the bench said. **ENS**

ODISHA

Minister moves HC for bail

Bhubaneswar: Union Minister and Mayurbhanj BJP MP Bishweswar Tudu on Friday filed an anticipatory bail plea in the Orrisa high court in connection with an alleged assault case registered against him at the Baripada police station on January 21. Tudu was accused of attacking Mayurbhanj District Deputy Director (Planning) Aswini Mallick and Assistant Director Debasish Mohapatra with a chair. Mohapatra had alleged in his complaint that he had fractured his arm in the attack. The high court admitted the plea but hasn't listed the matter for hearing yet. **ENS**

UTTAR PRADESH

Man 'lynched' in Bhadohi, 1 held

Bhadohi: A 30-year-old man was allegedly lynched in Koirauna police station area of Bhadohi on Friday, police said. Munshi Gautam, a Dalit, was drunk driving a tractor when he lost control and hit a cyclist in Berwa Paharpur village. As people tried to catch him, he accelerated in a bid to escape, but hit a tree and fell. The crowd caught and assaulted him. Later, he was taken to the community health centre where doctors declared him dead. A case has been registered against Jai Shankar Pandey and three others, police said. Pandey was arrested. **PTI**

Cong speaks out on Udupi hijab row: Girls' rights being violated

Attempt to prevent Muslim girls from being educated, says Siddaramaiah

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

Students of the college in Udupi district's Kundapur attempt to convince the authorities to let them attend classes. *Express*

THE CONTROVERSY over Muslim students in hijab being denied entry into colleges in Karnataka continued to simmer with students in a pre-university college in the Udupi region of Karnataka being kept out of the gates for the third straight day Friday and Education Minister B C Nagesh saying government colleges will "strictly follow" the Education Department's circular on uniforms.

In the first remarks on the issue from the Opposition in Karnataka, former Karnataka Chief Minister and Congress leader Siddaramaiah said the move to prevent Muslim students in head scarves or hijabs from entering their colleges was an attempt to rob the girls of their fundamental right to education. "This is an effort to prevent Muslim girls from getting educated. The head scarf is part of their religion. Now there is a problem being created at a government college in Kundapur [in Udupi]. It is a violation of the fundamental rights of the students. The Constitution grants you the fundamental right to practise your religion," he said.

At the Kundapur college on Friday, girls wearing hijabs, who came along with their parents, protested outside the college gates. As a counter-protest, a few Hindu boys entered the premises wearing saffron scarves. The boys were asked to take off their the scarves and attend classes.

Accusing the BJP of communalising the issue, Siddaramaiah said, "The BJP is making an issue of it by demanding the right to wear saffron scarves. They are doing it intentionally. Did they wear it earlier? Is it part of their custom?"

Congress's Leader of the Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge told *The Indian Express*, "It is not good to harass the girls because of the dress they wear. Our country has a diverse culture. They (Karnataka BJP) should not make a big issue out of it. The Constitution gives you the freedom... if you take those away with your might, it is not good."

U T Khader, deputy leader of the Congress in the Karnataka Assembly, said the girls should be allowed to attend classes wearing the hijab "if they wanted to do so" and that colleges should take a call on allowing saffron scarves for Hindu students. "The education of students must not suffer due to this issue being raised now."

Leader of Opposition in the Karnataka Legislative Council, Congress's B K Hariprasad, told *The Indian Express*, "It is terrible. It is a government school. They have no business imposing anything. There are no restrictions on the hijab nor are there any restrictions on saffron scarves. The BJP wants to polarize the society in coastal Karnataka. They are converting the entire region into a Hindutva laboratory. That is not fair. We are waiting for our local units to assess the situation and report to us. Then we will take a call."

Former Union minority affairs minister and senior Congress leader K Rahman Khan said, "All these years, there was no objection (to students wearing the hijab). Now these vigilantes are doing moral policing. India is a land with diverse cultures. Constitutionally, they cannot restrict it."

On Friday, state Education Minister Nagesh told the media, "We have sent circulars to PU colleges that students should wear uniforms. If not, students will not allowed inside... The matter is in the court and we will wait for the court directions."

On January 25, the state Education Department had decided to set up a committee to chalk out guidelines on uniforms. It also asked colleges in Udupi to maintain "status quo" till the government formulated a rule.

On Thursday, state Home Minister Araga Jnanendra had said students should wear uniforms prescribed by school and college managements, and refrain from wearing the hijab or saffron scarves.

State Minister for Kannada and Culture V Sunil Kumar alleged that the protesting Muslim girls were converting Udupi and Karnataka into Taliban territory. "We will not allow them to turn this region into Taliban territory..."

ASSAM

HC upholds law to abolish state-funded madrasas

TORA AGARWALA
GUWAHATI, FEBRUARY 4

Chief Miniter Himata Biswa Sarma called it a landmark verdict

THE GAUHATI High Court on Friday upheld a 2020 Assam Assembly law, according to which all state-run madrasas were to be converted into "regular schools" for "general education".

Reacting to the development, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma took to Twitter to call it a "landmark judgment".

In December 2020, when Sarma was Education Minister, the Assam government had passed a law repealing the Assam Madrasa Education (Provincialization) Act and Assam Madrassa Education (Provincialisation of Services of Employees and Re-organisation of Madrassa Educational Institutions) Act, 2018, in a bid to abolish all state-run Madrasas as well as initiate a change in curricula by drop Islamic subjects. Sarma had then said it was done to "reform the education system to make it secular". Following that, 13 petitioners, who were either donors or presidents of managing committees of the land on which the madrasas were built, moved the Gauhati HC, saying the government's move violated the fundamental rights under Articles 25, 26, 29 and 30, among other rights.

After hearing both sides, a division bench of Chief Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia and Justice Soumitra Saikia on Friday dismissed the petition, saying that secularism was a "basic structure of the Constitution", and that as per Article 28 (1), this secular nature "mandates that no religious instruction shall be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of state funds".

Recapping the history of madrasas in the state, the court said they had first begun as community schools, following which they were made into "venture" madrasa, receiving state funds.

During the hearing, the state's Advocate General, Devajit Lon Saikia, had clarified that the law was applicable to "Provincialised" or government madrasas alone, and not "Community", "Qawmi" madrasas, or "maktabs", which continue to function in Assam.

Senior advocate Sanjay Hegde, who was representing the petitioners, argued that they could "under Article 30(1) to 'establish' and 'administer' educational institutions of their 'choice' which gives them a right, inter alia, to decide their own curriculum, which is based on their perception to preserve their religion or culture."

However, Saikia argued that "all the state has done is that it had removed religious teachings from government schools".

The court observed that Clause (1) of Article 28 was extremely important. "It states in clear and unambiguous terms that no religious instructions shall be imparted in any educational institution which is wholly maintained out of state funds...," the bench said. It added that the madrasas in question were "fully under control of the government". "Consequently, the claim of the petitioners that these madrasas are minority institutions and are maintained by minority is a claim which has no foundation..."

On the matter of the government placing those teaching at Arabic Colleges and Title Madrasas under the Secondary Board of Education, the court said they be considered to be brought to the university level. However, since the teachers had not petitioned the court, the judges said the consideration "shall be subject to a representation being made by such teachers, before the Commissioner and Secretary, Education (Secondary) Department, which shall then be considered in terms of our observations, by passing a speaking order".

Four arrested in Yerwada slab collapse that killed 5 workers

Pune: Pune city police have arrested four people in connection with the slab collapse in Yerwada that killed five workers and left at least four others injured on Thursday night.

Police have identified the accused as Imtiyaz Abdul Barkhat Ansari (38), Mohammad Sharif Habibul Raheman Alam (35), Vijay Eknath Dhakode (25),, and Mujif Khan (45). All were earlier detained for questioning and later put under arrest on Friday as a probe pointed to their role in the alleged negligence that led to the collapse on the construction site of Bluegrass Business Park near the Shastri Nagar junction on the Pune-Ahmednagar road.

Amitabh Gupta, Commissioner of Pune city police, confirmed the four arrests.

"Police are investigating the case. Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) has launched an inquiry into the incident. PMC report is awaited for further action," said Gupta. **ENS**

Koregaon Bhima panel to call Mumbai police JCP to depose as witness

CHANDAN HAYGUNDE
PUNE, FEBRUARY 3

IPS officer and former commissioner of Pune city police Rashmi Shukla appears as a witness before the Koregaon Bhima Commission of Inquiry. *Pavan Khengre*

KOREGAON BHIMA Commission of Inquiry will call IPS officer Vishwas Nangare Patil to depose as a witness in the case, the panel's lawyer has said. The two-member commission, headed by retired Justice J N Patel, is probing the causes of the Koregaon Bhima violence of January 1, 2018, in which one person died and several others were injured.

Nangare Patil is currently the joint commissioner of police (law and order), Mumbai police. He was the special inspector general of police, Kolhapur Range, at the time the violence took place in Pune rural, which came under his jurisdiction.

The commission's lawyer, Aashish Satpute, in an application filed on Friday, said, "It is necessary to summon Vishwas Nangare Patil, IPS, to bring forward true and correct facts, intelligence inputs, minutes of meetings received by the office of SPL, IGP Kolhapur, during the relevant period when he was holding the charge..."

Retired Justice Patel said the commission will be calling him as a witness and asked state's lawyer Shishir Hiray to reply and file Nangare Patil's affidavit.

Meanwhile, IPS officer Rashmi Shukla appeared before the commission on Friday as a witness. Shukla was the commissioner of Pune city police at the time of Koregaon Bhima violence and is currently posted in Hyderabad as the Additional Director General of CRPF (South Zone).

In her affidavit, Shukla has attached various letters from the Maharashtra state intelligence department regarding the Elgaar Parishad held in the Pune city police jurisdiction at Shaniwar Wada in Pune on December 31, 2017, ahead of the 200th anniversary of the Koregaon Bhima battle.

Unable to return, Afghan cadets in India offered additional course

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

IN WHAT is being seen as a gesture to protect "at-risk" Afghan nationals, the Indian government has decided to offer an additional year-long training programme to about 80 cadets from the Afghan National Security Forces who have just completed their training in Indian military academies.

With the fall of Kabul in mid-August and the Taliban taking over the government in Afghanistan, these cadets are considered to be "at-risk" if they choose to return home.

"Eighty young Afghan cadets who recently graduated from various military academies in India have been offered a 12-month training programme in Effective English Communication for Business and Office," the Afghan Embassy said in a statement. It said the programme begins on February 7 and the cadets will be placed in three different institutes, where they will be provided accommodation and a monthly allowance. The training is being provided under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC) of the Ministry of External Affairs.

"Given the challenges and uncertainty facing these freshly graduated young cadets due to the prevailing situation back home, the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in India welcomes and applauds this generous move by the Indian government," the Embassy said.

India has regularly provided military training to young Afghan cadets, in sync with its close ties with Afghanistan.

Delhi has been pushing for the formation of an inclusive government in Kabul, besides insisting that Afghan soil must not be used for any terrorist activities.

In the last couple of months, India has sent large quantities of life-saving medicines and other supplies as part of its humanitarian aid to the war-torn country.

It is also planning to send the first consignment of wheat, via Pakistan, this month. Officials say the modalities are still being worked out, and could take place as early as February 10.

Responding to questions, the Ministry of External Affairs' official spokesperson, Arindam Bagchi, said on Thursday: "The government is committed to extending humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan. We have been sharing information about shipment of medicines and vaccines. The process to procure wheat and to arrange its transportation is still underway."

The United Nations said this week that it has received "credible allegations" that more than 100 former members of the Afghan government, its security forces and those who worked with international troops have been killed since the Taliban took over last August.

According to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, despite Taliban assurances, there are also credible allegations "of enforced disappearances and other violations impacting the right to life and physical integrity" of former government and coalition members.

Sacrilege case: Court convicts 3 of murder of Dera follower

KAMALDEEP SINGH BRAR
AMRITSAR, FEBRUARY 4

A FARIDKOT court on Friday convicted three people for the murder of Dera Sacha Sauda follower Gurdev Singh in 2016. The judgment, however, reads that motive behind the murder is not clear. The accused have been identified as Gurpreet Singh alias Gopi, Ashok Kumar Vohra alias Amna and Jaswant Singh alias Kala.

The incident took place on June 13, 2016, when the three accused entered the shop of the deceased and opened fire. Gurdev suffered head injuries and was declared brought dead at Faridkot hospital.

Under pressure from Dera followers, Gurdev's wife was given a job in Punjab police and the three accused were arrested in August 2017. However, in 2018, investigation revealed that the accused murdered Gurdev for his alleged involvement in the 2015 sacrilege case.

Vinod Monga, lawyer for the deceased, said the accused murdered Gurdev assuming that he had passed derogatory remarks against the Sikh religion.

Later, Justice Ranjit Singh commission found that the villagers had told police in 2015 that they suspected Gurdev's role in the 2015 sacrilege case. However, police didn't investigate the claims. The judgment now reads that motive behind Gurdev's murder is not clear.

"Undoubtedly there is nothing on record to show as to what could be the motive behind the murder of Gurdev Singh. The issue of motive becomes totally irrelevant when there is a direct evidence of a trustworthy witness regarding the commission of the crime..." reads the judgment by Additional Session Judge Faridkot Jagdeep Singh Marok.

Lokayukta junks Cong leader's plea against Kerala minister

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, FEBRUARY 4

THE KERALA Lokayukta on Friday rejected a petition filed by senior Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala, seeking a probe against state Higher Education Minister R Bindu for her alleged interference in reappointment of Gopinath Ravindran as vice-chancellor (V-C) of Kannur University.

Chennithala had moved the petition alleging nepotism, misuse of power and corruption on the part of the minister.

The former Opposition leader had sought a probe under Section 12 of Kerala Lok Ayukta Act, 1999, against Bindu. The plea also urged for a declaration under Section 14 of the law to the effect that the minister should not continue in her post.

In his verdict, Lokayukta Justice Cyriac Joseph said that the minister had only made a suggestion or proposal in her official capacity for the V-C's reappointment. "We are not prepared to hold the view that action of the minister in making such a suggestion/proposal amounts to abuse of her position. It is significant that the suggestion made by the Minister, as the Pro-VC, was accepted by the Governor, who is the Chancellor."

The order stated, "The Government was permitted to submit necessary proposals for the reappointment of the present incumbent."

The Lokayukta observed that there is no allegation that Bindu was motivated by personal interest, or improper or corrupt motives, in discharge of her functions as minister.

Although it is alleged that she is guilty of favouritism, nepotism and lack of integrity, there is "absolutely no material to substantiate" the allegation, the order noted.

Reacting to the verdict, Bindu said unnecessary controversies will hamper the government's functioning.

Chennithala, however, said he still believes the minister had abused her office to reappoint the V-C. "It is a clear case of nepotism. I would explore legal remedies after studying the verdict," he said.

Recently, the Kerala High Court had dismissed a plea against Ravindran's reappointment for the post of V-C. The court said that reappointment was different from appointment, and that the procedure adopted for appointment need not be followed when reappointing someone.

EXPLAINED

Relief for LDF govt

THE PETITION'S dismissal is a big relief for the CPI(M)-led LDF government against the backdrop of the recent move to bring an ordinance to amend Section 14 of Lokayukta Act. If implemented, this would reduce orders of the quasi-judicial, anti-corruption body to only recommendatory in nature, rather than binding on the government.

5 AAP corporators in Surat civic body join BJP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GANDHINAGAR, SURAT, FEBRUARY 4

MONTHS AHEAD of assembly elections in Gujarat, five councilors of Aam Admi Party (AAP) in Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC) on Friday joined the BJP in the presence of Minister of State for Home Harsh Sanghavi and other senior party leaders.

The five councilors include Ruta Kakadiya, Bhavna Solanki, Vipul Movaliya, Jyotika Lathhiya and Manisha Kukadiya. After joining BJP at party state headquarters - Shree Kamalam – in Gandhinagar, the five also addressed media sharing their grievances against the party including discrimination.

Gujarat AAP president Gopal Italia, however, rejected their allegations and said that they were won over by BJP through "monetary ways".

Ruta Kakadiya said that her grievances towards AAP began soon after the elections when she got divorce from her husband. Ruta alleged that she was mentally tortured to do a press conference to blame BJP for the divorce. "I have evidence of all this which I will produce legally and the law will take its own course," Ruta said adding that she will lodge a complaint against top Gujarat AAP leaders include its state president and general secretary.

Whereas, Bhavna Solanki, who belongs to the Scheduled Caste community, among other things alleged casteism in AAP. Solanki alleged that she was told in the AAP that people cannot drink water from her hands. Solanki also alleged that the Gujarat AAP leadership collected money from party councilors to celebrate birthday of Gujarat party president Gopal Italia. Solanki was the Whip of AAP in SMC.

Manisha Kukadiya said that after winning SMC elections, they were taken to Delhi to see the model of development created by the party there. But, she alleged, the model was fake. Among other grievances Kukadiya said, "We were not allowed to meet the Mayor over the issues of the public. When we demanded to raise the issue of ration of poor people, Leader of Opposition (in SMC) Dharmesh Bhanderi used to tell us not get into it," Kukadiya said.

General Secretary of Gujarat BJP Pradipsinh Vaghela welcomed the five AAP corporators in BJP. Rejecting AAP allegation that its councilors have been inducted in BJP with money power, Vaghela said, "Our party and its cadre is very strong which can win elections on its own."

Meanwhile, Italia, during a press conference in Surat. said, "We are doing honest politics and for that BJP is afraid of us and are picking our elected councilors through monetary ways."

Rajasthan Health Minister says tobacco, cancer unrelated; later clarifies he meant hookahs

DEEP MUKHERJEE
JAIPUR, FEBRUARY 4

Parsadi Lal Meena

THE HEALTH Minister of Rajasthan Friday made the dubious claim that tobacco is unrelated to cancer, "clarifying" later that he was referring to the tobacco used in hookahs and not cigarettes.

Parsadi Lal Meena's assertion came on the sidelines of a programme in Jaipur — to mark World Cancer Day. He cited anecdotal examples of people in villages who would consume tobacco but "go on to live till 100 years".

The statements stirred up controversy, with some activists calling for his resignation.

According to the World Health Organization, tobacco use is a major risk factor for cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, over 20 different types or subtypes of cancer, and many other debilitating health conditions.

Not according to the health minister though.

"Cancer is not related to tobacco or beedi. Cancer can happen to anybody," Meena told reporters Friday. "*Maine dekhe hai, mai gaaon me reheta hun. Aise aise log hain jo din mein bees baar toh tambaku peete hain, khub beedi ya cigarette peete hain, kabhi cancer nahin hota unko* (I live in a village, I have seen this. There are people who use tobacco up to 20 times a day, smoke cigarettes and beedis. They don't ever get cancer)... They go on to live till 80-100 years."

He added: "And even those who don't consume (tobacco), have cancer... Even in cities people have it (cancer)..."

When contacted by *The Indian Express*, Meena said: "I meant the tobacco used in traditional hookahs in villages that many villagers consume. They go on to live for many years and they don't have cancer. I am not talking about cigarettes or gutka. Cancer does happen because of gutka."

An NGO working in the field of health, Jan Swasthya Abhiyan Rajasthan, slammed the minister's claims. "This irresponsible statement by a state minister... Jan Swasthya Abhiyan Rajasthan condemns his statement and demands that he either withdraws his statement immediately or resigns from his post."

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Director

बैंक ऑफ महाराष्ट्र
Bank of Maharashtra

Head Office :
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Bank of Maharashtra, one of the Leading Listed Public Sector Banks having Head Office in Pune with more than 2000 PAN India Branch Network invites online applications from the eligible candidates for the following posts.

Sr.	Name of the Post	Scale	No. of Posts
01	Generalist Officer	II	400
02	Generalist Officer	III	100

Details are available on Bank's Website **https://www.bankofmaharashtra.in. Online applications shall be opened from 05/02/2022 to 22/02/2022.**

Place: Pune
Date: 05/02/2022

General Manager, HRM

Indian Overseas Bank
ASSET RECOVERY MANAGEMENT BRANCH
Third Floor, Central Office Annexe Building, 763, Anna Salai, Chennai – 600 002
Phone : 044—2851 9453, 044-28420262 email: iob1535@iob.in

e-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization 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 **M/s Sar Ispat Pvt Ltd** represented by its Directors 1)Mr.Vikrant Sharma 2)Mr.Sandeep Kothari and **AKS Alloys Private Limited** represented by its Directors 1)Mr. Vikrant Sharma 2) Mr. Nemi Chand Kothari 3)Narendra Kumar Kothari and Guarantors1)Mr. Vikrant Sharma 2)Mr.Sandeep Kothari 3) Mr.Narendra Kumar Kothari 4) Mrs.Pushpa Kothari 5)Mr.Nemi Chand Kothari 6)M/s Prudent Construction Pvt.Ltd. (Corporate Guarantor) 7) M/s AKS Alloys Pvt. Ltd.(Corporate Guarantor of M/s Sar Ispat Pvt. Ltd.) 8) M/s Sar Ispat Pvt. Ltd.(Corporate Guarantor of M/s AKS Alloys Pvt. Ltd.) that the below described immovable properties mortgaged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Indian Overseas Bank, Secured Creditor, **will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on 22.02.2022** for recovery of **Rs.36,29,29,681/-** (Rupees Thirty Six Crore Twenty Nine Lakhs Twenty Nine Thousand Six Hundred Eighty One Only) as on 31.01.2022 due to the Indian Overseas Bank, Secured Creditor from the borrower **M/s SAR Ispat Pvt. Ltd.,** Factory: R. S No. 214 & 215,Village Kalithirthalkuppam, Thirukanoor Road, Madagadipet post, Puducherry–605 107and **Rs.30,80,43,538/-** (Rupees Thirty Crores Eighty Lakhs Forty Three Thousand Five Hundred and Thirty Eight Only) as on 31.01.2022 due to the Indian Overseas Bank, Secured Creditor from the borrower **M/s AKS Alloys Pvt. Ltd.,** R. S. No. 81/1,3 to 7, Eripakkam village, Nettapakkamcommune, Puducherry – 605 106, and **Guarantor 1)Mr. Vikrant Sharma** residing at 4th Row House, 29, Ranganathan Avenue Road, Kilpauk, Chennai-600040 **2)Mr.Sandeep Kothari** residing at 1/3,Rathina Sabapathy Street, New Washermanpet, Chennai-600021 **3)Mr. Narendra Kumar Kothari** residing at 1/3,Rathina Sabapathy Street, New Washermanpet, Chennai-600021 **4)Mrs.Pushpa Kothari** residing at 1/3,Rathina Sabapathy Street, New Washermanpet, Chennai-600021 **5) Mr. Nemi Chand Kothari** residing at 1/3,Rathina Sabapathy Street, New Washermanpet, Chennai-600021, **6) M/s Prudent Construction Pvt.Ltd.** (Corporate Guarantor) at No.25,First Floor, C Block-Community Centre, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058 **7) M/s AKS Alloys Pvt. Ltd.** (Corporate Guarantor of M/s Sar Ispat Pvt. Ltd.) **8) M/s Sar Ispat Pvt. Ltd.** (Corporate Guarantor of M/s AKS Alloys Pvt. Ltd.) having corporate office at No.770, Thiruvottiyur High Road,Tondiyarpet,Near Toll gate Bus Stop, Chennai-600081.

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Bid Increment Amount: **Rs.1,00,000/-**

Last Date & Time for EMD remittance and submission of online tender: **21.02.2022** before 4.00 p.m

DATE & TIME OF E-AUCTION : 22.02.2022 between 11:00 a.m. and 03:00 p.m. with auto extension of 10 minutes each till sale is completed at the platform of **https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi**

Date and Time of Inspection of the Property: **17.02.2022** between 11.00 a.m and 2.00 p.m
Contact : Kshyamanidhi Mohabhoi - 7064143500

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the service provider link **https://www.ibapi.in or bank's website www.iob.in**

Note: In compliance with Section 194IA and section 194 O of the Income Tax Act,1961, the successful bidder shall pay the applicable TDS.

Date : 01.02.2022
Place: Chennai

Authorised Officer
Indian Overseas Bank

This may also be treated as a Notice under Rule 8(6)/ Rule 9(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 to the borrower/s and guarantor/s of the said loan about holding of e-auction on the above mentioned date.

EASTERN COALFIELDS LIMITED
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

Ref No:ECL/CMD/Recruit./SRD/MS-21-22/665 Date: 11.01.22

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EMPLOYMENT NOTICE FOR THE POST OF MINING SIRDAR (T&S GR.'C') IN ECL

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Name of Posts	Basic Pay (NCWA X) (under revision)	GEN	EWS	OBC (NCL)	SC	ST	TOTAL	Backlog (ST)	PH Identified posts	Total
Mining Sirdar, T & S Gr. 'C'	Rs. 31852.56 (Per month)	127	30	83	46	23	309	+4	NA	313

Note:

(I) All the above posts carry VDA & other admissible allowances as per National Coal Wage Agreement.

(II) The number of posts advertised can be increased or decreased at the sole discretion of the management. The management also reserves the right to cancel the notified vacancies at its discretion & such decision will be final and binding to all. In event of cancellation of notified vacancies, the examination fee paid by the candidates will not be refundable.

(III) Above Vacancies are not suitable for the PH candidate, and colour-blind candidate. These candidates are requested not to apply for the same.

Submission of Online application will commence from	**20.02.22 (Sunday)**
Last date of Online application	**10.03.22 (Thursday)**

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-Sd- General Manager(P&IR)
ECL HQ, Sanctoria.

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davp 15113/13/0003/2122

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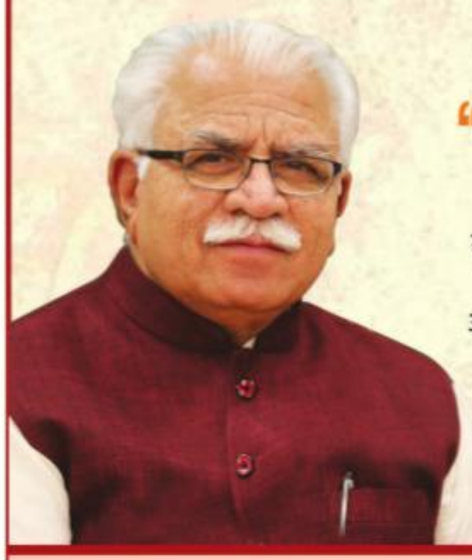
PENSION FUND REGULATORY AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

हरियाणा सरकार

आज़ादी का अमृत महोत्सव

किसानों के मसीहा
दीनबन्धु सर छोटूराम
की जयंती पर
शत-शत नमन

5 फरवरी, 2022

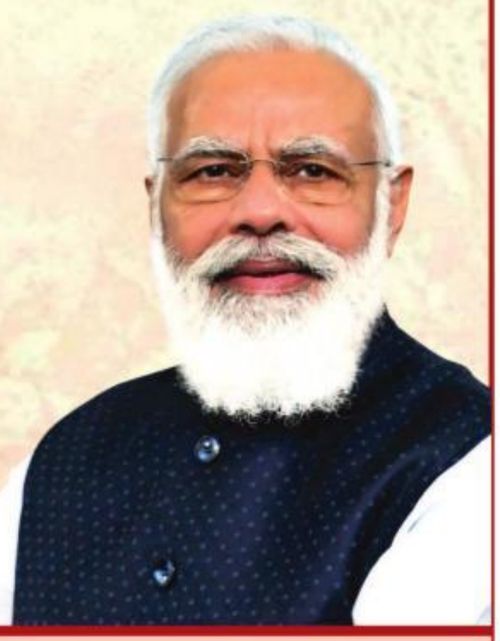


"दीनबन्धु सर छोटूराम जी का जीवन संघर्ष की एक अद्भुत गाथा है। किसानों और गरीबों की स्थिति सुधारने को उन्होंने अपना निजी कर्तव्य समझा। उनके विचार राष्ट्रीयता से ओत-प्रोत थे। वह एक कर्मठ ईमानदार व स्पष्ट वक्ता थे। ऐसी महान विभूति को कोटि-कोटि प्रणाम।"

- मनोहर लाल

"जन सेवा और किसान कल्याण के लिए अपना जीवन समर्पित करने वाले सर छोटूराम जी को उनकी जयंती पर शत-शत नमन। उन्होंने न केवल देश के अन्नदाताओं के अधिकारों के लिए संघर्ष किया, बल्कि वे मजदूरों, वंचितों और शोषितों की भी आवाज बने। समाज के उत्थान में उनका योगदान सदैव अविस्मरणीय रहेगा।"

- नरेन्द्र मोदी



सूचना, जन सम्पर्क एवं भाषा विभाग, हरियाणा www.prharyana.gov.in | @DiprHaryana

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I,Chhaya Pasey,W/o-Veshesh Pasey,R/o-B-4/28A,Ashok Vihar,Phase-2,Delhi-110052, after marriage have changed my name Chhaya Pasey to Chhaya Mudgal. 0040601581-2

I,Sushila Mudgal,W/o-Surender Kumar Mudgal,R/o-DA-228,SFS Flats,Shalimaar Bagh,Delhi-110088,have changed my name to Sushil Mudgal. 40601581-1

I,Sunil Chaudhry S/o Goverdhan Lal Choudhary R/o 652, 2nd-Floor, Gali-No.2, Sri Nagar, Shakur Basti,Delhi Changed Name To Sunil Chaudhary. 0040601573-8

I,Sariful Rahman,R/o-5654 gali no-13,old Seelampur,Gandhi Nagar, Delhi-110031,have changed my minor daughter name,from Nagifa Rahman to Najifa Rahman 0040601581-8

I,Sariful Rahman,R/o-5654 gali no-13,old Seelampur,Gandhi Nagar, Delhi-110031,have changed my minor daughter name,from Nafisa Rahaman to Nafisa Rahman 0040601581-9

I,Sanjeev Sharma S/o Bhushan Lal Sharma R/o-294 Ram Nagar, Krishna Nagar Delhi-110051, have changed my name to Sanjiv Sharma,for all purposes. 0040601577-7

I,SHIVANSHU GOEL S/O NITIN GOYAL R/O BLOCK-A 38,MAX HEIGHTS, KUNDLI, SONIPAT-131028HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SHIVANSU GOYAL. 0040601577-2

I,SHEIKH AMIR HUSSAIN S/O SHEIKH TAHEER HUSSAIN,R/O HOUSE.NO.E-195,GALI.NO. 70,MAHAVIR ENCLAVE PART-3,UTTAM NAGAR,WEST DELHI-110059,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM AMIR HUSSAIN TO SHEIKH AMIR HUSSAIN FOR ALL.PURPOSES. 0040601577-9

I,SHAMSHUL ARAFIN,S/O NOOR MOHAMMED R/O-2820,GALI SHANKAR WALI BAZAR-SITA RAM,DELHI-110006,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME,FROM SHAMSUL ARIFEEN, SHAMSHUL ARAFEEN@SHAMSHUL AREFEEN TO SHAMSHUL ARAFIN. 0040601587-1

I,Rishita Bhulchandani D/o Jitender Bulchandani R/o-B-401,Balaji Apartment,Plot No.11/2,Rohini,Sector-14 Delhi-110085,changed my name to Rishita Bulchandani. 0040601573-4

I,Nandini Malik D/o Sunil Malik W/o Shivam Oberoi,R/o O-490, Rishi Nagar Rani Bagh Delhi-110034,have changed my name to Nandini Oberoi. 40601573-7

I,NITIN GOEL,S/O SURESH GOYAL,R/O WARDNO.1,LOKO-COLONY,CHOPAN SENDHUARI, SONBHADRA,UTTAR-PRADESH-231205.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO NITIN GOYAL. 0040601577-3

I,VIJAY SUBRAMANIAM S/o SH. VIJAY KUMAR R/o.C-12, Meenakshi Puram Mawana Road Near Defence Colony. Meerut Cantt-250001,UP at present Flat.No.1002,Tower-2,Emaar Imperial Gardens,Sec-102,Gurugram-122006, Haryana,have changed,my son's name,from AANJENAYA SUBRAMANIAM to AANJANEYA SUBRAMANIAM for,all future. purposes. 0040601577-8

I,MOJAKKIR HOQUE,S/O-NIJAMUDDIN AHMED,R/O IHQ OF MOD(ARMY) CAMP, SHANKAR VIHAR,NEW DELHI-110010,have changed my minor daughter's Name from AYAAT AHMED to AAYAT AHMED. 0040601573-9

I,Jamshed Alam,S/o-Juned Hassan R/o-Plot.No.-15,Khasra No.-118/3,Harbhajan Colony, Opp.Panchayat Ghar,Chandan Hola, Chandanhoola,New Delhi-110074,inform that J.Alam and Jamshed Alam and father,name Junned Hassan &Juned Hassan,same and one person. 0040601587-11

I,Deepak S/o Narender Kumar, R/o Ward No-20, H.No-659 Nai Basti, Gali.No-2, Bahadurgarh, Jhajjar Haryana-124507,have changed my name to Deepak Kumar Permanently. 0040601573-10

I,Army No.14685008P NK Munna Singh,505,Army Base Workshop,Delhi.Cantt-110010, do hereby declare that,my wife's name mentioned,as Kumud instead,of Kumud Singh in,my service-records and,my wife's true and correct,name is KUMUD SINGH. 0040601587-2

I,Amit Kumar Choudhary S/o Prafulla Chandra Choudhary R/o H.No.Y-17-1402, Eros Sampoornam, Sec-2, Surajpur, Greater Noida(U.P) have changed my name to Amit Kumar for all purposes. 0040601499-1

I, Sakshi w/o Rajesh Bhutani R/O-5P/42 3rd floor NH-5 Faridabad, have changed my name to Sakshi Bhutani. 0040601356-1

I,Ashok Kumar S/o,Late Madan Lal Behl R/o-LP-22E,Maurya-Enclave,Pitampura, Delhi-110034 have changed my name to Ashok Kumar Behl. 0040601581-3

I,Gopal Sharma, S/o Krishan Lal Sharma, R/o C-129A, Third Floor, Hari Nagar, Clock Tower, Delhi-110064 have changed my name to GOPAL KUMAR SHARMA 0040601476-1

I, Sunil Kumar Gambhir, S/o Nand Lal Gambhir, R/o-227, New Gandhi Nagar, Ghaziabad, U.P-201001, have changed my name to SUNIL GAMBHIR for all future purposes. 0070771415-1

I, Prakash, S/o Sh. Late Ram Prasad R/o H.No. D-402 Rajeev Nagar Gali No.-11 Bhopura Ghaziabad-201005, UP, have changed my name from Prakash to Prakash Kanojia for all future purposes. 0040601555-1

I, Nipun Jain, S/o Neeraj Jain, R/o H.No. 150, Ground Floor, Sec. 10A, Vasundhara, Ghaziabad-201012, have change my Daughter's name from Charmi Jain to Myra Jain for all future purposes. 0070771413-1

I, Mayank Kumar S/o Ram Avtar Gupta R/o 72 Anand Vihar Pitampura Delhi have changed my name as Mayank Gupta permanently. 0040601504-1

I, Kiran Bala, D/o Tarsem Lal And W/o Vijay Verma, R/o 2075, Jaat Mohalla, Ismailabad (317), Kurukshetra, Haryana-136129, have changed my name to Rimpy Verma. 0070771420-1

I, Dharmendra Singh S/o Jaswant Singh R/o-A-111-A, Rajeev Nagar, Begumpur, Delhi-110086 have changed my name to Dharmender Singh. 0070771416-1

I, Dharampal Jain, S/o Satpal Jain, R/o A-61/A, Shukra Bazar Road, Ashok Nagar, Mandoli, North East Delhi, Delhi-110093, have changed my name to Dharm Pal. 0070771417-1

I, Davinder Singh Sandhu s/o Manminder Singh Sandhu, R/o A-202, S.F, Sudershan Park, New Delhi-110015, also known as Davinder Singh c/o Manminder Singh. Both are the same persons. 0040601502-1

I, Ajay Gupta S/o Ashok Kumar Gupta R/o 2 Suvidha Kunj Pitampura Delhi have changed my name as Ajay Kumar Gupta permanently. 0040601504-2

I Udita Singh D/O, Ashwinder Singh Lamba R/o 208 D Pocket C Sfs Mig Sidhartha Extension, Delhi :110014, have changed my name to Udita Singh Lamba for all purposes. 0040601548-1

I No IC 86035X Lt Md Yousir Amin, Name of my brother changed from MD Mirja Amin to Makak Mmayum Mirza and date of birth from 19-11-2005 To 25-02-2000. Affidavit No 03AA 126193 0050191464-1

I Naveen Kalani S/o Murli dhar Kalani R/o A-23, second floor,Lok Vihar, Pitampura, New Delhi-110034 have changed my name from Naveen Kumar Kalani to Naveen Kalani for all Purpose. 0040601539-1

I Jai Verma alias Jai Vinod Verma S/o Sh. Vinod Verma R/o C-372, Defence Colony, Lajpat Nagar, South Delhi, Delhi-110024 have changed my name to Jai Vinod Verma for all purposes. 0040601477-4

I Anuj Bhushan S/O, Late Bharat Bhushan R/o House No 1404, Tower 19 Orchid Petals, Sector 49, Sohna Road, Gurugram-122018 have changed my name to Anuuj Bhushan for all purposes. 0040601550-1

I,NEELIMA MINOCHA W/O RAVINDRA KUMAR R/O C-449,SECTOR-19, ROHINI,DELHI-110089.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO NEELIMA RAJPUT FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040601573-3

I,NARENDER SINGH,S/O SADHU SINGH H.NO.43,VISHWAKARMA PARK LAXMI-NAGAR EAST DELHI-110092,changed my name to NARINDER SINGH, permanently. 0040601577-5

I,MOHD SHAKEEL S/O JAHIR AHMAD R/O A-37B,HARI-ENCLAVE,BLOCK-A, KIRARI, SULEMAN-NAGAR,DELHI-110086.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SHAKIL. 40601573-1

I, Sudesh, W/o Ramesh Kumar, R/o Sundana (111), Rohtak, Haryana-124412, have changed my name to Sudesh Kumari. 0070771419-1

I,Vipin Kumar Tyagi S/o Mool Chand Tyagi R/o H.No.Kh.No. 587,2nd-Floor Nehru-Enclave, Village Alipur Delhi-110036, changed my name to Vipin Tyagi permanently. 0040601573-6

I,VIKAS,S/o RANDHIR SINGH, ADD:73/9, KISHAN GARH VILLAGE, VASANT KUNJ, NEW DELHI-110070,Changed my name to VIKAS KUMAR. 0040601577-10

I,LAKHVINDER S/O SUKHDEV SINGH R/O HNO.611,MINI STADIUM,NEHRU-ENCLAVE, ALIPUR,DELHI-110036.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO LAKHVINDER SINGH. 0040601573-2

I,Kum.Laxmi Devi Joshi D/o Dinesh Pandey R/o-229/7-A,Third-Floor Gali,No.22, Railway,Colony Mandawali Fazalpur, Shakarpur Delhi-110092,changed my name to Manisha Pandey. 0040601581-6

I,Jyoti D/o Om Parkash W/o Gurbakshish Singh Gulati R/o-C-16, Block-C, Raja-Garden, Ramesh-Nagar, N.Delhi-110015, have changed my name to Saral Gulati. 0040601581-4

I,DINESH KUMAR PARDASANEY, S/O LATE SHRI.KRISHAN KUMAR PARDASANEY,R/O-205, RPS-COLONY, KHANPUR, Ambedkar-NAGAR,NEW DEHLI-110062,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO DINESH PARDASANEY, FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040601577-4

I,JUNAID KHAN S/O MAJID KHAN,R/O HOUSE.NO.J-3/49,BLOCK-J3,LAXMI NAGAR,DELHI-110092,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM ZUNAID KHAN TO JUNAID KHAN FOR ALL.PURPOSES. 0040601577-1

I,Gajinder Kumar Gupta S/o Sh.Gopal Gupta,R/o A-3, 1st-Floor,Swarn Singh Road, Adarsh-Nagar,Delhi-33,have changed my name to Gajender Kumar Gupta. 0040601581-5

I,Gagandeep kaur Dua,D/o-Mohinder Mohan Singh Dua residing-D-131, Ground-Floor,New Rajinder Nagar, Delhi,have changed my name to Gagandeep Dua,for all purposes. 0040601581-7

I,Devendra Kumar Kapur,S/o P.L Kapur R/o-296,Forest-Lane, Sainik-Farms, New Delhi-110068 have changed my name to Devendraa P Kapur,permanently. 0040601573-5

I,Bal Gopal,S/o Tilak Singh,S/o Tilak Singh Chaudhary,R/o J-62 Gali.No-1, Swaroop-Nagar,Delhi-110042,have changed my name to Bal Gopal Chaudhary,for all Purposes. 0040601577-6

MISCELLANEOUS

I (Sahil Sharma, proprietor Treevest Financial Services) am going to surrender my SEBI registration certificate as a Research Analyst with registration number INH100008258. If anyone has any grievances, please lodge your grievances at scores.gov.in. 0050191431-1

LOST & FOUND

Lost Original Documents i.e. Allotment Letter, Possession-Latter,Share-Certificates.Flat-No.B-66, Raksha Vikas Co-Operative Group Housing-Society Ltd, Vikaspuri, New Delhi-110018, favouring Joginder Singh Lamba,S/o Sher Singh Lamba FIR-Lodge.Vide. LR-NO. 95764/2022. Founder-inform at above address. 0040601501-1

I Anita Ujjainia D/o Sh. Ram Chandra R/o 126, Gali No.5, South Anarkali, Delhi-110051 have lost my Original property documents Regd. Sale Deed in the name of Amir Chand Sawhney vide Document No.11224 dated 31.12.1970 in the Office of S.R.Delhi & GPA in the name of Vasudha executed on 10.06.1985 of Property No.D-18/20, Old No.21, Saket Gali, Old Gobind Pura, Delhi-110051. Finders may contact at above address. 0040601477-3

LOST & FOUND

This is to inform to general public that original Sale Deed of rear side Portion of Second Floor A 12/2, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi-110057 of bearing registration no. 40, in book no. 1 Vol no. 579 on pages 138 to 156 registered on 02/01/2018, in the having an area measuring about 700Sq. Ft. consisting of One Bed Room, Lounge, Attendant area, Two Toilets and Balconies, along with 8.5% undivided, indivisible and impartible ownership rights in the said plot of land has lost/misplaced. If anyone finds it, kindly contact me at mobile 9910234699

PUBLIC NOTICE

"It is to inform to the public at large that Mrs. Suraj Mukhi acquired Piece of land measuring 98 Sq. yards, Khasra No. 205, situated at Village Babarpur, Illaqa Shahdara, Delhi vide GPA, ATS & Will dated 19.03.1979 executed by Mrs. Chandra Vati and Mr. Abhey Singh and now Mrs. Suraj Mukhi is the undisputed owner of the above said property. OR Any person / firm / institution / company having any claim or right in respect of the said Property by way of inheritance, share, sale, agreement, lease, license, gift, possession, legal heirs, partners or encumbrance howsoever or otherwise is hereby required to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice of his/her/their share or claim, if any, with all supporting documents at below mentioned address. After expiration of notice period, the claims, if any, of such person shall be treated null and void and also treated as waived and not binding on our client.

Ajay Kumar Giri (Advocate)
H.No. 26/161, Basement, Vikram Vihar, Lajpat Nagar 4, New Delhi 110024

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the share certificate for the under mentioned Equity shares of Escorts Ltd have been lost.

Any person to have a claim in respect of the said certificates should report to the undersigned within 15 days else the company will proceed with issuance of duplicate certificate on my request of **Folio No. 104412:**

Name of Share Holders	Aparajita Basu Dilip Kumar Basu
Certificate No.s	No. of Shares
00424400	25
00424401	25
00632157	25
00632158	25
1293928	10
1293929	10
1293930	10
No.of Certificate	07
Total Shares	130

Dilip Kumar Basu
A-19 D Vatika Apartments
DDA MIG Flats,
Mayapuri, New Delhi-110064

COURT NOTICE

IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI

Notice under order V rule 20 of Code of Civil Procedure
Case No. LAA 222/2018 & C.M. 49531/2018
Appeal against the Judgment/Decree dated 26-09-2018, In L.A.C. No. 1642/2016
Passed by Sh. Neeraj Gaur, Additional District Judge, Rohini Courts, Delhi.
Smt. Sarti Devi (Since deceased) Thr. LRs
..... Appellants
Versus
Sh. Roop Chand (Since deceased) Thr. LRs
..... Respondents

Notice to: Respondent No.
7. Sh. Joginder, S/o Late Shri Rajpal Grandson of Late Shri Roop Chand R/o House No. 118, Paina Khurdpur, Near Dr. Neta Shop, Khera Khurd, Delhi-110082.

Whereas the above noted appellant has presented an appeal u/s 96 of CPC alongwith the above mentioned application which was listed before the Court on 29.11.2018 & on the other subsequent dates the Court ordered issuance of notice to you.

And whereas it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that you cannot be served in the ordinary manner, notice by way of Publication to you is hereby issued. If you wish to defend the above mentioned appeal and application, you may cause an appearance to be entered on your behalf either in person or through an Advocate duly appointed by you for the purpose before the Court of Worthy Registrar (Appellate) on 17.02.2022 (Actual) at 11.00 am.

If no appearance is made on your behalf, by yourself, your pleader or someone by law authorized to act for you in the said appeal & application on the aforementioned date, no further notice of the subsequent date of hearing of the said appeal & application will be given and the same will be heard and determined ex-parte in your absence.

Given under my hand and the seal of this Court, this the 14th day of January, 2022.

Seal
Sd/-
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR (APP)(CIVIL)
FOR REGISTRAR GENERAL

IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI

Notice under order V rule 20 of Code of Civil Procedure
Case No. LAA 221/2018 & C.M. 49468/2018
Appeal against the Judgment/Decree dated 26-09-2018, In L.A.C. No. 1648/2016
Passed by Sh. Neeraj Gaur, Additional District Judge, Rohini Courts, Delhi.
Smt. Sarti Devi (Since deceased) Thr. LRs
..... Appellants
Versus
Sh. Roop Chand (Since deceased) Thr. LRs
..... Respondents

Notice to: Respondent No.
7. Sh. Joginder, S/o Late Shri Rajpal Grandson of Late Shri Roop Chand R/o House No. 118, Paina Khurdpur, Near Dr. Neta Shop, Khera Khurd, Delhi-110082.

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And whereas it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that you cannot be served in the ordinary manner, notice by way of Publication to you is hereby issued. If you wish to defend the above mentioned appeal and application, you may cause an appearance to be entered on your behalf either in person or through an Advocate duly appointed by you for the purpose before the Court of Worthy Registrar (Appellate) on 17.02.2022 (Actual) at 11.00am.

If no appearance is made on your behalf, by yourself, your pleader or someone by law authorized to act for you in the said appeal & application on the aforementioned date, no further notice of the subsequent date of hearing of the said appeal & application will be given and the same will be heard and determined ex-parte in your absence.

Given under my hand and the seal of this Court, this the 14th day of January, 2022.

Seal
Sd/-
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR (APP)(CIVIL)
FOR REGISTRAR GENERAL

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the public at large that deceased MRS. ISHWAR DEVI W/O LATE SH. LADHA RAM SACHDEVA was owner of H.NO.1529, Ward No.16 RAMLILA GROUND, ARJUN NAGAR, GURGAON (HARYANA) bearing Property Id No. 94C1099U29/MCG. Mrs. Ishwar Devi had personally appeared and executed/ Registered a Vashiyat Vide No. 936 on 09.03.2018 that consequent upon her Death Mr. Satvinder Kumar Sachdeva and Mr. Parmod Kumar Sachdeva (will hold equal share) are the only legal heirs of the deceased. However, Members of Public are hereby notified that if anyone having any adverse claim in respect of said Property of whatsoever nature are hereby advised to submit their claim within 30 days from present publication to the Sub-Registrar/Joint Registrar, Mini Secretariat, Gurugram with appropriate written evidences. If no claim is submitted before the concerned authority then Property will be transferred in the name of above legal heirs in the Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority/ Municipal Corporation Gurugram Zone-1 Property Id : 94C1099U29 records.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is general information that my client Dinesh Kumar Aggarwal S/o Sh. Desraj Aggarwal R/o 1518, Sector-28 Faridabad Haryana. I lost original documents of properties 1518 Sector- 28 Faridabad at haldiram Mohan co-operative New Delhi. Allotment letter the estate office Haryana The state officer Haryana Urban Development authority under Sudeep Singh Dhellon IAS Resident of H.no.-3438 Sector 24 Chandigarh, Memo no. A28_95/1695 Dated 25-05-1995. Residential Plot alloted on free hold bases Measuring 551.77 sq.yard .Possession certificate Memo No. 6127 Dated 21-11-1995 Occupation certificate Memo No. 1944 Dated 30-11-1998 favour of Sudeep Singh Dhellon Convinced Deed stamp paper of Rs. 12500/- stamp serial no. 5059 Dated 15-07-2005 Convinced Deed made at Faridabad on 18 July,2005 Sale Deed Rs.18,00,000 stamp paper worth 1,26,000 issued from District Tehsil Faridabad wide no. 5206 Dated 19 July 2005 Sale Deed Made at Faridabad on 4 August, 2005 by shri Sudeep Singh Dhellon son of Prof. Shri Nishant Singh R/O 3438 Sector 24 Chandigarh in favour of Smt. Asha Bhalla W/O Shri Pawan Bhalla and Shri Pawan Bhalla S/O Shri G.C Bhalla both R/o 82 Sector -31 Faridabad. Wide no. 16362 Sale Deed Harvi executed at Faridabad on 14 December 2009 Smt. Asha Bhalla W/O Shri Pawan Bhalla S/O G.C Bhalla R/O 82 Sector-31 Faridabad in favour of Dinesh Kumar Aggarwal S/O Desraj Aggarwal. Smt Sangeeta Aggarwal W/O Shri Dinesh Kumar Aggarwal R/o 1466 Sector 28 District Faridabad. Owners in possession of residential House bearing its no 1518 situated in Sector 28 Urban estate Faridabad teshil and District Faridabad area measuring Plot size 551.77 sq.yard wide registered sale Deed bearing document no. 6326 Dated 04-08-2005 July registered in Sub Registrar Faridabad Haryana. Finder pls send Dinesh Kumar Aggarwal House no. 1518 Sector 28 Faridabad.

KAMAL SINGH (Advocate)
Enrl.No.D-748/2014

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Raghubir Singh Jain, s/o Mahavir Parsad Jain, r/o 1221/5,Peer ji Mohalla, Rohtak Haryana, have lost my original Reliance Industries Ltd Share Certificate No-4008153 with Folio No. 031316812. Finder may please contact at 09968836622

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC AT LARGE IS HEREBY INFORMED THAT MY CLIENT MUNNI DEVI W/o LATE Sh. NAND LAL, R/o 1951/55, MOLAR BAND EXT. BADARPUR, NEW DELHI 110044, HAVE SEVERED ALL HER RELATIONS WITH HER SONS NAMELY RAJENDER AND DAVANAND AND THEIR RESPECTIVE WIVES NAMELY RENU AND MAMTA, AND HAS DISINHERITED/ DISOWNED THEM FROM ALL HER MOVABLE AND IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES, ANYBODY DEALING WITH THEM SHALL BE DOING SO AT HIS/ HER/ ITS OWN COSTS, RISK AND CONSEQUENCES.

Sd/- **YUDHVIR SINGH CHAUHAN**
Enroll No. D/2693/1999 Advocate
276, Lawyer's Chamber, Block-II
Delhi High Court, New Delhi-110003

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is notified on behalf of my client Mr. Nawaz Ali S/o Late Mr. Raheemuddin and his wife Ms. Anwari Begum, Both R/o C-15/4A okhla Vihar, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi, have disowned and disclaimed their son Mr. Ahsan Ali having aadhar number 263277378689 and his wife Ms. Salma from their moveable and immovable properties, who are residing separately and are not under control of my client as they are not obedient to them. Mr. Ahsan ali and his wife Salma are liable themselves to their acts and deeds and have no concern whatsoever with my clients.

M. TARIQ FAROOQI (ADVOCATE)
En.No.D-477/84

PUBLIC NOTICE

be it known to all that my clients Sh. Mangal Singh S/o Sh. Sohan Singh R/o 28/171E, Kasturba Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi - 110032 have broken all connections with their son Jaspreet Singh or any persons related to him. My clients are humiliated with the acts and deeds of their son and his wife. My clients have debarred his son Jaspreet Singh from all her assets, properties, Jewellery and from all assets etc., in all respect and for all intends and purposes. My client will not be responsible for any acts and deeds of Jaspreet Singh or/and any person related to them.

RISHABH GULATI ADVOCATE
Chamber No.379 Civil Side
Tis Hazarl Courts. Delhi-110054

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Client Brij Mohan Sehgal S/o Sh. Diwan Chand Sehgal & his wife Mrs. Sujata Sehgal R/o ED-61-B, Madhuban Chowk, Pitampura, Delhi have severed all relation from their son Mr. Sandeep Sehgal and his wife Mrs. Rachna Sehgal, Ansh Sehgal (Grand-Son) and have disowned/ debarred from all their movable and immovable properties due to their misbehaviour, bad conduct & bad habits.

Anybody dealing with him in any manner whatsoever will be doing at his/her own cost, risk & responsibility.

Sd/-
SANCHIT GOYAL
Advocate
Enrl. No.: D-2538/2017

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Gautam Singh Pal S/o Shri Maharaj Singh R/o village Nagla Jhala, Post-Dharmangadpur, Distt. Mainpuri, U.P.-205001, have changed my wife name from **VIMLESH** to **VIMLESH DEVI**, and my sons name from **PRIYANSHU** to **PRIYANSHU PAL & ADITYA** to **ADITYA PAL**. My wife will be known as **Vimlesh Devi**, and my sons known as **Priyanshu Pal & Aditya Pal** for all future purposes.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to inform that my Client **Sh. Narender Kukreja** S/o Sh. Ghanshyam Dass Kukreja and **Smt. Anita Kukreja** W/o Sh. Narender Kukreja is the intending purchaser of **Property Bearing No. B-26, Situated at Vishal Enclave, New Delhi,** if any person have any claim/objection regarding the transaction of the above said property please contact to **9289207666 and BBN Deo Advocate 9213123489** within 10 days from Publishing of this Notice

B.B.N Deo (Advocate)
Enrol. No. D/387/B/89

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General public that Mrs. Chanchal Kashyap W/o. Mr. Kuldeep is the owner of ONE RESIDENTIAL PLOT AREA MEASURING 50 SQ. YARDS, OUT OF KHASRA NO. 1077, SITUATED IN CHAMAN VIHAR COLONY, HADBAST VILLAGE: LONI (OUT OF CHAKBANDI), TEHSIL: LONI, DISTRICT: GHAZIABAD, UTTAR PRADESH, vide registered Gift deed dated 31.12.2021. All persons are hereby informed that Mrs. Chanchal Kashyap W/o. Mr. Kuldeep has approached JANASHA FINANCE PRIVATE LIMITED. to take a Mortgage Loan for the same. If anybody has any charge/ interest/title in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 7 days of the present.

Mrs. Prasoon Lata, Advocate.
SG Associates (Law Firm)
Unit No 7, Basement, Plot No C 78, Sector 2, Noida, UP 201301
E-MAIL: sgassociatespl@gmail.com
Ph: 7011172764, 8130200837.

For All Advertisement Booking
Call : 0120-6651214

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to notify all concerned that Santosh Kumari w/o Raj Bahadur Dhanda who expired on 09.02.2014 was owner of House No. 15, 150 Sq. Yds., Khasra No. 4/39/1, 4/39, 4/38, 5/30, Ram Nagar Extn., Behind Har Singh Gurdwara, Khureji Khas, Illaqa Shahdara, Delhi-110051.

And further a Relinquishment Deed dated 03.05.2014 executed by Vijinder Kumar Dhanda - Nirmal Kumar sons and Sunita Malhotra - Rajni D/o Raj Bahadur Dhanda in favour of Mr. Raj Bahadur Dhanda S/o Late Mr. Banarasi Dass

And now Mr. Raj Bahadur Dhanda S/o Late Mr. Banarasi Dass is selling a floor on to the above said plot to intended borrower of HHFL.

If any concern having any claim, objection, related to above transaction and mortgage He/She may kindly contact me within 7 days failing which no claim will be entertained later.

Sd/-
Amit Kumar Adv.: 114, Deep Plaza
Opp. Civil Court, Gurugram 122001

PUBLIC NOTICE

"It is to inform to the public at large that Mr. Pramod Kumar acquired Shop on Ground Floor without terrace rights (Size : 14' X 78') and (7'X14'), total measuring 132 Sq. Yards, (Back side Portion) of TA-102, (Left Side Portion) measuring 100 Sq. Yards of TA-102 (Right Side Portion) of Property No. TA-102 (Left side Portion) and TA-102 (Right Side Portion) , total measuring 200 Sq. Yards, Khasra No. 483, Main Okhla Road, Tughlakabad Ext., New Delhi vide Sale Deed dt. 11.08.2021 executed by Mrs. Sabra Malik alias Sabra and now Mr. Pramod Kumar is the undisputed owner of the above said property. OR Any person / firm / institution / company having any claim or right in respect of the said Property by way of inheritance, share, sale, agreement, lease, license, gift, possession, legal heirs, partners or encumbrance howsoever or otherwise is hereby required to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice of his/her/their share or claim, if any, with all supporting documents at below mentioned address. After expiration of notice period, the claims, if any, of such person shall be treated null and void and also treated as waived and not binding on our client.

Ajay Kumar Giri (Advocate)
H.No. 26/161, Basement, Vikram Vihar, Lajpat Nagar 4, New Delhi 110024

MILITARY DENTAL CENTRE ROORKEE

REGISTRATION OF VENDORS FY 2022-2023

1. The CO, MDC Roorkee invites applications from vendors who are authorized stockists/ institutional suppliers/ distributors or original manufacturers of dental materials & consumables interested to supply for Military Dental Centre Roorkee for the FY 2022-2023. Vendors will be required to register on defence procurement portal / GeM.
2. For all terms and conditions & application forms please contact mail id : **roorkeemdc@gmail.com,** contact no: **+9176108320253.** Application duly completed in all respects with connected documents to reach commanding officer, Military Dental Centre, Roorkee by 20 feb 2022

ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL (APS), NEW CANTT, ALLAHABAD

Tele No : 0532-2420772, email : armyschoolalld@gmail.com
School website : armypublicschoolalld.org

Sealed tenders for purchase of items for purchase of computers are invited by **25 Feb 2022.** Details of tenders/quotation are available at school website.

PRINCIPAL

पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता विभाग

शुद्धि–पत्र

इस कार्यालय द्वारा प्रकाशित "Request for Proposal (RFP) for selection of Third Party Inspection Agency to carry out inspection of all engineering works relating to civil, mechanical and electrical components of Rural water supply scheme executed under Jal Jeevan Mission" (RFP No. – 01/CDO/Ranchi/TPIA/2021-22) जिसका **PR. No.-260743, 262010 & 262594 Drinking Water & Sanitation (21-22)*D** है, में Last date & time of online submission : 09.02.2022 upto 6.00 PM को संशोधित करते हुए 18.02.2022 upto 6.00 PM; Last date & time for submission of hard copy : 10.02.2022 upto 5.00 PM को संशोधित करते हुए 21.02.2022 upto 5:00 PM एवं Opening date of technical bid : 11.02.2022 at 3.30PM को संशोधित करते हुए 22.02.2022 at 3:30 PM किया जाता है, शेष यथावत रहेगा।

ह०/–
(सुनील कुमार) कार्यपालक अभियन्ता (गुण नियंत्रण)
सी०डी०ओ०, पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता विभाग,
झारखण्ड, राँची।

PR.NO.263266 Drinking Water and Sanitation(21-22):D

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice

The Chief Administrative Officer/Const/Northern Railway, Kashmere Gate, Delhi, for and on behalf of the President of India **invites e-tender** under **Two Packet System** for the under noted work:-

Full Name of work	Civil works, Road under bridges, Permanent way works, in c/w Extension of existing loop lines, construction of new longer loop lines at Chiheru, Kartarpur, Jandiala and Manawala Railway Stations in FZR Division in the jurisdiction of Dy. Chief Engineer/Const., Jalandhar City.
Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 4314.02 Lakhs
Completion period of the work	**18 months**
Earnest Money to be deposited	Rs.23,07,000.00
Sale/availability of tender document on Rly. Website	Tender documents will be available on IREPS web site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from **04.02.2022 to 28.02.2022 upto 11.30 hrs.**
Last date/Time of upload of tenders	**28.02.2022** upto **11.30** hours Tender documents can be uploaded by the tenderer on IREPS web site w.e.f. **14.02.2022 to 28.02.2022**
Date and time of opening of tender	**28.02.2022** at **11.30 hours** (immediately after close of uploading of tender (D2). In case of two packet system. Financial bids of the eligible tenders would be opened subsequently on the date and time to be notified later on. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.

Tender Notice No. 74-W-1-1-451-WA-JUC Dated : 04.02.2022 258/2022

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EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

CORRIGENDUM

Please refer to Open E-Tender Notice No. W-7/E-Tender/18/Open/DNR/2021-22 dated 01.02.2022, which is scheduled to be opened on 23.02.2022. The name of work, Approx. Tender value & DOC of item No.12 of said notice may read as under:

Item No.12, Name of work: Conversion of SWR into LWR in FUT-IPR section of Danapur Division. **Approx. Tender Value:** Rs.2,94,43,367.77, **Earnest money:** Rs.2,97,300/-, **DOC:** 09 months

Other terms and condition will remain unchanged.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.),
East Central Railway, Danapur.

PR/01623/DNR/ENGG/C/21-22/24

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE

Open Tender Notice No.: - SPJ-ST-S-03-2022

DRM (S&T)/Samastipur invites open e-tender on behalf of president of India for following work. **(1) Name of work with its location:** Provision of Fire detection and Alarm System in the relay room at station of SPJ Division. **(2) Approx. cost of the work :** Rs. 61,62,668/- (Rupees Sixty One Lakh Sixty Two Thousand Six Hundred Sixty Eight Only). **(3) Earnest Money to be deposited :** Rs. 1,23,300/- (Rupees One Lakh Twenty Three Thousand Three Hundred Only). **(4) Date & Time for Submission of tender & opening of tender :** 22.02.2022 Up to 16:00 Hrs. 22.02.2022 at 16:30 Hrs. **(5) Particulars of website where full details of tender may be seen: www.ireps.gov.in** Note: For any corrigendum (if any) in above tender, the details will be uploaded/available on website. For further details please visit the website **www.ireps.gov.in.**

Divisional Rail Manager (S&T), Samastipur
PR/1617/SPJ/S &T/T/21-22/32

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-OPEN TENDER NOTICE

E-OPEN TENDER NOTICE NO. : Com-Gshed-Dev-NYO-SEE-21D, Date : 01.02.2022

The Sr. DCM / SEE for and on behalf of the President of India invites two packet open e-tender for the following work. The last date of online tendering is 02.03.2022 up to 15:00 hrs. All information and tender documents related to E-tender is available on **Website: www.ireps.gov.in.**

Sl. No. 1. Name of work with item no. : Development of Goods sheds at Nayagaon and its maintenance against subsequent incentive as detailed in tender documents for a period of Ten (10) years i.e. 120 months. **Approx. Cost (In Rs.):** 12,87,00,000.00 **Earnest Money (In Rs.):** 00 **Cost of Tender Document (In Rs.) (Non Refundable) :** 10000.00

The above tender notice is available on **website: www.ireps.gov.in.** RIGHT OF RAILWAY TO DEAL WITH TENDER: Railway administration reserves the right to postpone/modify or to cancel the above tender without assigning any reasons.

Divisional Railway Manager (Commercial)
East Central Railway/Sonpur
PR/01621/SEE/COML/T/21-22/36

"IMPORTANT"

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JAMMU & KASHMIR ENERGY DEV. AGENCY

**SCIENCE AND TECH

@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

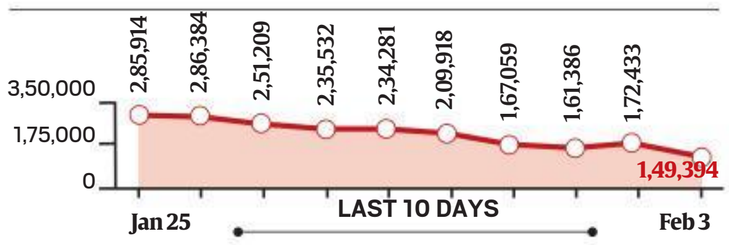
DASHBOARD, AS ON FEB 3

704 DAYS SINCE PANDEMIC BEGAN

New cases	Active cases	Deaths
1,49,394	14,35,569	1,072

Weekly CFR: 0.39% | Overall CFR: 1.30% | Total deaths: 5,00,055

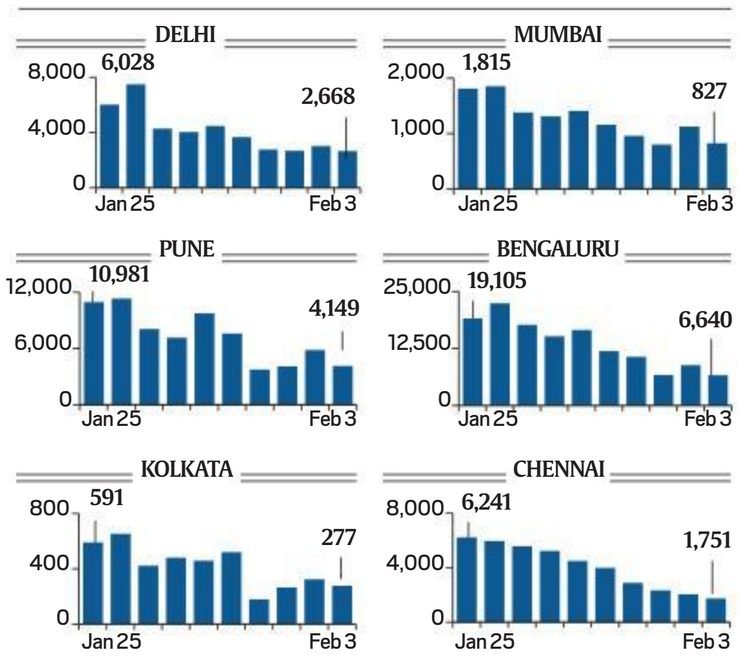
NEW CASES, DAILY



SURGE IN THE STATES

State	ON FEBRUARY 2			Weekly positivity
	New Cases	Active Cases	Deaths	
Kerala	42677	3,69,819	601	43.78%
Karnataka	16436	1,48,833	60	16.02%
Maharashtra	15252	1,58,151	87	12.72%
Tamil Nadu	11993	1,66,878	30	14.22%
Rajasthan	8073	59513	22	15.20%

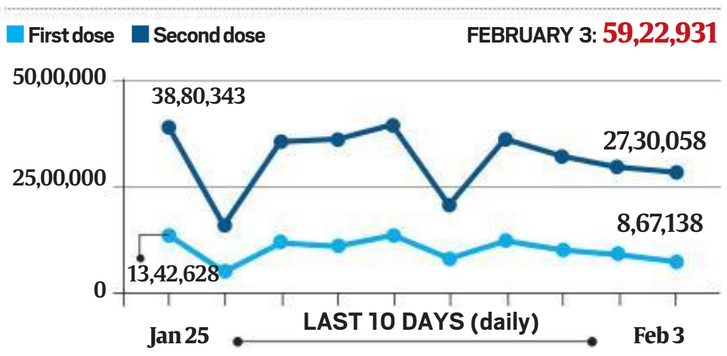
CASES IN THE CITIES, LAST 10 DAYS



TOTAL TESTS		73,58,04,280
TESTS ON FEB 3	WEEKLY POSITIVITY	OVERALL POSITIVITY
16,11,666	11.03%	5.70%

INDIA TOTAL DOSES 168,47,16,068

(Adults 1st dose: 89,82,12,076; 2nd: 72,07,60,671; 15-18 age group 1st dose: 4,83,47,278; 2nd: 34,90,074; precautionary: 1,39,05,969)



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SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

Freedom of religion and attire

A Karnataka school's denial of entry to six girls in hijab throws the spotlight on freedom of religion. How is religious freedom protected under the Constitution, and how have courts ruled on students wearing a hijab?

APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

AFTER SIX students were banned from entering a college in Karnataka's Udupi district for wearing a hijab last month, the row over whether educational institutions can impose a strict dress code that could interfere with rights of students has spilled to other colleges in the state. The issue throws up legal questions on reading the freedom of religion and whether the right to wear a hijab is constitutionally protected.

How is religious freedom protected under the Constitution?

Article 25(1) of the Constitution guarantees the "freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion". It is a right that guarantees a negative liberty — which means that the state shall ensure that there is no interference or obstacle to exercise this freedom. However, like all fundamental rights, the state can restrict the right for grounds of public order, decency, morality, health and other state interests.

Over the years, the Supreme Court has evolved a practical test of sorts to determine what religious practices can be constitutionally protected and what can be ignored. In 1954, the Supreme Court held in the *Shirur Mutt* case that the term "religion" will cover all rituals and practices "integral" to a religion. The test to determine what is integral is termed the "essential religious practices" test.

What is the essential religious practices test?

"In the first place, what constitutes the essential part of a religion is primarily to be ascertained with reference to the doctrines of that religion itself," the SC had held in the *Shirur Mutt* case. So the test, a judicial determination of religious practices, has often been criticised by legal experts as it pushes the court to delve into theological spaces.

In criticism of the test, scholars agree that it is better for the court to prohibit religious practices for public order rather than determine what is so essential to a religion that it needs to be protected.

In several instances, the court has applied the test to keep certain practices out. In a 2004 ruling, the Supreme Court held that the Ananda Marga sect had no fundamental right to perform Tandava dance in public streets, since it did not constitute an essential religious practice of the sect.

Students sit outside their school in Kundapura village, Karnataka on Friday after the authorities denied them entry for wearing a hijab. *PTI*

While these issues are largely understood to be community-based, there are instances in which the court has applied the test to individual freedoms as well.

For example, in 2016, a three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court upheld the discharge of a Muslim airman from the Indian Air Force for keeping a beard. Justices T S Thakur, D Y Chandrachud and L Nageswara Rao distinguished the case of a Muslim airman from that of Sikhs who are allowed to keep a beard.

Regulation 425 of the Armed Force Regulations, 1964, prohibits the growth of hair by Armed Forces personnel, except for "personnel whose religion prohibits the cutting of hair or shaving of face". The court essentially held that keeping a beard was not an essential part of Islamic practices.

The court did not examine religious practices as required in the *Shirur Mutt* case, but referenced an input by senior advocate Salman Khurshid.

"During the course of the hearing, we had inquired of Shri Salman Khurshid, learned senior counsel appearing on behalf of the Appellants whether there is a specific mandate in Islam which 'prohibits the cutting of hair or shaving of facial hair'. Learned senior counsel… indicated that on this aspect, there are varying interpretations, one of which is that it is desirable to maintain a beard. No material has been produced before this Court to indicate that the Appellant professes a religious belief that would bring him within the ambit of Regulation 425(b) which applies to 'personnel whose religion prohibits the cutting off the hair or shaving off the face of its members'," the verdict stated.

How have courts ruled so far on the issue of a hijab?

While this has been put to courts on several occasions, two set of rulings of the Kerala High Court, particularly on the right of Muslim women to dress according to the tenets of Islam, throw up conflicting answers.

In 2015, at least two petitions were filed before the Kerala High Court challenging the prescription of dress code for All India Pre-Medical Entrance which prescribed wearing "light clothes with half sleeves not having big buttons, brooch/badge, flower, etc. with Salwar/Trouser" and "slippers and not shoes".

Admitting the argument of the Central Board of School Education (CBSE) that the rule was only to ensure that candidates would not use unfair methods by concealing objects within clothes, the Kerala HC directed the CBSE to put in place additional measures for checking students who "intend to wear a dress according to their religious custom, but contrary to the dress code".

"If the Invigilator requires the head scarf or the full sleeve garments to be removed and examined, then the petitioners shall also subject themselves to that, by the authorised person. It is also desirable that the C.B.S.E issue general instructions to its Invigilators to ensure that religious sentiments be not hurt and at the same time discipline be not compromised," Justice Vinod Chandran ruled.

In *Amna Bint Basheer v Central Board of Secondary Education* (2016), the Kerala HC examined the issue more closely. Justice P B Suresh Kumar, who allowed the plea by the student, held that the practice of wearing a hijab constitutes an essential religious practice but did not quash the CBSE rule. The court once again allowed for the "additional measures" and safeguards put in place the previous year.

But both these cases involve restrictions placed on the freedom of religion for a specific purpose — to ensure a fair examination process — and the CBSE had cited a resource crunch to check every candidate if they allowed autonomy in choosing their dress.

However, on the issue of a uniform prescribed by a school, another Bench ruled differently in Fathima Tasneem v State of Kerala (2018). A single Bench of the Kerala HC held that collective rights of an institution would be given primacy over individual rights of the petitioner. The case involved two girls, aged 12 and 8, represented by their father who wanted his daughters to wear the headscarf as well as a full-sleeved shirt. The school that refused to allow the headscarf is owned and managed by the Congregation of the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI) under CMI St Joseph Province.

"Petitioners cannot seek imposition of their individual right as against the larger right of the institution," Justice Muhamed Mustaque held.

The father appealed before a division Bench of the High Court. The division Bench headed by Justice Vinod Chandran dismissed the appeals as it was "submitted that the appellants-petitioners are not now attending the School and are no more in the rolls of the respondent-School."

Why Facebook users, valuation have declined

PRANAV MUKUL
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

FACEBOOK'S DAILY active users have dropped sequentially for the first time — a development that has sent parent company Meta's valuation into a nosedive. In addition, the social media giant has also flagged the move by Apple to introduce the 'App Tracking Transparency' as one of its key pain-points going ahead.

What was the decline Facebook has witnessed, and why did it happen?

In the October-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 topline of $33.67 billion during the three-month period, compared to $28.07 billion in the same period last year.

According to Reuters, Meta reported a weaker-than-expected forecast, blaming Apple's privacy changes and increased competition for users from rivals like TikTok. Notably, during the three-month period ending December, the company also came under severe backlash for its practices of prioritising profits over user safety. This was highlighted through a trove of internal documents of Facebook released by whistleblower and former company employee Frances Haugen.

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 the company's pivot to its metaverse ambitions. Further, Meta's chief financial officer, Dave Wehner, told analysts in a conference call that the impact of Apple's privacy changes could be "in the order of $10 billion" for 2022.

What are these privacy changes introduced by Apple?

Last year, Apple introduced the 'App Tracking Transparency' feature to its iOS mobile operating system, through which users of iPhones could select whether apps such as Facebook could monitor their online activity. Since the rollout of the update, only if users grant permission to specific apps, are they able to gather data that can be used to track users across third-party sites and apps.

Why does it hurt Facebook?

According to a report by *The New York Times*, with users being given the choice to opt out of app tracking, many have done so for apps such as Facebook, stymieing the social media app's main modus operandi of supporting its online advertising business. With less user data gathered from their online activity such as e-commerce and search engine queries, and other social media surfing activity, it has become more difficult for Facebook to target specific ads, thereby causing advertisers to potentially run fewer promotions on the platform. Additionally, the fact that it is iPhone users that are able to opt out of app tracking makes it worse for platforms dependent on online ads such Facebook, given that these users typically have higher conversion rates than Android users and end up spending more money through targeted online ads.

How has the company reacted?

Since the announcement of the new feature last year, Facebook has rallied against it suggesting that it would hurt consumers and small businesses that rely on the platform's reach to advertise their products and services to potential customers. Moreover, the hit to Facebook has resulted in its rivals such as Google moving their business elsewhere. In the analyst call, Wehner pointed out that with Apple introducing the changes, advertisers now have less visibility into user behaviours, and therefore many have started shifting their ad budgets to other platforms.

Diplomatic boycott of Winter Olympics: what it entails, what it intends

MIHIR VASAVDA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

ON THE eve of the opening ceremony of the Beijing Winter Olympics, India announced a diplomatic boycott of the Games, joining several other countries who have not sent government delegations to the event. Soon afterward, Prasar Bharti said it would not telecast live the opening and closing ceremonies.

The Olympics began on Friday, with the lone Indian athlete, alpine skier Arif Khan, marching with the Tricolour.

The US announced a diplomatic boycott of the Games in December, and was joined by several countries including the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, and the Netherlands. Russia's President Vladimir Putin and Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan are in Beijing for the Games.

What is a diplomatic boycott?

While there is no obligation for heads of state or government, or high-ranking diplomats to do so, senior officials from governments around the world often travel to the Games as VIP visitors. A diplomatic boycott means these countries have not sent high-profile delegations of officials to Beijing.

Does a diplomatic boycott affect the participation of athletes?

It does not. Unlike the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow and the 1984 Los Angeles Games, from which thousands of athletes stayed away amid Cold War tensions, athletes and sports officials from all countries have come to Beijing.

The Olympics are now are a billion-dollar enterprise, and a total boycott would cost broadcasters and organisers, as well as athletes, very large sums of money. In the US, NBC pays billions of dollars to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to show the Games, and non-participation by star American athletes would impact revenues.

A diplomatic boycott by contrast is a very visible but low-cost option — a snub that makes a political point with no major financial costs attached.

Doordarshan's decision to not telecast the opening and closing ceremonies will, however, impact the event's TRP, and could have financial implications as well. None of the major sponsors or broadcasters have pulled out.

What political messaging is involved in the diplomatic boycotts of Beijing?

The Ministry of External Affairs announced on Thursday that the Charge d'Affaires of the Indian Embassy in Beijing would not attend the opening or closing ceremonies following the "regrettable" decision by China to pick a soldier involved in the Galwan clash of June 2020 to be a Games torchbearer. "It is indeed regrettable that the Chinese side has chosen to politicize an event like the Olympics," MEA official spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said.

The Western countries, led by the US, have chosen to deliver a snub to China over its "egregious" abuses of human rights, including against the Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang province. The US, Australia, and Germany have also cited the alleged sexual abuse and mistreatment of Peng Shuai, a top ranked Chinese tennis player, who posted on social media accusing a high-ranking member of the communist party, Zhang Gaoli, of sexually assaulting her..

Chinese President Xi Jinping during the opening ceremony. *Pool via Reuters*

Some countries like Austria, New Zealand, Slovenia, Sweden, and the Netherlands have cited pandemic-related risks for not sending government officials. France's President Emmanuel Macron has been quoted as saying the Olympics should not be politicised.

How has China reacted?

In a tweet following the US announcement, the Chinese Embassy in Washington had said: "In fact, no one would care about whether these people come or not, and it has no impact whatsoever on the #Beijing2022 to be successfully held."

The state-run *Global Times* newspaper had targeted Australia — with which China has serious disputes — for making an "immature, arrogant and stupid" decision.

The Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson had accused the countries that had announced the diplomatic boycott of using "the Olympics platform for political manipulation", and warned "they will have to pay the price".

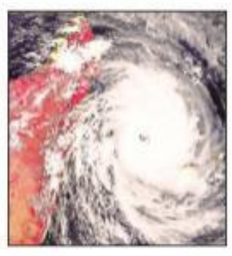
Will the diplomatic boycotts have an impact going forward?

Some fear a retaliation by China during the Summer Olympics in Los Angeles (2028) and Brisbane (2032). The US is reportedly looking to stage the Winter Olympics as well in the near future. Many of the key Olympic sponsors are Chinese companies.

For the ongoing Winter Olympics, athletes have been cautioned by authorities in both China and in their own countries not to indulge in protests against Chinese policies.

Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the US House of Representatives, asked American athletes to "not risk incurring the anger of the Chinese government because they are ruthless", according to a Bloomberg report. Al Jazeera had earlier quoted a senior Chinese official as saying that "any behaviour or speeches that is against the Olympic spirit, especially against Chinese laws and regulations, are...subject to certain punishment".

Some countries have advised their athletes to not carry their phones to the Games and instead use burner devices while in China to guard against potential privacy breaches.



MEANWHILE

STORM MAY DISPLACE MANY IN MADAGASCAR

Aid workers on Friday set up emergency shelters and readied search and rescue teams in Madagascar as tropical cyclone Batsirai barrelled towards the island, less than two weeks after Storm Ana killed at least 58 people there. The storm, set to be more powerful than Ana with heavy rainfall and winds up to 200 km an hour, is projected to drive up to 150,000 people from their homes in addition to some 130,000 people displaced by the last cyclone.

Putin, Xi pledge 'no limits' to ties

Oppose NATO expansion and accuse the US and the West of stoking instability in Ukraine

THE NEW YORK TIMES
BEIJING, FEBRUARY 4

PRESIDENT XI Jinping of China on Friday offered firm support to President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia in the Kremlin's showdown with the West over Ukraine, strengthening a relationship that presents a continuing challenge to the United States' dominance on the world stage.

In a highly choreographed display of solidarity, the two leaders met in Beijing ahead of the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics, the first meeting that Xi has held in person with a foreign counterpart in nearly two years.

China sided with Russia on one of its key security demands: an end to NATO expansion to the east and closer to Russia's borders. "The sides oppose further enlargement of NATO and call on the North Atlantic Alliance to abandon its ideologised Cold War approaches," the statement said.

In a lengthy joint statement, China accused the US of stoking protests in Hong Kong and encouraging independence in Taiwan, while Russia said the US was playing a similarly destabilising role in Ukraine.

"Russia and China stand against attempts by external forces to undermine security and stability in their common adjacent regions," according to the 5,300-word joint statement released by the Kremlin. It said both nations "intend to counter interference by outside forces in the internal affairs of sovereign countries under any pretext, oppose colour revolutions and will increase cooperation in the aforementioned areas."

In scenes initially shown on Russian state television, Putin greeted Xi on a red carpet at the government guesthouse in western Beijing, raising his hand in greeting. The Chinese leader responded, through a translator: "Hello! I'm very glad to see you."

Putin told him that the Chinese-Russian relationship had "taken on a truly unprecedented character." "It is an example of a dignified relationship that helps each of us develop while supporting each other's development," Putin said.

After their meeting, Putin attended the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics, as the most prominent of nearly two dozen world leaders whose attendance has blunted the impact of a "diplomatic boycott" by President Biden and other leaders of democratic nations.

In the days leading up to the meeting — the 38th between the two leaders — Beijing expressed support for Putin's grievances and it joined Russia to try to block action on Ukraine at the United Nations Security Council.

Any new Chinese promises of economic and political support for Putin could undermine Biden's strategy to ostracise the Russian leader for the military buildup.

Xi and Putin on Friday signaled that their countries would work to establish closer ties on trade, diplomacy and security.

"Friendship between the two states has no limits," the pair said in their joint statement.

Russian President Vladimir Putin meets with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing on Friday. *AP*

RUSSIA DENIES CLAIMS OF FABRICATING PRETEXT TO INVADE

Moscow: Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov on Friday dismissed as "nonsense" allegations by the US that Moscow was preparing a fake video as a pretext for starting a war in Ukraine, Russia's RIA news agency reported. US intelligence agencies believe Russia has formed a plan to use a fabricated video showing the graphic aftermath of an explosion targeting Russian people as a pretext for an invasion, Washington said on Thursday. **REUTERS**

Macron to visit Russia, Ukraine in mediation trip

Emmanuel Macron

Paris: French President Emmanuel Macron will head to Moscow and Kyiv next week as part of his push to try to deter Russian President Vladimir Putin from launching an invasion of Ukraine and find a diplomatic way out.

The visit Monday and Tuesday comes after the US accused the Kremlin on Thursday of an elaborate plot to fabricate an attack by Ukrainian forces that Russia could use as a pretext to take military action.

While France is a major player in NATO and is moving troops to Romania as part of the alliance's preparation for possible Russian action, Macron has also been actively pushing for dialogue with Putin and has spoken to him several times in recent weeks. The two will hold a one-on-one meeting Monday, Macron's office said Friday.

In a call Wednesday with US President Joe Biden, Macron filled him in on his diplomatic efforts. In talks with the Russian and Ukrainian leaders Thursday night, Macron's office said they discussed ways to "identify elements that could lead to de-escalation," and "conditions for strategic balance in Europe, which should allow for the reduction of risks on the ground and guarantee security on the continent." **AP**

IMRAN KHAN IN CHINA FOR FOUR-DAY VISIT

Pak signs new pact with China to kick off 2nd CPEC phase

K J M VARMA
BEIJING, FEBRUARY 4

PAKISTAN ON Friday signed a new agreement with China to begin the second phase of the $60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as Prime Minister Imran Khan showered praise on the controversial projects, saying it has strategic significance for both the countries and delivering tangible benefits to the people.

Khan, who arrived in China on Thursday on a four-day visit to attend the opening ceremony of the 2020 Beijing Winter Olympics and meet the top Chinese leadership, held a virtual meeting with He Lifeng, the Chairman of China's apex planning body — the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) on Friday to discuss the expansion of Chinese investments in Pakistan.

Pakistan's State Minister and Chairman of Board of Investment Muhammad Azfar Ahsan and Lifeng signed the Framework Agreement on Industrial Cooperation which aims to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), promote industrialisation and development of economic zones, and initiate, plan, execute and monitor projects, both in public and private sector, Pakistan's state-run Associated Press of Pakistan news agency reported.

Addressing the meeting, Khan, who was a critic of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) before coming to power for its secrecy and uneven investments neglecting certain provinces of the country, said that the project has strategic significance for both the countries and delivering tangible benefits.

He noted that the CPEC's early-harvest projects had transformed Pakistan's economic landscape, thus laying a solid foundation for sustainable economic growth, the report said.

During the meeting, both sides reviewed the progress of ongoing CPEC projects and discussed the preparations for future initiatives, it said. **PTI**

EXPLAINED: CPEC and its significance

CPEC IS a 3,000-km long route of infrastructure projects connecting China's northwest Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and the Gwadar Port in the western province of Balochistan in Pakistan. India has protested to China over the CPEC as it is being laid through the PoK. Pakistan media has been critical about CPEC saying that 40% of Chinese loans had been disbursed in a way that blurred distinction between private and public debt, 'doing away' with the need for its disclosure as public debt.

TOP OF THE WORLD

Sarah Palin arrives at Federal court on Thursday. *AP*

UNITED STATES

Palin resumes court battle with the NYT

New York: Sarah Palin's libel suit against *The New York Times* went to trial on Thursday in a case over the former Alaska governor's claims the newspaper damaged her reputation with an editorial linking her campaign rhetoric to a mass shooting. The trial is a rare example of a jury deciding the validity of a persistent refrain from Palin and other Republicans: That a biased news media is willing to bend the truth to make conservatives look bad. Palin told journalists as she arrived at the courthouse that she was looking for "justice for people who expect truth in the media." A lawyer for The *NYT* told jurors the editorial was primarily about gun laws, not Palin, and was not a "political hit job." **AP**

MYANMAR

Report: Hearing in Suu Kyi's trial postponed

A COURT in military-run Myanmar postponed a hearing in the trial of Aung San Suu Kyi this week, a source with knowledge of proceedings said on Friday, after media reported the ousted leader had not been feeling well. Suu Kyi had been due in court on Thursday and Friday for hearings on corruption charges related to the leasing and purchase of a helicopter while in office. The source with knowledge of proceedings said while Thursday's hearing was postponed, Friday's was not and Suu Kyi did attend it. A spokesman for the junta did not answer a call seeking comment. **REUTERS**

UNITED STATES

Arbery defendant set to stand trial again

Savannah: One of the men convicted of murder in the chase and fatal shooting of Ahmaud Arbery says he plans to stand trial for a second time in the killing rather than plead guilty to a federal hate crime. Greg McMichael reversed course late on Thursday on a planned guilty plea, days after a US District Court judge rejected terms of a plea deal that he and his son, Travis McMichael, had negotiated with prosecutors. That deal was met with passionate objections by Arbery's parents. **AP**

Army soldiers, on Friday, carry the coffin containing the body of Captain Bilal Khalil, who was killed along with others in an attack on a military base in Nushki. *Reuters*

Pakistan military conduct search for militants 38 hours after base attacks

SYED RAZA HASSAN
KARACHI, FEBRUARY 4

PAKISTANI SECURITY forces were conducting search operations on Friday to flush out militants suspected of hiding near two military bases attacked by insurgents on Wednesday, which killed seven soldiers and 13 of their own, in the latest violence in the southwestern Balochistan province.

The attacks, the biggest in recent years by ethnic Baloch insurgents, came hours before Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan arrived in Beijing for the opening of the Winter Olympics, where he will have meetings with Chinese President Xi Jinping and other leaders

Two Pakistani security officials said the operation was not yet over. "The army is conducting search operations in the area. There might be some more elements hiding in the surroundings," one official told *Reuters*.

The army said the attacks were simultaneous and coordinated. "They used explosive-laden vehicles at gates, they have the latest weaponry left behind by NATO forces," Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad, Minister of Interior said on Friday, adding that the attack was defeated and both bases were under the control of the Pakistani military.

Ethnic Baloch guerrillas have been fighting the government for decades, demanding a separate state, saying the central government unfairly exploits Balochistan's rich gas and mineral resources. **REUTERS**

150 ATTACKS IN 16 PROVINCES AGAINST 20 IN 5 PROVINCES: REPORT

Eight-fold increase in attacks by ISIL-K from Aug-Dec '21, says UN

YOSHITA SINGH
UNITED NATIONS, FEBRUARY 4

THE UNITED NATIONS has recorded over 150 attacks between August and December last year by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan (ISIL-K) in 16 provinces in Afghanistan, a nearly eight-fold increase from the same period in 2020 as attacks claimed by the group expanded beyond its previous areas of focus in Kabul and eastern Afghanistan.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, in his report on "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security" said that the situation in the war-torn country remains precarious and uncertain six months after the Taliban takeover, as the multiple political, socio-economic and humanitarian shocks reverberate across the country.

"Afghanistan faces multiple crises: a growing humanitarian emergency, a massive economic contraction, the crippling of its banking and financial systems, and the fact that an inclusive Government remains to be formed," he said in the report.

According to the report, "attacks claimed by or attributed to ISIL-KP increased and expanded beyond the movement's previous areas of focus in Kabul and eastern Afghanistan."

Between August 19 and December 31, 2021, UN recorded 152 attacks by ISIL-KP in 16 provinces, compared with 20 attacks in 5 provinces during the same period in 2020.

In addition to the de facto authorities, the group also targeted civilians, in particular Shia minorities, in urban areas. ISIL-KP claimed responsibility for suicide attacks on a Sunni mosque in Kabul on October 3 and on two Shia mosques in Kunduz and Kandahar cities on October 8 and 15, in addition to an attack on a military hospital in Kabul on November 2.

The report added that the Taliban authorities made efforts to consolidate their control of the border areas amid concerns of neighbouring countries that extremist groups might launch attacks on their territories from Afghan soil. **PTI**

AUSTRIA'S SWEEPING VACCINE MANDATE BECOMING LAW

AUSTRIA IS the first Western democracy to mandate Covid vaccinations for nearly its entire adult population. The sweeping measure, which easily cleared its final parliamentary hurdle on Thursday when it was approved by lawmakers in Austria's upper house, will be signed into law as soon as Friday by President Alexander Van der Bellen of Austria. The requirement will be introduced in phases. **NYT**

COVID-19 UPDATE

A woman receives a Covid shot in Salzbur. *Reuters*

'FUTURE LARGE WAVES OF COVID POSSIBLE'

London: There is a realistic possibility of large waves of Covid infection in the future in Britain and such waves might even be considered likely, epidemiologists who model the the pandemic to inform government advice have said. The Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Modelling, Operational sub-group said the emergence of new viral variants was the biggest unknown factor in the medium-to-long term, along with waning population immunity and changes in mixing patterns. **REUTERS**

PM'S CHIEF OF STAFF AMONG THOSE RESIGNED

UK lawmaker submits letter of no-confidence as Johnson's top aides quit

REUTERS & NYT
LONDON, FEBRUARY 4

AARON BELL, a British lawmaker in the ruling Conservatives, said on Friday he had submitted a letter of no-confidence in Boris Johnson, saying the Prime Minister's handling of Downing Street lockdown parties had made his position untenable.

Johnson could face a vote of no confidence in his leadership if 54 of his 360 Conservative lawmakers submit a letter to the chairman of the party's 1922 Committee.

Bell said he was profoundly disappointed in the situation after he backed Johnson to become leader. "However the breach of trust that the events in No. 10 Downing Street represent, and the manner in which they have been handled, makes his position untenable," Bell tweeted.

Meanwhile, an exodus of senior officials from 10 Downing Street on Thursday deepened the crisis engulfing Johnson. His chief of staff, private secretary, communications chief, and head of policy all resigned, leaving the top of British government rudderless at a time when Johnson is struggling to avert a mutiny in the ranks of his Conservative Party. About a dozen party lawmakers have called publicly for a no-confidence vote in the Prime Minister.

The departure of one of his longest-serving and most influential aides, Munira Mirza, his policy chief, carried a particular sting. Some of the resignations fulfilled Johnson's promise to overhaul the Downing Street operation, after the release of a government report on Monday that criticised the office for "excessive" workplace drinking, citing 16 social gatherings — some of them now under police investigation — during periods when England was under strict lockdowns.

The departures of the chief of staff, Dan Rosenfeld, and the principal private secretary, Martin Reynolds, were not as unexpected as Mirza's. Critics have faulted Rosenfeld for his management of Downing Street, while Reynolds sent an email inviting nearly 100 staff members to a B.Y.O.B. garden party at a time when the government's own lockdown rules prohibited people from gathering with more than one person outside their families.

Johnson could be forced out of power if 54 Conservative lawmakers submit letters calling for a no-confidence vote. *NYT File*

Lanka's Rajapaksa says foreign investment key to development

Colombo: Sri Lanka cannot accelerate its economic development without encouraging and removing obstacles faced by entrepreneurs, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa said on Friday, as he pitched for foreign investment and urged the public to be wary of those propagating "incorrect public opinion" against it.

Speaking at the 74th National Day celebrations, Rajapaksa defended his government's policy of encouraging foreign investment and said, "Foreign investment is especially important for large-scale projects, industries requiring modern technological know-how and new ventures that open up global market opportunities for us." **PTI**

WORKERS FROM INDIA AND PAKISTAN ARE PART OF A VAST FOREIGN WORKFORCE POWERING THE UAE'S ECONOMY

Yemen rebel attack on UAE brings tragedy to Indian families

ISABEL DEBRE
ABU DHABI, FEBRUARY 4

FIRST, THERE was a pop, like firecrackers, then the world itself seemed to splinter. Ramjan Rath felt a sharp pain. He looked down, and realized he was on fire.

Rath, whose fuel tanker blew up in a fatal attack on Abu Dhabi last month claimed by Yemen's Houthi rebels last month, was standing by his truck filling out forms when the drones hit.

"I saw my vehicle burning right in front of my eyes.... There was fire on my feet," he told *The Associated Press* on Wednesday from an Indian canteen in Mussafah, the industrial district of Abu Dhabi where the explosion occurred at a nearby state-owned oil facility. "I shook with terror. ... It wasn't clear what had happened, it all happened so fast."

He remembers blood gushing from his leg as he ran for his life. Sirens howled. Hours later, he was in a hospital room.

The 24-year-old had come a long way to the industrial side of the Emirati capital, where Yemen's brutal war reached for the first-known time on January 17. He grew up in a tiny village in Rajasthan, the youngest son of a farmer.

Rath knew nothing of the yearslong civil war that has riven Yemen, killed thousands of civilians and spawned the world's worst humanitarian disaster. He'd never heard of the Iran-backed Houthis who seized Yemen's capital, Sanaa, in 2014, and have been battling a Saudi-led coalition that includes the UAE since 2015.

Like the millions of other low-paid expats who make up the vast foreign labour force powering the UAE's economy, he had come to the country four years ago for work — the chance to carve out a bit of security for his parents and four older sisters in rural India.

It was a relentless life as a truck driver, working up to 12 hours a day to send money home. But it was a safe one.

Unlike in India, he said, the police were honest, the roads well-paved. He never feared for his life in the federation that is home to oil-rich Abu Dhabi and glitzy Dubai — a refuge in a Middle East mired in conflict and economic collapse. Yet that changed in a single, violent instant. "There's pain, physical and mental. When I sleep at night, or whenever I'm alone, I remember the blast," Rath said.

But he is alive, and for that he said, he is grateful. Three of his colleagues from India and Pakistan were killed — years of work and accumulated opportunities put to an abrupt end.

One of them was Hardeep Singh. Newly married at 29, he had a bachelor's degree in computing, enviable skills in the ancient Indian sport of Kabbaddi and dreams of joining his young wife in Canada.

"The house is empty," Hardeep's cousin Gagandeep Singh, who called him a brother, said from their village in the northern Indian state of Punjab. "He was our light, our loveable one." His wife, 21-year-old Kanupriya Kaur, has come undone.

Meanwhile, residents of the UAE have witnessed a steady drumbeat of missile and drone interceptions over the past weeks, mostly claimed by the Houthis.

The puncturing of the illusion of safety, Gagandeep said, is another reason for mourning.

"I can't accept this. ... In this war between two countries, our son is lost. Our family is damaged," he said. "Never have such things happened in the past." **AP**

Ramjan Rath survived a Jan. 17 Houthi attack on a fuel depot. *AP*

GOLD	RUPEE	OIL	SILVER
₹47,918	₹74.69	$89.12	₹61,006

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of February 3

SENSEX: 58,644.82 ▼ 143.20 (-0.24%) **NIFTY:** 17,516.30 ▼ 43.90 (-0.25%) **NIKKEI:** 27,439.99 ▲ 198.68 **HANG SENG:** 24,573.29 ▲ 771.03 **FTSE:** 7,521.13 ▼ 7.71 **DAX:** 15,119.35 ▼ 249.12

International market data till 1900 IST

SECTOR WATCH
FINTECH

At BharatPe, audit flags recruitment 'fraud', 'non-existing' vendors being paid

Board yet to receive an 'interim or final' review of audit, claims co

SOUMYA ARENDRA BARIK
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

PAYMENTS ALLEGEDLY made to "dubious" recruitment firms, expenses said to be running into crores of rupees spent on "non-existing" vendors and "questionable invoices" created to substantiate such spends — these are learnt to be among the findings made by an independent advisory firm into fintech firm BharatPe's corporate governance practices.

All of these anomalies, per the audit's findings, allegedly involve the company's co-founder Ashneer Grover's wife and the firm's head of controls till recently, Madhuri Grover.

The findings of the independent audit come weeks after the controversy involving Ashneer and Madhuri Grover erupted in the wake of a leaked audio clip, where the former was allegedly hurling abuses at a Kotak Mahindra Bank employee for presumably not being able to secure shares of e-commerce company Nykaa during its IPO. Soon after that, Ashneer Grover went on a two month leave of absence.

Amid the controversy, BharatPe commissioned risk advisory firm Alvarez and Marsal (A&M) last month to audit its internal processes and systems and overall corporate governance. Sources said A&M concluded an interim investigation into the firm and prepared a report on January 24.

However, when contacted, BharatPe claimed its board is yet to receive an interim or final review of the independent audit. A spokesperson said, "The Board in all its actions has followed due process in the best interest of the company. We would urge that the confidentiality and integrity of the Governance review and board meetings is maintained by all. We request everyone, including the PRESS & Media, to show restraint and allow the governance review to take place in a thorough manner. The Board is yet to receive any interim or final report of the review."

The board includes co-founders Ashneer Grover and Shashvat Nakrani, CEO Suhail Sameer, Sequoia India's Harshjit Sethi, Coatue Management's Rahul Vijay Kishore, Ribbit Capital's Meyer Malka, former State Bank of India chairman Rajnish Kumar, and former Union Bank chairman Kewal Handa. Sequoia India, Ribbit Capital and Coatue Management are among the investors in the loss-making fintech firm, valued at about $3 billion.

Sources close to the developments said that Ashneer Grover, in a letter written to the board on Wednesday, had also called for the removal of its CEO Suhail Sameer.

A&M's report, as per sources, testified to the company paying fees to HR consultations for recruiting employees, and there being procedural inconsistencies. It claimed that these recruitment firms had nothing to do with hiring and had a link to Madhuri Grover.

First, A&M reviewed the invoices of fees paid to these consultants and spoke to the employees that had joined the company as per the invoices. The employees confirmed their date of joining as stated in the vendor invoice, but allegedly denied being recruited through the stated consultants or any knowledge of them. In at least three instances, A&M said it reviewed emails where Madhuri Grover "directly received" invoices from these firms and forwarded those to the accounts team for payment.

A&M said that these firms appear to be sole proprietorships rather than being established companies. They also shared certain commonalities, A&M found — they had similar email addresses, physical addresses and bank branches among other things. All these recruitment firms, barring one, the A&M report said, had a "Panipat" connection, while noting that Madhuri Grover is originally from Panipat. Detailed queries sent to the Grovers and A&M did not elicit a response until publication.

Aside from inconsistencies in payments made to these questionable recruitment firms, A&M's probe claims it found that over Rs 50 crore was paid to 30 vendors who appeared to be "non-existent".

Sources suggested that in its probe, A&M also found that in October 2021, the Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) conducted a search operation at BharatPe's head office and summoned the company's authorised signatory to appear before them. It also asked the company to produce bank statements from July 2018 till date reflecting payments made to these vendors.

BharatPe then chose to pay Rs 11 crore in dues along with penalties, per A&M's report. The risk advisory firm said it was difficult to assess why BharatPe was dealing with such non-existent vendors and why it decided to settle the matter which resulted in the loss of this Rs 11 crore without any legal representation or making efforts to recover the money from the vendors.

In a letter sent to the DGGI last year after its search operation, the company communicated to the DGGI that the vendors "do not exist or never operated from their principal place of business", A&M's report found. This letter was signed by Deepak Jagdishram Gupta, who A&M said is the brother-in-law of Madhuri Grover. Gupta also requested the DGGI to waive off the showcause notice issued to the company.

GROVER'S LETTER

■ In a letter to the board, BharatPe co-founder Ashneer Grover called for the removal of its CEO, Suhail Sameer

INTERVIEW WITH FINANCE SECRETARY

'Cash transfers not been done; short of that, there are lot of programmes'

CONSUMPTION LEVELS continue to be constrained by restrictions such as the weekend curfews and are affecting the consumption levels, Finance Secretary TV SOMANATHAN said. In an interview with AANCHAL MAGAZINE, he said capital expenditure by states will have a quicker effect since it has a "greater geographical spread and a greater diversity of projects" compared to capex by the Centre. Edited excerpts:

There has been a marked reaching out to states. Was it nuanced? How will the capital expenditure plan work with states?

Yes. It has proved very successful in year 1 and year 2. We gave Rs 12,000 crore in one year, and Rs 15,000 crore in year 2. In both years, it has been very quickly and, effectively, spent by the states. It has been welcomed by the states. There was feedback from the states that it was very useful to them to preserve capital expenditure during the pandemic, please continue and increase.

If you want capital expenditure to happen quickly, states are in a much better position to do it. Because they can do dispersed small projects across the country in every district. The Centre operates on certain big axis projects like national highways, railways, pipelines, telecom, that has its own value but this has a greater geographical spread and a greater diversity of projects. So, it has a good chance of being effective. So, we thought that in this push, some portion must be done through states especially because of the positive reaction by states in the meeting. They said give it to us and we will use it.

So, it's a shift in stance on capex by pushing it more through states?

We started in 2020-21. Aatmanirbhar package was when we first announced Rs 10,000 crore of capex for states. That has continued in year two and has now been expanded. It has done very well. They have all spent it. It's only for capital, they cannot spend it for anything else. It does not crowd out, it's not like a Centrally-sponsored scheme where if we give 60 per cent, they find 40 per cent. They don't have to find anything. We give them the entire cost. So, no state has any financial problem in accepting this. And it is over and above their normal borrowing, so it is pure additionality with no necessity to take away any existing resources. So it's obviously very popular. Only condition is that it is tied to one or two reforms sometimes and it is tied to capital expenditure and cannot be used for welfare expenditure.

TV Somanathan *Express file*

This fiscal there might be a bigger multiplier because they might spend less on health and there would be more space to spend on this.

Yes.

The Budget does not seem to acknowledge those lower down in the society.

I think the restrictions on consumption are preventing the well-off from consuming. Restrictions are not stopping consumption of the poor, that is getting impacted by lack of income. What I'm saying is you do have a force, which is the consumption of the rich and the middle-class, which is being stopped. Now that could very easily create a lot of jobs. These two-day curfew restrictions may have to go. Consumption has to come from the rich in volume terms. In an unequal society, a greater share of consumption comes from the well off. Say, I go to a restaurant, there's somebody standing there, I have to consume for that person to get his job back. The restrictions are affecting the consumption of those who can afford to consume.

> Restrictions on consumption are preventing the well-off from consuming ... Consumption of the poor is getting impacted by lack of income"

I'm not neglecting or offsetting it against the fact that people have suffered income shocks and they can't consume because they don't have money. I admit that these two are not necessarily connected. Most of the flagship programmes continue. Gram Sadak Yojana is up 27 per cent. Counterpart funding for Gram Sadak Yojana is being allowed under Rs 1 lakh crore of capital, that is capital for the states. That is job creating, that is unskilled jobs in rural areas. What has not been done is a direct cash transfer. Short of that, I think a lot of programmes are out there. Nal se Jal has Rs 60,000 crore (outlay), that has a lot of employment creating effects in rural areas. It's a record outlay for Nal se Jal, for PMAY. The government is trying to create actual output through genuine jobs and not through cash transfer.

For that (cash transfers), the bus was missed perhaps after the first lockdown.

The international experience has been the answer, it has not proved successful in most countries in terms of spending rather than saving. Look at the developed countries' experience, most of it is saved. It has not proved successful even in the first wave, we had studies showing that in the Jan Dhan accounts 30-40% was saved, 70% was spent. If you want generation of demand and you have 100 rupees, you can either do 70 rupees of demand through cash transfer or 100 rupees of demand through government expenditure. And that 100 has a higher multiplier than the 70. We believe that the growth effects of spending are better when it is direct government expenditure rather than income transfer. And income transfer has been handled more through the food route and through the welfare, existing welfare and safety nets, both of Centre and states.

There's a segment of urban poor also. Do the schemes address that segment?

A proportion of this capex to states will be for urban. There is a component, which has specifically an urban component. That has been tied to some reforms in building laws and so on, but it is intended for generating urban projects. Amrut 2.0 has been launched. There is a considerable increase in it. We have a few easy-to-meet reforms criteria. *Full interview on www.indianexpress.com*

Covid hits foreign ops: Branches, staff, income of Indian banks fall

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 4

FOREIGN BANKS expanded their branch network and employee base in India marginally whereas overseas staff strength and number of branches of Indian banks and their subsidiaries recorded a decline during 2020-21, as per a Reserve Bank of India (RBI) survey.

According to the RBI, the number of foreign branches of Indian banks declined from 137 in 2019-20 to 121 in 2020-21 and foreign subsidiaries fell from 381 to 377. The decline coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic which hit most parts of the world in 2020.

While credit extended by foreign branches of Indian banks fell from Rs 7,34,663 crore to Rs 6,84,808 crore in FY21, deposits fell from Rs 4,25,994 crore to Rs 3,98,630 crore. Deposits of subsidiaries of Indian banks also fell from Rs 1,12,117 crore to Rs 1,08,969 crore in 2020-21. The number of employees in overseas branches was down from 3,329 to 3,164 in 2020-21 and overseas subsidiaries from 5,762 to 4,943, the RBI survey said. The central bank said the total income of foreign branches of Indian banks declined from Rs 48,891 crore in FY20 to Rs 29,494 crore in FY21.

The RBI survey found that in FY21, branch network and employee base of foreign banks in India saw a rise. *File*

However, Indian branches of foreign banks mobilised a rise in deposits at Rs 7,58,361 crore in FY21, against Rs 6,84,289 last year. The number of branches of foreign banks here too went up from 306 to 311 during the year, and the employee strength from 23,548 to 23,930, according to the RBI.

The consolidated balance sheet of overseas branches of Indian banks rose despite outflow of deposits and fall in credit in FY21, indicating a larger role of borrowing and investment portfolios in business expansion. *Full report on www.indianexpress.com*

'Conservative Budget estimates leave room for Covid response'

Conservative Budget assumptions leave room for the Centre to respond to pandemic risks, Moody's Investors Service said

The government assumes that inflation-adjusted real GDP growth will come in at

13.6% in first half of next fiscal till Sept

9.2% for fiscal ending March 2022

FOCUS ON capital expenditure in 2022-23 Budget supports near-term growth, but poses challenges to longer-term fiscal consolidation

BUDGET IS characterised by a continued emphasis on rising capex to sustain growth momentum near term, as the economy continues to rebound from its pandemic trough

BUDGET IS consistent with the view of gradual fiscal consolidation and a continuing increase in government debt through the next year to around 91% of GDP

Source: Moodys' Investors Service/PTI

***Projection of** a 6% rise in revenue receipts appears achievable, balancing buoyant corporate tax, income tax, and GST receipts against declines in dividends and other non-tax revenue*

Why is Starlink offering a 'premium' service now?

EXPLAINED

SOUMYA ARENDRA BARIK
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

ELON MUSK'S satellite internet venture Starlink, which has been hit with delays in India owing to pending regulatory approvals, has started offering a "premium" service to its customers in existing markets with a promise of faster internet speeds and improved performance. The new premium offering — being offered at $500 a month — further flags the technology's cost-prohibitiveness for market like India.

What is the satellite broadband service?

The service offers low-latency broadband internet to remote areas across the globe using a constellation of satellites in low-Earth orbit. It allows users to connect to the internet beamed from space onto a dish antenna.

What is Starlink's premium service?

The premium service claims to provide internet speeds ranging between 150 and 500 Mbps. The latency of the premium service is between 20-40ms. In contrast, the regular Starlink service has speeds between 100 and 200 Mbps. According to Starlink's website, the premium offering will come with 24×7 support and assist features through a mobile app.

What has been Starlink's journey in India so far?

Starlink had started pre-orders for users in India, a key market, last year. All that came to nought in November following a government notification that warned it to obtain a licence for its services before starting bookings.

Is there a market for satellite broadband in India?

Starlink and OneWeb plan to launch satellite broadband services in India in 2022. And, while, in the absence of widespread optic fibre coverage, satellite broadband presents a stopgap solution for government and civic services, high costs may not result in wider adoption once BharatNet coverage reaches. *Full report on www.indianexpress.com*

Jio buys 25% in deep tech co Two Platforms

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 4

JIO PLATFORMS on Friday announced an investment of $15 million in Two Platforms Inc, a Silicon Valley-based deep tech startup founded by Pranav Mistry, for a 25 per cent equity stake on a fully diluted basis.

Two Platforms is an artificial reality company with focus on building interactive and immersional AI experiences. "After text and voice, Two believes the next chapter of AI is visual and interactive ... Two plans to bring its interactive AI technologies first to consumer applications followed by entertainment and gaming, as well as enterprise solutions including retail, services, education, health and wellness," RIL said.

Akash Ambani, director of Jio, said, "We are impressed with the strong experience and capabilities of the founding team at Two in the areas of AI/ML, AR, metaverse and Web 3.0."

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY - e-Tender Notice

Tender No : 98,99,100,101/2021-22/KWA/PHC/D3/TVM. (1) JJM (2021-2024) "Kuttichal and Poovachal panchayaths -"CWSS to Manoorkara Veeranakavu and Perumkulam villages "Phase II Package III Providing Distribution network and Functional Household Tap Connections (No: 3500) in Poovachal Grama Panchayath, in kuttichal and Poovachal Panchayath in Thiruvananthapuram. (2) Providing Distribution network and Functional Household Tap Connections (No: 2500) 3. Providing Distribution network and Functional Household Tap Connections (No: 2660) 4. providing Distribution network and Functional Household Tap Connections (No: 2900). EMD : Rs. 200000 each. Tender fee : Rs. 10000 each. Last Date for submitting Tender : **28-02-2022 03:00:pm**. Phone : 04712322303, Website : www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in.

KWA-JB-GL-6-1003-2021-22 Superintending Engineer, PH Circle, Thiruvananthapuram

RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDYUT PRASARAN NIGAM LIMITED

NOTICE INVITING BID

Bids for "Design, Manufacture, testing at works and supply of 132 kV Single core XLPE cable for establishing of 132 kV Double Circuit (500 Sq. mm) between proposed 132 kV Laxman Doongri substation and existing 220 kV substation Kunda Ki Dhani (Jaipur) (Approx. 9.5 km) including detailed route survey, laying and installation of cable along with associated accessories/ items and civil works" against specification no. RVPN/EHV/A&SP/TN-90 **(UBN: VPN2122WL0B01204)** and "Maintenance of various 220kV & 132kV Substations and 220kV EHV lines under RVPN Transmission System under Alwar, Bharatpur, Jaipur City & Jaipur Rural circles", against specification no. RVPN/EHV/A&SP/TN-86 **(UBN: VPN2122WL0B01200)** and "Maintenance of various 220kV & 132kV Substations and 220kV EHV lines under RVPN Transmission System under Hindaun, Sawai Madhopur & Kota circles", against specification no. RVPN/EHV/A&SP/TN-87 **(UBN: VPN2122WL0B01201)** and "Maintenance of various 220kV & 132kV Substations and 220kV EHV lines under RVPN Transmission System under Ajmer, Merta, Sikar, Babai, Bhilwara, Chittorgarh & Udaipur circles", against specification no. RVPN/EHV/A&SP/TN-88 **(UBN: VPN2122WL0B01202)** and "Maintenance of various 220kV & 132kV Substations and 220kV EHV lines under RVPN Transmission System under Jodhpur, Kankani, Bikaner, Hanumangarh, Ratangarh, Sirohi, Barmer, Bhadla, Jaisalmer & Ramgarh circles", against specification no. RVPN/EHV/A&SP/TN-89 **(UBN: VPN2122WL0B01203)** are invited from interested bidders up to 04:OOPM, 03.03.2022 for Specification No. RVPN/EHV/A&SP/TN-90 and up to 04:OOPM, 04.03.2022 for Specification No. RVPN/EHV/A&SP/TN-86, 87, 88 & 89. For other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in of the state and http://energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvpnl departmental website.

RRVPN/TR-5337/2022
Raj.Samwad/C/21/11357

Superintending Engineer (Automation, N/M & SP), Jaipur

Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited
(Wholly owned by Govt. of Karnataka undertaking)
(CIN-U04010KA2002SGC030438)

BRIEF SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through E-procurement Portal)

BESCOM invites tenders against Enquiry No.: **BESCOM/BCP-1374/2021-22**, for **Supply of New Insulating oil-Uninhibited (U) Type- II Transformer oil.**

Bid Documents available: **05.02.2022 onwards to 19.02.2022 16:00 Hrs.** Last date for Bid Submission: **19.02.2022, 16:00 Hrs.** Opening of Bid Document: **21.02.2022, 16:15 Hrs.**

The Tenders can be obtained through e-procurement portal website: **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in.** Aspiring Bidders need to register on e-procurement portal. Further, Bidders can take assistance with e-procurement helpdesk: **+91-8046010000, +91-8068948777,** or e-mail to **support@eprochelpdesk.com** for any issue.

Sd/- General Manager (Ele.,), Procurement, BESCOM, 4th Floor, K.R. Circle, Bengaluru - 560 001. Ph.:080-22354939.

For Electricity related complaints call : 1912
Download BESCOM Mithra Mobile APP.

BRIEFLY

Paytm loss

New Delhi: One97 Communications, which operates Paytm, has reported widening of consolidated loss to Rs 778.5 crore in the December 2021 quarter. **PTI**

Aramco stake

Bengaluru: Saudi Aramco plans to list more shares and a stake sale of up to $50 billion, as per *WSJ*. The firm also held talks with advisers on a secondary listing, in London or Singapore. **REUTERS**

IndiGo appoints Bhatia as MD

New Delhi: InterGlobe Aviation on Friday announced the appointment of co-founder Rahul Bhatia as the company's managing director with immediate effect. The company is the parent of the country's largest airline, IndiGo.

The board of directors, during its meeting on Friday, unanimously approved the appointment of Bhatia as MD with immediate effect, subject to the approval of the shareholders, according to a statement.

Rahul Bhatia *File*

₹130-cr Q3 profit

IndiGo posted a profit after tax of Rs 129.8 crore in the December quarter. **ENS, WITH PTI**

Amazon Q4 income doubles

San Francisco: For the holiday quarter, Amazon earned $14.3 billion, double its net income from a year earlier. That included a pre-tax gain of $11.8 billion from its stake in electric car maker Rivian Automotive.

The e-commerce major also pulled the veil off its sprawling advertising business for the first time on Thursday, revealing a business larger than that of Google's YouTube. Meanwhile, Britain's competition regulator said it had fined Meta $2 million over fresh issues regarding its purchase of Giphy. **REUTERS**

Tata Steel Q3 net up 139% on rising demand

Mumbai: Tata Steel on Friday posted a 139 per cent jump in consolidated net profit at Rs 9,598 crore for the quarter ended December 2021, against a net profit of Rs 4,011 crore a year ago.

Revenue from operations rose 45 per cent to Rs 60,783 crore for the period under review, compared to Rs 41,935 crore in the year-ago period. Sequentially, revenues were broadly stable as improvement in net realisations more than offset drop in volumes.

TV Narendran, CEO-MD, said, "India steel demand has begun to improve on the back of continued economic recovery as 3rd wave of COVID begins to ebb." **ENS**

Revenue from operations rose 45% to ₹60,783 cr for the period under review, compared to ₹41,935 cr in the year-ago period

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

Grenadier Champa Lal, Sena Medal (P)
(02 Feb 1975-05 Feb 1998)

On this day, we proudly remember the supreme sacrifice of the braveheart who laid down his life for the Nation, while protecting the territorial integrity of India, along the Line of Control in Jammu & Kashmir in finest traditions of the Indian Army. His courage and bravery would remain an abiding source of inspiration to us. May your Soul attain Moksha.

Commanding Officer and All Ranks 3 GRENADIERS

बैंक ऑफ़ इंडिया
Bank of India BOI

Head Office, Information Technology Department, Star House-2, 8th floor, C-4, G-Block Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai-400051. E-mail: Headoffice.it@bankofindia.co.in

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
for selection of service provider for DC site in co-hosting model

The captioned RFP is available on Bank's corporate website **www.bankofindia.co.in** under **"Tender"** section since 05.02.2022

Subsequent changes if any, will henceforth be uploaded only on the website.

The last date of submission: 28.02.2022

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
SHRI MATA VAISHNO DEVI SHRINE BOARD, KATRA (J&K)

ABRIDGED EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

For and on behalf of the Chairman, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, offers/proposals are invited from reputed/registered Manufacturers/ Dealers for selection of Battery Operated Vehicles (Pollution free vehicles) which shall ply between Adhkuwari and Bhawan via Himkoti Marg for carrying pilgrims visiting the Holy Shrine for paying obeisance to the Deity which should reach this office by or before 25.02.22 to 1500 hours IST. The application format can be had from the Central Office of the Shrine Board Katra (J&K) against cash payment of Rs. 1000/- (non transferable and non-refundable) on any working day or same can also be downloaded from official website i.e. www.maavaishnodevi.org.

Sd/-
Dy. Chief Executive Officer
SMVDSB, Katra

No. CO/Adm/993/3156
Dated: 04.02.2022

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav
www.bankofbaroda.in
बैंक ऑफ़ बड़ौदा
Bank of Baroda

E-AUCTION CUM SALE NOTICE

Bank of Baroda invites offer for E auction-cum-sale of Bank's owned vehicles on "As-is-where-is & Whatever-it-is basis"

Details are available under 'e- Auction section' on Bank's Website : **www.bankofbaroda.in**

Addendum, if any shall be issued on Bank's website under 'e-Auction section'. Bidders are advised to check the website before submission of EMD / Commencement of auction.

Last date of EMD payment / KYC submission : 28/02/2022 before 04.00 P.M.

Date and Time of Auction : 04/03/2022 Between 12.00 Noon to 02.00 P.M.

Place: Mumbai **Asst. General Manager**
Date: 05.02.2022 **(COA, Baroda Corporate Centre)**

125/21-22

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. P. C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely **Saheb Ansari S/o Gulab Ansari** R/o Asha Ki Jhuggi, Near Masjid, Old Seemapuri Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence under case **FIR No. 150/2018 u/s 380/457/411/34 IPC** has been registered at **P.S.Lahori Gate, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said, **Saheb Ansari** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Saheb Ansari** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Saheb Ansari of FIR No. 150/2018 U/s 380/457/411/34 IPC. registered at PS. Lahori Gate, Delhi** required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 06.04.2022

DP/1938/N/2022

By Order,
Neha Gupta Singh Ld. MM
Room No. 286, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

GOVERNMENT OF JHARKHAND
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
PUNASI DAM DIVISION, PUNASI CAMP DEOGHAR

e-Procurement Tender Notice

Tender Reference No. :- WRD/PUNASI DAM DIVISION PUNASI CAMP DEOGHAR / F2-2/2021-22 Dt :03.02.2022

1.	Name of the work	Construction of barbed wire fencing along the boundary of rehabilitation center of Nand Vihar and Krishna Vihar under Punasi Reservoir Scheme.
2.	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Rs. 94,65,400.00 (Rupees Ninety Four lakh Sixty Fivet thousand Four hundred and paisa Zero) only
3.	Time of Completion	180 days
4.	Last date & Time for receipt of bids	24.02.2022 Up to 5:00 P.M.
5.	Date of Publication of Tender on website	10.02.2022 11:00 A.M.
6.	Name & address of office Inviting tender	Executive Engineer Punasi Dam Division, Punasi Camp-Deoghar
7.	Contact no. of Procurement officer	8757745843
8.	Helpline number of e-Procurement cell	06432-232477

Note :- Only E-Tender will be accepted
Further details can be seen on website http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in

Executive Engineer
Punasi Dam Division, Punasi Camp – Deoghar

PR 263206 (Water Resource) 21-22 (D)

GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA
Public Works Division Aurangabad
E-Tender Notice No. 46 of 2021-2022

E- Tender for the following works in B-1 Form for the (03) Works is invited via online E-Tendering system from Contractor/Agency/Firm/Company of Eligible Class by Executive Engineer Public Works Division Aurangabad (PH No. 0240-2331174) on behalf of Public Works Department of Government of Maharashtra.

All details can be viewed and downloaded online directly from the Government of Maharashtra e-Tendering Portal **https://mahatenders.gov.in** on sub Portal of public works Department also on **www.mahapwd.com** portal as per online tender Schedules.

sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Public Works Division,
Aurangabad

dgipr 2021-2022/4140

HIMACHAL PRADESH
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

e-Procurement Notice
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

The Executive Engineer, Shimla, Division No.I, HPPWD, Shimla-3, H.P on behalf of Governor of H.P invites the item rate bids, in electronic tendering system from the eligible class of contractors registered with HPPWD for the works as detailed in the table.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost.	Starting date for downloading Bid	Earnest Money	Deadline for submission of Bid
1	Improvement and widening of NavbharBhumia road km. 0/00 to 2/150 (SH;- Formation cutting, passing places, Retaining walls, WBM-III, tarring work , side drain parapets and C.C. Pavements)(Under Shimla Smart city Project)(.	20413093/-	21-02-2022	408300/-	06-03-2022

The bidders are advised to note other details of tenders from the department website www.hptender.gov.in

The executive Engineer reserves the right to accept/reject any tender/application or all tenders without assigning any reason.

6653/HP

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल, चाईबासा

संशोधित शुद्धि पत्र

दिनांक 04.02.2022

एतद् द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि इस कार्यालय द्वारा आमंत्रित अल्पकालीन ई० निविदा सूचना संख्या – DWSD/Chaibasa 12/ MVS/Jagannathpur WSS / 2021-22, दिनांक 31.12.2021 तथा जिसका PR संख्या PR 260824 West Singhbhum(21-22).D है, में अपरिहार्य कारणवश निम्नलिखित संशोधन किया जाता है, शेष शर्तें यथावत् रहेगी।

क्रमांक	Clause	पूर्व में प्रकाशित	संशोधित
8	बीड प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक 07.02.2022, समय 4.00 बजे अपराहन तक।	दिनांक 14.02.2022, समय 4.00 बजे अपराहन तक।
9	बैंक गारंटी एवं परिमाण विपत्र का मूल्य जमा करने की तिथि, समय एवं स्थान	दिनांक 08.02.2022, समय 3.00 बजे अपराहन तक। कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल, चाईबासा/ अधीक्षण अभियंता का कार्यालय, पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता अंचल, चाईबासा/ क्षेत्रीय मुख्य अभियंता का कार्यालय, पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता विभाग, राँची प्रक्षेत्र राँची	दिनांक 15.02.2022, समय 3.00 बजे अपराहन तक। कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल, चाईबासा/ अधीक्षण अभियंता का कार्यालय, पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता अंचल, चाईबासा/ क्षेत्रीय मुख्य अभियंता का कार्यालय, पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता विभाग, राँची प्रक्षेत्र राँची
10	निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक 09.02.2022, समय 4.00 बजे अपराहन।	दिनांक 17.02.2022, समय 4.00 बजे अपराहन।

कार्यपालक अभियंता
पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल, चाईबासा

PR 263267 West Singhbhum (21-22)_D

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e-Procurement Cell
URBAN DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING DEPARTMENT
NAGAR PARISHAD CHATRA, JHARKHAND

e-procurement Notice

Sl.No.	Particular	Details			
1	Name of Work	Construction of Shopping Complex (Subhash Market) near Nayki Talab, Ward No. -16 under Nagar Parishad, Chatra.			
		Estimate Cost	Earnest Money	Cost of BOQ (Rs.)	Time of Completion
		2,05,15,316/-	4,10,300/-	10,000/-	12 Months
2	Date of Tender Uploading in Website - http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in	08.02.2022 at 11:00 AM			
3	Bid Submission Start Date & Time	08.02.2022 at 11:30 AM			
4	Last Date/Time for Receipt of Bid	15.02.2022 upto 5:00 PM			
5	Last Date for Received of EMD/Cost of BOQ. (in the form of DD/BC)	17.02.2022 upto 5:00 PM, in the office of Executive Officer, Nagar Parishad, Chatra (Jharkhand)			
6	Date & Address for Opening of Bid.	18.02.2022 upto 11:00 AM, in the office of Executive Officer, Nagar Parishad, Chatra (Jharkhand)			
7	Name & Address of Office inviting Tender	Executive Officer, Nagar Parishad, Chatra (Jharkhand)			
8	Contact No. of Procurement Office	+91-8340343116			
9	Helpline No. of e-Procurement Cell	0651-2480345			

Any change can be seen on Website *http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in*
Any other information can be seen on http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in

Executive Officer,
Nagar Parishad Chatra.

PR 263184 Urban Development(21-22)#D

DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE SRINAGAR KASHMIR
Tel-0194-2474234 Fax -2482032 – email: - kashflori@rediffmail.com

Gist of Fresh e- Tender Notice No.50 of 2022
Dated. 01/02/2022

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of J&K UT, e-tender is invited from interested parties/persons for **Outsourcing of entry Ticketing system of Ashmuqam Park,Anantnag** of Floriculture Department Kashmir as per details given below: -

The participants have to quote their bid amount in the concerned BOQ: -

S. No.	Period of contract	Reserve Bid (Rs. in Lakhs)	Value of security deposit	Cost of tender document
1.	01 year from the date of award of contract	**3,88,000**	**38,800.00**	200/- in the shape of e-challan

Thebidding document (s) consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, terms and conditions and other details can be seen/downloaded through the Departmental website www.dirflorikmr.in / www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of date given below:-

1.	Period of downloading of bidding document	03.02.2022 from 02:00 PM to 22.02.2022 up to 02:00 PM
2.	Bid submission Start Date	03.02.2022 from 03:00 PM
3.	Bid submission End date	22.02.2022 up to 02:00 PM
4.	Date and time of Opening of Tenders (Online)	25.02.2022 at 02:00 PM

The security deposit money exceeding 2% shall be adjustable towards approved bid amount in favour of the successful bidders. The CDR's of the bidders who offer below the reserve bid shall be forfeited. In case of any eventuality, the date of opening will be considered on any other convenient working day.

Sd/-
Accounts Officer,
Member Secretary

DIPK-17527/21

राजस्थान सरकार

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग–वृत सीकर

(डाक बंगला कैम्पस सीकर 332001: email : piu_sikar1@rediffmail.com, seskr.pwd@rajasthan.gov.in)

क्रमांकः– एस.ई/सीकर/2021/डीः–1780 दिनांकः– 11–01–2022

ई–निविदा सूचना संख्या : 14/2021–2022

राजस्थान के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से निम्न विवरण के अनुसार कार्यो के लिए उपयुक्त श्रेणी मे सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग राजस्थान मे उपयुक्त श्रेणी में पंजीकृत संवेदको एवं राज्य सरकार/केन्द्र सरकार के निर्माण विभाग/डाक एवम दर संचार विभाग/रेल्वे इत्यादि में उपयुक्त श्रेणी में पंजीकृत संवेदकों, जो कि राजस्थान सरकार के 'एए' 'ए' एवं 'बी' श्रेणी के संवेदकों के समकक्ष हो, से कार्यो हेतु ई –टेण्डरिंग के माध्यम से निर्धारित प्रपत्र मे निविदाएं प्राप्त की जावेंगी।

क्र. सं.	खण्ड का नाम	कार्य/पैकेज का नाम	टेण्डर लागत (लाखों में)	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि	चालान व मूल दस्तावेज जमा कराने का स्थान वृत कार्यालय, संबंधित खण्ड एवं संभाग–प्रथम कार्यालय	ऑनलाईन निविदा खोलने का स्थान
1	सीकर	Construction of BT Road From, SH-82 to Dantujla, Khedi Dhukia, Bhuma Bada, Narsasa, Poonami MDR-180 Km 68/00 KM0/00 to 16/500 District Sikar	499.46	10 Months	Dn. Fatehpur	Circle Sikar
2	सीकर	Construction of BT Road From Dholas SH-82 km 28/00 to Kheerwa, Doodwa, Bagariyon ka bass, Bau, Yalsar Road Km 0/00 to 15/00 District Sikar	453.27	10 Months	Dn. Fatehpur	Circle Sikar

निविदा से संबंधित विवरण वेब साईट **www.dipronline.Org http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** एवं **sppp.raj.nic.in** पर देखा जा सकता है।

NIBNO. PWD2122A2852
UBN NO. PWD2122WSOB13946,PWD2122WSOB13947

हस्ता/–
(सायर मल मीणा)
अधीक्षण अभियन्ता
सा.नि.वि. वृत सीकर

DIPR/C/1181/2022

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MECHANICAL HOSPITAL AND CENTRAL HEATING DIVISION SRINAGAR
(Telefax: 0194-2496089, E-mail ID: xenmhchdk@yahoo.in)
(Short Term)

GIST of E -NIT NO: MHCHD/TS /2021-22/314/e-tendering **Dated:03.02.2022.**

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K State e-tenders are invited from registered/reputed/experienced firms with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the below mentioned work:-

Name of Work	Est. Cost. (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (in Rupees)	Time of Completion (in Days)	AA A	Earnest Money (in Rs)	TS No.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Refilling of existing installed Fire Extinguishers at Govt. Dental College, Srinagar.	1.46	200	05	45-GDC of 2022, Dt:29-01-2022	3000	MHCHD/ TS/235 Dated 02/22

1. The Tender document 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/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in from 03.02.2022 (18.00 hrs).
2. The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above web site from 04.02.2022 (10:00hrs) to 10.02.2022 (14:00 hrs) in two (02) cover.
3. The bids uploaded on the website up to due date and time will be opened on 10.02.2022 (16.00 hrs) or any date convenient to the department in the office of Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar.

MHCHD/TS/10397-10402
Dt:-03-02-2022
DIPK-17581/21

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
MHCHD, Srinagar

Associate Director (Extension)
Directorate of Extension Education
CCS Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar-125004 (Haryana)
[Established by Parliament Act 16 of 1970]
Phone: 01662-255234, 9053068379, 9416482401

TENDER NOTICE

Tender are invited for Display material/ Infrastructure/ Tentage for "Agro-Industrial Exhibition" at Krishi Mela (Kharif) to be organised by CCS Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar (Haryana) dated 15-16 March, 2022. For detailed information, please visit university website: https://www.hau.ac.in or contact: O/o Associate Director (Extension), 1st Floor, Gandhi Bhawan, CCSHAU, Hisar-125004 (Haryana) or contact on above mentioned numbers. **Last date of submitted tender is February 25, 2022 till 5:00 PM.**

-Sd/-
Associate Director (Extension)
CCSHAU, Hisar

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

Tender No.: JHSW-MNP-22-01 **Chief Workshop Manager (Wagon Repair Workshop) NCR/Jhansi**
Date : 30.01.2022

E-Tender Notice

For & on behalf of President of India, Chief Workshop Management Wagon Repair Workshop, North Central Railway, Jhansi has invites online E-Tender for the following work.

Description of Work	Tender No.	Earnest Money	Approx Cost
Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract for Four Column hydraulic Press machine cap. 500 T (Make-United Engineering) Plant No. - 967 for three years at Wagon Repair Workshop.	JHSW-MNP-22-01	Rs. 52,900/- (Rupees Fifty Two Thousand Nine Hundred Only)	Rs. 26,46,150/- (Rupees Twenty Six Lakh Fourty Six Thousand One Hundred Fifty Only

Note:- Tender will be closed at **15:00** hrs. on **28.02.2022** and is availabel on Indian Railway E-Tendering website **www.ireps.gov.in** **115/22 (P)**

North central railway **www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in** **@CPRONCR**

NORTH DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

O/o Director Hospital Administration
12th Floor, Dr. SPM Civic Centre, Jawaharlal Nehru Marg, New Delhi - 110002 Ph. No. 23226204

No. 517 /DHA/NDMC/2022 **Dated:- 02.02.2022**

INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

North Delhi Municipal Corporation invites expression of interest from NGO/Charitable Trust/Philanthropic organization/society to run medical facility at Jhandewalan Chest Clinic Karol Bagh & Qutubgarh Dispensary Complex premises at Narela Zone. The details are available in MCD website **https://mcdonline.nic.in/ndmcportal** & **https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app**. Last date of submission of EOI is 23.02.2022.

Sd/-
Director Hospital Administration
North Delhi Municipal Corporation

RO NO 68/DPI/NORTH/2022

U.P.RAJYA VIDYUT UTPADAN NIGAM LTD
HARDUAGANJ THERMAL POWER STATION, KASIMPUR (ALIGARH)

E-Tender Notice

SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, ECMC.

1. E-Tender Notice No. ET-24/ECMC/ECMD-II/HTPS/2021-22, Online e-bids are invited for the work of "Monitoring of environment parameters at HTPS." E-tender has been uploaded on 29.01.2022 on http://etender.up.nic.in. Estimated cost of work Rs. 24.63 Lac Only. Time period-12 months, E.M.D cost Rs. 49000, Last date of Tender 08.03.2022 (14:00 Hrs).
2. E-Tender Notice No. ET-25/ECMC/ECMD-II/HTPS/2021-22, Online e-bids are invited for the work of "Construction of remaining R.C.C. nala from Watch Tower No. 03 to S.T.P. at HTPS." E-tender has been uploaded on 29.01.2022 on http://etender.up.nic.in. Estimated cost of work Rs. 28.92 Lac Only. Time period-06 months, E.M.D cost Rs. 58000, Last date of Tender 08.03.2022 (14:00 Hrs).
3. E-Tender Notice No. ET-26/ECMC/ECMD-II/HTPS/2021-22, Online e-bids are invited for the work of "Misc. Aluminium, Glass, Wooden, Sanitary and civil work in Guest House, Field Hostel and Power House area." E-tender to be uploaded on 29.01.2022 on http://etender.up.nic.in. Estimated cost of work Rs. 31.67 Lac Only. Time period-6 Month, E.M.D cost Rs. 62000, Last date of Tender 08.03.2022 (14:00 Hrs).

Superintending Engineer, O&MC-IV, "D"TPS.

4. E-Tender Notice No. ET-53/O&MC-IV/D/TPS/EMD-I/C/TPS/2021-22, Online e-bids invited for the "Work of Technical Audit of Generators, GTs, 220KV/132KV Switchyard & 6.6 KV Electrical System of U#7, U#8 & U#9." E-tender has been uploaded on 01.02.2022 at 18.00 Hrs. on http://etender.up.nic.in. Estimated cost of work Rs. 980000. Time period-12 Months, E.M.D cost Rs. 19600, Last date of Tender 03.03.2022 at 16.00 Hrs.
5. E-Tender Notice No. ET-54/O&MC-IV/D TPS/EMD-III/C TPS/2021-22, Online e-bids invited for the work of "Round the clock up keeping and routine cleaning of elevators installed in Block A and B of Type 4th, Type 3rd and Type 5th and rescue work of passengers in any of the Elevators of EMD-III." E-tender will be uploaded up to 30.01.2022 on http://etender.up.nic.in. Estimated cost of work Rs. 1288050 Only. Time period-12 Months, E.M.D cost Rs. 25761, Last date of Tender 02.03.2022 up to 14.00 Hrs.

Superintending Engineer, EMCC-III, 1x660MW, HTPS Extn-II, HTPS.

6. Short Term E-Tender Notice No. SET-04/EMCC-III/EMCD-VII/HTPS EXTN-II/2021-22, Online e-bids are invited for the "Round the Clock Operation and maintenance Works of Complete Coal Handling Plant including Locomotive, Bulldozer and etc. of 1x660 MW." Short term E-tender will be published on 31.01.2022 on http://etender.up.nic.in. Estimated cost of work Rs. 23293200 Only. Time period-03 Month, E.M.D cost Rs. 394800 (Refundable), Last date & Time for submission of e-tender 17.02.2022 at 14:00 Hrs.

SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, E.M.C.C.-V, 'E'TPS, HTPS.

7. Short Term E-Tender No. SET-02/EMCC-V/EMCD-XIV/'E'TPS/HTPS/2021-22, "Contract for Round the Clock Operation, Routine & Preventive mechanical maintenance and housekeeping & cleaning works Breakdown mechanical maintenance of complete Ash Handling Plant of 1x660MW, Extn.-II, HTPS Kasimpur Aligarh for three month". Short term E-tender will be published on 01.02.2022 http://etender.up.nic.in. Estimated cost of Work: Rs. 7021000, E.M.D. cost Rs. 119000, Time period-03 months, Last date & Time for submission of e-tender 17.02.2022 at 14:00 Hrs.

Total quantity of work, tender specification and other terms & condition is as per tender documents available on the e-portal. Corrigendum, Addendum, Extension if any shall be uploaded only on the above website. Bidders are advised to visit the website regularly for updated information from time to time. Part- I shall contain Tender Cost/Earnest money and other necessary documents as per pre-qualifying conditions and Part -II will contain price bid as per bill of quantity. Tender specification may be downloaded from the website (http://etender.up.nic.in) and other specification details can be seen on Nigam website www.uprvunl.org. The contactors have to submit the hard copy before the schedule date/time in the concern office in sealed envelope containing details of the tender mentioned on the envelope. Tenders are advised to send their hard copy directly to the concerned tendering authority of the Circles/ Division. Who reserve the right to unaccept/cancel any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

Superintending Engineer (H.Q.)

पत्रांक : 04/अधी0अभि0(मु0)/विज्ञापन/कैम्प–1(03)/22 दिनांक 31.01.2022

"Save Electricity Enhance National Productivity"

E-TENDER NOTICE

The Executive Engineer (E), EMD M-351, Division, PWD, invites on behalf of President of India online item rate tender for following works:-

1. NIT No. 77/2021-22/ EMD M-351/EE(E) Name of work "1) Maintenance and Electrical consumption charges of street lights on various roads under C&ND Division. 2) RMO Electrical and Mechanical services install at New Police Line Kingsway Camp, Delhi. (SH:- Auction of Dismantled Materials)" Estimated Cost Rs. 0/- Earnest Money Rs. 4,000/- period of completion Seven Days, Last time and date of submission of bid 15-02-2022 upto 3.00 pm.

The tender forms and other details can be obtained from the website **https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in** vide tender ID No. i) 2022_PWD_215816_1

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-OPEN TENDER NOTICE

E-OPEN TENDER NOTICE NO. : COM-NFR-SOL-SEE-22, Date : 03.02.2022

The DRM (Commercial) / SEE for and on behalf of the President of India invites open e-tender for the following work. The last date of online tendering is 07.03.2022 up to 15:00 hrs. All information and tender documents related to E-tender is available on **Website: www.ireps.gov.in.**

Sl. No. 1. Name of work : Award of contract for Sole advertisement rights through Advertisement / Glow sign board at 54 stations of Sonpur Division for a period of 01 year. **Approx. Cost (In Rs.):** 40,29,285/- **Earnest Money (In Rs.):** 80,600/- **Cost of Tender Document (In Rs.):** 3000.00 The above tender notice is available on **website: www.ireps.gov.in.** RIGHT OF RAILWAY TO DEAL WITH TENDER: Railway administration reserves the right to postpone/modify or to cancel the above tender without assigning any reasons.

Divisional Railway Manager/Commercial
East Central Railway/Sonpur
PR/01624/SEE/COML/T/21-22/36

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

GeM Bid No. GEM/2022/B/1913849
Dated : 02/02/2022

For and on behalf of the President of India, E-Tenders on "Two Packet System" are invited from the Firms/ Agencies/ Contractors of repute having technical expertise and financial solvency for the following work :-

(i) Name of work with its location and completion period.:- Mechanized cleaning & housekeeping work of Parasnath station under Dhanbad division for a period of two (02) years (i.e 730 days). Completion period - 02 years. **(ii) Approx. Cost of the work :** ₹ Rs.1,57,10,058.15 (Rupees One crore fifty seven lakhs ten thousand fifty eight and fifteen paise) only. **(iii) Earnest Money to be deposited :-** ₹ Rs.3,14,201.00 (Rupees Three lakhs fourteen thousand two hundred one). **(iv) Date & time for closing of e-tender :-** 16:00 hrs, on 23/02/2022, **Date & time for opening of e-tender :** 16:30 hrs. on 23/02/2022 **(v) Website particulars : https://gem.gov.in** No manual tender will be accepted against e-tendering.

Divl. Mechl. Engineer (C&W)/Dhanbad
PR/1619/DHN/Mech./T/21-22/36

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE

File no. M/C&W/321/Fire detection / 2021-22, Date: 03.02.2022

For and on behalf of the President of India Sr. DME/C&W/SEE invited e-open tender (E-Tender Notice no.- CW-Sonpur-02-2022) from experienced contractors for the work given below:- **1. Name of the work with its location:** Supply & Installation of Automatic Fire Detection and suppression system in all power cars and provision of Linear Heat Detector in Luggage portion as per Latest RDSO Specification no- RDSO/2013/CG- 06 (Rev-2) Ammend-1 or latest of coaching depot Muzaffarpur of Sonpur division. Location- Coaching depot MFP., **2. Approx cost of the work:** Rs. 40,28,590.80 (Rupees fourty lakh twenty Eight Thousand Five Hundred Ninety and Eighty paise only)., **3. Earnest Money to be deposited:** Rs. 80600.00 (Rupees Eighty Thousand Six Hundred Only), **4. Date & Time for submission of tender and opening of tender:** Tender submission date : 23.02.2022 up to 15:00 Hrs., Opening date : 23.02.2022 after 15:00 Hrs., **5. Website particulars, notice board location where complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc: website:- www.ireps.gov.in** Railway administration reserves the right to postpone/modify or to cancel the tender anytime without assigning any reasons.

ADME/C&W/Sonpur
PR/01622/SEE/MECH/T/21-22/48

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

ईसीआर–सीएओ–कॉन–उत्तर–ई. निविदा /उत्तर–35–21–22, दि.: 03.02.2022
E-TENDER NOTICE NO.- ECR-CAO-CON-NORTH-ETN-35-21-22
E-TENDER IS INVITED ON BEHALF OF THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA FOR THE UNDER MENTIONED WORKS.

S.N.: 1, Name of work: Supply of 1,00,000 cum 50mm size machine crushed track ballast as per RDSO specification for B.G. Railway track & loading the same into any type of railway wagons F.O.R. Pakur for various projects under CAO/Con. ECR, **S.N.: 2, Approx. cost of the work :** Rs. 13,27,93,000/-, **S.N.: 3, Earnest Money :** Rs. 8,14,000/-, **S.N.: 4, Date and time for closing of tender :** 25.02.2022 at 14.30 hrs., **S.N.: 5, Website particular, Notice board location where complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc. :** The above E-Tender, E-Tendering document alongwith full information is available on website i.e. **http:// www.ireps.gov.in** and also can see in the office of CAO/Con/ECR, MHX, Patna. **Note :** Tenderers are requested to visit the website **http://www.ireps.gov.in** atleast 15 days before last date of closing for latest corrigendum / corrections etc. in response to this E-tender.

CAO/Con/North,
E.C.Railway, MHX, Patna
PR/01625/CONN/Engg/T/21-22/48

Aus set to tour Pak for the first time in 24 years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KARACHI, FEBRUARY 4

CRICKET AUSTRALIA on Friday approved its first tour of Pakistan in 24 years with a revised itinerary being announced by both the boards amid lingering security concerns.

Coming off a 4-0 Ashes victory against England at home, Australia will play three Tests -- in Rawalpindi, Karachi and Lahore. They will also play three one day internationals and a T20I during the full tour.

The opening Test match will be played from March 4-8 in Rawalpindi and the four white-ball matches are scheduled to be played from March 29 to April 5. The tour will now start and end in Rawalpindi with the opening Test to be played from 4-8 March and the four white-ball matches to be played from 29 March to 5 April.

The second Test will be played in Karachi from March 12-16 and the third in Lahore from March 12-16.

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chief executive Faisal Hasnain said: "We are pleased that the Cricket Australia Board has formally approved their side's five-week tour itinerary and confirmed that their best available players will visit Pakistan for the first time in 24 years.

"We are really excited to host Pat Cummins and his players, and look forward to a competitive series that will comprise three Tests, three ODIs and a T20I." The tour comes as a huge boost for Pakistan, which was hit hard when New Zealand and England abruptly pulled out from their scheduled tour of the country last year over security concerns.

No top-flight cricket

Top-flight international cricket did not take place in Pakistan for nearly a decade since the 2009 terrorist attack on the Sri Lankan team bus in Lahore.

"While Australia will arrive at the back of strong performances in their home series against England, our team has been playing excellent cricket resulting in our players sweeping the ICC Awards," Hasnain.

The schedule has been revised to ease logistical and operational challenges as well as to avoid Pakistan Day rehearsals, which usually commence in Islamabad in the second week of March.

TOUR SCHEDULE

March 4-8: 1st Test, Rawalpindi
March 12-16: 2nd Test, Karachi
March 21-25: 3rd Test, Lahore
March 29: 1st ODI, Rawalpindi
March 31: 2nd ODI, Rawalpindi
April 2: 3rd ODI, Rawalpindi
April 5: one-off T20I, Rawalpindi

MEMOIRS OF AN OLD BCCI HAND

Apparently Virat was not happy with Anil 'for not standing up for players'

A CHEMISTRY PROFESSOR, Ratnakar Shetty's long innings as a cricket administrator began in 1975 when he was appointed staff-in-charge of cricket at Mumbai's Wilson College. His family moved from Udupi in Karnataka to Mazgaon in the metropolis and lived in a chawl during their early years in the city. Shetty, the second-eldest among seven sons, rose through the ranks. From joining the Bombay Cricket Association's tournament committee, Shetty eventually became a manager of Indian cricket teams, a chief administrative officer of the Board of Control for Cricket in India before retiring as its General Manager. In his book **On Board: Test.Trial.Triumph. My years in BCCI by Ratnakar Shetty**, the veteran administrator gives a first-hand account of the growth of Indian cricket, the boardroom battles, Team India's victories and dressing room intrigue.

Extracts from the book

Narendra Modi's question

Narendra Modi, the honourable prime minister of India, attended the 2010 AGM, which was held at the Cricket Centre, as the representative of the Gujarat Cricket Association. He was the chief minister of the state at the time. By the time he settled into the meeting after the exchange of pleasantries, the approval of the accounts for 2009–10 came up for discussion. The annual accounts and the budget for 2010–11 were unanimously approved and the treasurer started reading out the quantum of subsidy payable to the member units. I happened to be sitting next to Mr Modi.

He turned to me and enquired as to why there was no discussion on the accounts or budget, which ran into thousands of crores. I took a deep breath and told him that the members of the Board's finance committee had vetted the accounts and budget and forwarded the same to the working committee with their observations.

The working committee had then approved the accounts and budget and only then had the same been placed before the general body. He later observed that the members finished discussing most of the items on the agenda within 45 minutes and then deliberated for over an hour on issues related to Lalit Modi.

Ineptitude frustrated Sachin

Having spent a lot of time with Sachin in Sri Lanka, I had sensed that he was disturbed. He wasn't enjoying the captaincy and I was by no means the only individual who felt that all wasn't well. There were times when information pertaining to the trajectory of games that we were yet to play, would reach us and leave us wondering. The timing of some dismissals, especially in the ODIs, was weird, to say the least.

Virat Kohli (right) with the then coach Anil Kumble. *FILE*

The captain, the coach and I wanted to brief the senior office-bearers of the Board about these incidents and seek their inputs on the future course of action, after returning to India. We sought an appointment with Rajbhai (Raj Singh Dungarpur), as the Board president was known.

Sachin and I went to meet Rajbhai and (Jaywant) Lele at the Cricket Club of India. We discussed the tour, the Rashid Latif interview and the rumours that had been doing the rounds. Imagine my shock then to receive a call later that night from none other than Azharuddin, enquiring about our meeting with the BCCI president and secretary.

The entire purpose of the meeting had been defeated. I called Mr Dalmiya and told him that henceforth, no manager would be frank with the Board. Unfortunately, it took a while — three more years, to be precise — for people to realise that the ineptitude of some of the players was deliberate.

Kohli-Kumble fallout

The events leading up to the resignation of Anil Kumble as coach of the men's team after the ICC Champions Trophy final in June 2017 showcased the murkiness that had steadily crept into the corridors of the Cricket Centre.

ON BOARD: TEST TRIAL TRIUMPH
BY RATNAKAR SHETTY
Rupa Publications
Pages 328, Rs 595

I happened to meet Virender Sehwag and Sachin Tendulkar at the Wankhede Stadium, on the eve of an IPL game between Mumbai Indians and Kings XI Punjab, in the second week of May. I was taken aback when Viru informed me that Dr Sridhar had advised him to apply for the position of the coach of the Indian team.

I flew to Hyderabad a few days later for the IPL final. The game was preceded by a meeting of the CoA at the ITC Kakatiya, where we were staying. Anil and Virat Kohli, who by then had become the all-format captain, were to make a presentation on the way forward for Indian cricket, at this meeting. Both Vinod Rai and Diana Edulji (Committee of Administrators) were attending. Anil was present physically, while Virat was to participate virtually. Rai then asked me what process had been followed by the Board to appoint a coach for the national team in 2016.

What happened next was shocking. Rai said in front of the entire gathering, Anil included, said that the same process would have to be repeated soon! Anil was stunned and so was I. I remembered my conversation with Viru in May and told Anil about it. Surely, Dr Sridhar would not have told Viru to apply of his own volition.

I learnt later about a meeting that took place in London before the final of the Champions Trophy, which we lost to Pakistan. This meeting was attended by Virat, Anil, Johri, Amitabh Choudhary and Dr Sridhar. Apparently, Virat was not happy with Anil 'for not standing up for the players and creating a tense atmosphere in the dressing room', among other things.

How Dhoni became captain

Rahul told me at the (IPL) launch that he wanted to talk to Mr Pawar in private. I informed the president, who then invited Rahul to his room. Rahul came downstairs after a few minutes and met me in the lobby. He told me that he had a flight to catch and left immediately, not staying back for the official dinner.

I then received a call from Mr Pawar. I went up to his room and learnt that Rahul had submitted his resignation as the captain. The resignation was announced on the eve of India's first game in the ICC World T20. When asked by Mr Pawar who he thought should succeed him, Rahul recommended Mahendra Singh Dhoni, who was already leading the team in the ICC World T20 in South Africa. Mr Pawar then posed the same question to Sachin, who had been Rahul's deputy in England, when we were having dinner later that evening. Sachin repeated what Rahul had said.

Sourav available for World T20

A day before the selectors met, I received a call from Rahul. He told me that he had spoken to Sachin and Sourav, his predecessors, and both had concurred with his view that Twenty20 was a 'young man's game'. He accordingly requested me to inform the selectors that the three of them would not be available for the ICC World T20 (2007).

Dilip and his colleagues proceeded to pick 30 probables, sans the trio. Later, the chairman told me that he had received a call from Sourav, who said that he was in fact available for selection and the information conveyed to him was incorrect.

Root to stay as Test captain, Thorpe sacked

REUTERS
FEBRUARY 4

JOE ROOT IS to remain as England captain for the upcoming tour of the West Indies, the team's interim managing director Andrew Strauss confirmed on Friday, despite his side's woeful performance in the Ashes.

Batting coach Graham Thorpe became the latest casualty of the 4-0 series defeat by Australia, following head coach Chris Silverwood and managing director Ashley Giles out the door on Friday after several batting collapses by the team in Australia.

Former England skipper Strauss has replaced Giles on an interim basis and will appoint a caretaker coach for the forthcoming tour of West Indies in March, with Root still in charge of matters on the field.

"Having spoken to Joe it is absolutely clear the extent of his commitment to moving this England team forward," Strauss told *Sky Sports* on Friday.

"He's got incredible motivation and energy to do that. He's bruised, hugely disappointed by what went on in the Ashes and I think it goes without saying there are many others in the same boat on that one.

"But he has the respect of the players, they all play for him, and he sets a magnificent example both on and off the field so I'm very happy to give him my support and make sure he has the right structure around him to take pressure off him and make sure he can do his job."

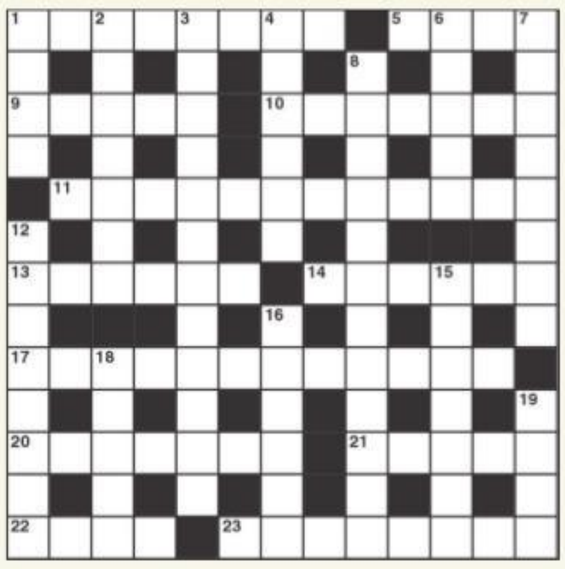
Strauss would not commit himself to a long-term return to the game that he left to focus on his family following the tragic death of his wife Ruth.

"This is short-term," Strauss added. "My role is to help prepare the team for the West Indies series and to recommend some structural changes and help Tom Harrison with recruitment of the roles, including the new managing director of England cricket.

"However long it takes I'm prepared to play that role." England are due to play three test matches against the West Indies starting from March 8 in North Sound, Antigua. Last month, they lost the Twenty20 series 3-2.

Batting coach Graham Thorpe became the latest casualty of the 4-0 series defeat by Australia, following head coach Chris Silverwood and managing director Ashley Giles out the door on Friday after several batting collapses by the team in Australia.

CROSSWORD 4656



ACROSS
1 Good place for Norman invasion as things turned out (8)
5 Goes downhill fast? (4)
9 Frosted look seen when I'm in debt? (5)
10 Present some evidence at court (7)
11 See 1 Down (3,4,5)
13 Greater king gets royal backing outside (6)
14 A feast of cheese, etc? (6)
17 Fighting man audibly the worse for shouting? (5,7)
20 These spectacles give you double vision (7)
21 Care nothing for ridicule (5)
22 They are nailed on the foot (4)
23 View a way to seek wealth (8)

DOWN
1 and 11 Across: Rigorous and fleeting reigns? (4,3,4,5)
2 Group studying ruined remains (7)
3 Lack of interest shown in a disagreement (12)
4 Agrees to change gun ammunition (6)
6 A bulk transport that's capital (5)
7 Reserved beach about the end of August (3,5)
8 Qualified corn dealers? (12)
12 Every letter is written in it (8)
15 Watches foreign money - not a pretty sight (7)
16 One who plays in the alley (6)
18 Rob with a gun (5)
19 One has a lot of fun with it (4)

Solutions Crossword 4655: Across: 1 Steamship, 8 Loins, 9 Deposit, 10 Minima, 11 Metric, 12 Hysteria, 15 Offender, 18 Antics, 20 Apiece, 21 Atheism, 22 Draft, 23 Youngster. **Down:** 2 There, 3 Aboard, 4 Stitched, 5 Plaint, 6 Riviera, 7 Asparagus, 11 Memoranda, 13 Straiten, 14 African, 16 Nicety, 17 Utters, 19 Caste.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis

CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson

MARVIN by Tom Armstrong

DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
The chances are very strong that those of you with busy professional schedules will be working this weekend. Other Ariens will be kept active pursuing ambitious worldly schemes. But remember, whatever you're doing, it works best if you have a genuine passion for it.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
Hopefully you have had the opportunity to revise arrangements affecting children. You may also have been able to re-establish social or romantic connections which had been broken or postponed. The essence of the current moment is to establish absolutely equal, honest and open relationships.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
You can pre-empt imminent planetary movements and make an effort to form new relationships. From this weekend onwards, partnership and teamwork will be the main consideration at work and in your personal affairs. The most important people could turn out to be those you have known for long.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
If you're following precise planetary patterns, now is the time to make formal arrangements, but also to break out and abandon your commitments. Romantic illusions may be nothing more than harmless fun. The possibilities are various, the options many.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
This is a superb day for local jaunts or country trips. You should now be free of the pressures that have made travel such a risky business over the past few days. You may afford to be more confident in personal matters, perhaps because other people are now more open to your brand of doing things.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
Although you would still be advised against any temptation to indulge in speculation, you may now begin to plan sensible domestic spending. Those of you involved in property deals may look forward to better conditions some way down the line, sooner than you think.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
The Sun and Mars, those two ambitious and energetic planets, are still your faithful allies. Aim as high as you wish now, because until you try, there is no knowing what can be achieved. The first step is to gather information, so that you find out what other people are up to.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)
The reason why partners or close associates have been so off-hand and un-co-operative is still far from clear. However, in the financial area you will now find it much easier to reach some sort of consensus. You'll be keeping your plans to yourself for a while, so watch your tongue.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)
Because the planets are constantly on the move, no one situation ever lasts for too long. The planetary configuration is now improving, and you will be the first to feel the refreshing winds of change. Social and team enterprises benefit first.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
Neither adverse planetary aspects nor your sober Capricornian nature should be allowed to dampen the current enthusiasm for life. However, in some way, professional concerns are likely to intrude on the weekend. They may concern partners or relations, but you'll still have your say.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
Now that good will is returning, you may receive appreciation for your worthwhile efforts on other people's behalf. You may, if you wish, announce to the world your intentions for the future. You seem to be prepared to make the most of yourself for once.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
You must expect a certain amount of family controversy. There is, after all, no reason why people should accept what you say at face value. You must make the effort to explain yourself. I know you think everyone can read your mind, but you'd do better to set out your case as carefully as you can.

JUMBLED WORDS

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

An ounce of ___ is worth more than tons of preaching. - Mahatma Gandhi (8)

CNTAE
AMOTCT
DETIR
ILOYCP

SOLUTION: ENACT, TRIED/TIRED, TOMCAT, POLICY
Answer: An ounce of **practice** is worth more than tons of preaching. - Mahatma Gandhi

SUDOKU 4736

Difficulty Level 2s
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

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4735

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

ICC UNDER-19 WORLD CUP

FINAL: INDIA VS ENGLAND

Live on Star Sports Network, 6.30pm

BRIEFLY

Majchrzak knocks out 2nd seed Musetti

Pune: It turned out to be a day of upsets at the Tata Open Maharashtra as Kamil Majchrzak knocked out second seed Lorenzo Musetti while defending champion Jiri Vesely also exited along with two more seeded players here on Friday. Returning extremely well and using the drop shots quite effectively, the 95th ranked Majchrzak from Poland eked out a 6-2 7-6(5) 6-4 win over the world number 66 Musetti in two hours and 13 minutes to advance to the semifinals. The top seed and world number 15 Aslan Karatsev has already exited the event after a loss in the second round at the hands of qualifier Elias Ymer. Majchrzak will now clash with Finland's 22-year-old Emil Ruusuvuori, who shocked the title holder from Czech Republic 6-3 6-4 in his quarterfinal.

Football: India to play Bahrain, Belarus

New Delhi: The Indian senior men's national football team will play two international friendlies against Bahrain and Belarus on March 23 and 26 respectively, the sport's apex body announced on Friday. Both the matches will be played in Manama, Bahrain. The matches are part of the preparation for the national team campaign in the 2023 AFC Asian Cup third round qualifiers, which is scheduled to be held in June. Bahrain are placed at 91 in the FIFA rankings, while Belarus are on 94. India's current ranking is 104. The last time India played any UEFA member association was more than a decade ago in February 2012 against Azerbaijan.

Taipei beat Thailand in women's Asian Cup

Navi Mumbai: Chinese Taipei defeated Thailand 3-0 in the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup playoff match in the Asian Cup here on Friday. The three points mean Chinese Taipei's tie against Vietnam on Sunday will be a showdown for the sole automatic qualifying slot to the World Cup in Australia/New Zealand. Thailand's Women's World Cup hopes now depend on them navigating the Inter-Confederation playoffs. The final will be played on Sunday between China and South Korea.

Shooting selection trials in March, April

New Delhi: With COVID-19 cases starting to decline across the country, the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) has decided to hold the selection trials for rifle and pistol shooters in March and April this year. The selection trials - one and two - for rifle will be held from March 8 to 21 in Bhopal and the pistol trials in Delhi. The selection trials - three and four - will be conducted from March 26 to April 7 for rifle in Delhi and pistol in Bhopal. The Indian shooting team for the upcoming ISSF World Cup in Cairo was picked after taking into consideration the qualification scores along with final ranking points of the 64th National Championship as the selection trials could not be held owing to the pandemic.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Boxer's son with deadly left

Sunil Kumar couldn't fulfil his sporting dreams due to family pressure; his son Nishant has been crucial in India's march to final

PRATYUSH RAJ
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

GROWING UP, Sunil Kumar had just one dream: wearing the Indian jersey. The circumstances forced the then 19-year-old budding boxer to quit the sport. Now, 20 years later, he is finally living his dream through his son Nishant Sindhu, who is representing India at the ICC Men's U-19 World Cup.

The 17-year-old Sindhu has played a pivotal role in India's run in the ongoing tournament. The talented all-rounder from Haryana has picked up six wickets and scored 90 runs in four matches so far. Sindhu, along with his fellow left-arm spinner Vicky Ostwal, has shared 18 wickets in the tournament and has given India an edge against the teams in the tournament. The duo has successfully choked oppositions run flow in the middle overs.

Ostwal and Sindhu are different bowlers. One is quick through the air, while the other looks for more spin, but both are equally effective on the slow Caribbean wickets. They dried up runs from both ends, forced the batters to play shots, and are rewarded with a bagful of wickets. "It gives me so much joy to watch him play for India. My dream was always to don the Indian jersey, which unfortunately I never did," Sunil Kumar tells Indian Express over the phone.

Kumar, 39, was a state-level boxer for Haryana, but the lack of support from the family forced him to hang his boxing gloves.

"I was in 54kg weight category but never got that backing from my family. My father was a government employee. For him, academics was everything. My mother supported me a lot but unfortunately, she passed away when I was 19. There was responsibility, I had two younger sisters, so I started working," recalls Kumar.

Kumar, who never had any interest in cricket, was surprised when he saw his three-year-old son jumping in joy when India, under MS Dhoni, won the T20 World Cup in South Africa in 2007. The following day, he gifted him a plastic bat, which was when he discovered another facet about his son.

"I gave him the bat, and his stance was left-handed. I threw the ball toward him and he picked up with his left hand. Then I came to know why he is a southpaw," laughs Kumar.

Kumar always wanted his son to follow in his footstep, but Sindhu never showed any interest in boxing. In 2011, the day after India won the ODI World Cup, he hesitantly told his father that he wanted to play cricket.

"I always wanted him to be a sportsperson, be it cricket or boxing. I decided that I would never let anything come between him and his dream. He wanted to play cricket, and I decided to back him with my last penny," says Kumar.

Kumar enrolled Nishant into Shri Ram Narain Cricket Academy, run by a former Haryana first-class cricketer and coach, Ashwani Kumar.

Sant Rathee, a coach at the academy, recalls how he was shocked after watching Sindhu bowls for the first time. "I saw an 8-year-old kid with a natural loop. It was so natural. The batting was equally good, the hand-eye coordination, the drives, everything was so perfect," recounts Rathee.

Sindhu came to the limelight when he scored 290 runs and bagged 24 wickets for Haryana in the U-14 Dhruv Pandove Trophy held in Patiala in 2017. He was immediately fast-tracked into the Haryana U-16 team, and in the 2017-18 Vijay Merchant Trophy, he scored 280 runs and took 16 wickets.

He saved his best for the 2018-19 Vijay Merchant Trophy, where Sindhu amassed 572 runs and bagged 23 wickets. It was under his captaincy that Haryana defeated Jharkhand in the final to lift the tile. The Vijay Merchant Trophy success helped him get a call-up from the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru.

Nishant Sindhu has picked six wickets and scored 90 runs in four matches in the Under-19 World Cup so far. *ICC*

> "I always wanted him to be a sportsperson, be it cricket or boxing. I decided that I would never let anything come between him and his dream. He wanted to play cricket, and I decided to back him with my last penny."
>
> — SUNIL KUMAR
> NISHANT SINDHU'S FATHER

Coming to son's rescue

When he returned from the camp in March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic raged on, and Sindhu, like hundreds of young aspiring cricketers in India, was left disappointed.

Kumar again came to his son's rescue. He made a makeshift gym on his terrace and requested his friend, Anand Maina, a fitness trainer, to spare some time for his son.

"For any athlete, fitness should be the top priority. I have learned it from my experience. Anand used to visit us twice a day, and he will look after his fitness routine. There was not much space for him to bowl; we used to do shadow practicing and throwdowns with the wet tennis balls. I managed whatever I could," recalls Sunil.

Two years later, Sindhu marshalled his troops to the U-19 Vinoo Mankad Trophy triumph. Haryana defeated Maharashtra by six wickets in the finals to cap off a campaign where the team didn't lose a single game. Sindhu scored 299 runs and took 12 wickets for Haryana in the tournament.

His success was rewarded when he was selected for the India U-19 squad for the Asia Cup and U-19 World Cup. What surprised everyone was that he was not being nominated as the team's skipper. But he went on to captain India in two games against Ireland and Uganda following a Covid-19 outbreak in the Indian camp. With captain Yash Dhull and vice-captain Shaik Rasheed both in isolation, VVS Laxman and Co. passed the captaincy badge to Sindhu. Unfortunately, the Haryana youngster also tested positive and had to miss the quarter-final clash against Bangladesh.

"He has always been a leader. He has great awareness of the game, and when Yash and Rasheed were tested positive, I knew Nishant would be the leader. He is not even 17 and has won two prestigious tournaments," says Kumar, who has also trained India women's team opener, Shafali Verma.

Pankaj Thakur, Haryana U-19 coach, too, rates Sindhu highly. He decodes how the youngster has evolved as a cricketer over time.

"He is a complete package. A solid middle-order batter, a brilliant bowler and a gun outfield fielder. The greatest attribute of his game is his eagerness to improve," says Thakur, who has played 57 first-class matches for Haryana. "What has impressed me the most is his bowling. He always tries to play with the batter's mind. He loves setting up batters; he might get hit in the process, but he will never lose heart. He loves to flight the ball and will always look for the rough patches created by the fast bowlers."

He adds: "In his U-16 days, he didn't have that arm ball. He learned this craft over a period of time. I think being a spinner, he was used to bowl 30-35 overs in a day, and it gave time to add arm ball into his armoury."

Thakur loved how his ward cleaned up Australia's Nivethan Radhakrishnan in the semifinal. "The same ball in the last over, he was hit for a boundary. This time he bowled it slow in the air; it spun, took the inside edge ricochets onto the stumps. His celebration will tell you that he was setting him up from the last over," says Thakur.

Spinner Ostwal making heads turn at U-19 WC

PRATYUSH RAJ
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

VICKY OSTWAL'S ability to generate turn and bounce has made him an asset for India at the ongoing ICC U-19 World Cup. Add to it his pinpoint accuracy and it's no surprise that the left-arm spinner has troubled all the teams in the competition.

The Indian team was affected by a Covid-19 outbreak but Ostwal is one of the few players to have played all the matches. The lanky youngster is third on the wicket-takers' list with 12 scalps in five games, including a fifer against South Africa.

Going back in time, his coach Mohan Jadhav, who has watched Ostwal from close quarters for the past 10 years, tells The Indian Express: "He hates going for a run. He is a spinner, but has the mentality of a fast bowler. He is six feet tall and because of his height, causes trouble for batsmen with his bounce."

Jadhav, who is also the coach of opener Ruturaj Gaikwad, explains how Ostwal has improved as a bowler.

"He is from this Indian Premier League (IPL) generation. He grew up watching IPL, and till his U-16 days, his only focus was to bowl wicket-to-wicket. You can't blame a 15-year-old, who is afraid of getting hit," recalls Jadhav.

He says it took Ostwal two years to add more variations to his bowling. "In an U-16 match, he bowled some 20 overs and gave away 35 or 40 runs and took two wickets. I just told him he could bowl with more freedom. He might have ended up with a five-wicket haul," recalls the coach.

During an interview for the International Cricket Council (ICC), Ostwal said that there is no substitute for a good work ethic and discipline, and he must be patient and trust the process.

In 2019, he was a net bowler for Chennai Super Kings (CSK). One of his fondest memories is getting Shane Watson out. He says, "I was thrilled when I got him out. It was in the nets, but I will still take it."

With time, Ostwal started to give the ball more air, and found that drift and turn.

"That CSK camp helped him a lot. He had a long chat with Imran Tahir, and was a different bowler when he returned. With more variations, it became more difficult for batsmen to negotiate him. He will not give an inch because of his high-arm action. He forces batsmen to take risks, and this is where he deceives them. Even in this (U-19 World Cup) tournament, you can see batsmen getting out trying to play him against the spin. The top edge and LBW will always be in play when he is bowling," says Jadhav.

The coach considers the wicket of Australian batsman Tobias Snell the best among the 12 wickets Ostwal has picked in the tournament.

"He set up that batsman (Snell) beautifully. First ball of the over, a bit of turn, he guided it towards midwicket and took two runs. The next ball was another length ball on off stump, but there was more turn. Third ball, he again played across the line and pushed for a single to short midwicket. Fifth ball, same length, he goes for an inside-out shot. Last ball of the over - a straight one, no turn, he misses, and it hits the top of off-stump," Jadhav shares the details.

"I immediately texted him that now you are a complete package," he adds.

Vicky Ostwal is one of the few players who has played in all the matches for India.

India take on Eng in final, eye fifth title

North Sound: Eight finals and four trophies in 14 editions make India the most successful team in the Under-19 World Cup history. And come Saturday, they look on course for a record-extending fifth title given the depth of talent and form but standing in the way is a driven English team, chasing its own piece of history in what promises to be ann enthralling summit clash.

Yash Dhull and Co. will aim to add to India's rich legacy when they take on England at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium here. India have had a rather smooth run into the final despite a massive off the field setback when skipper Dhull and his deputy Shaik Rasheed missed two of the three league games due to Covid-19.

Virat Kohli, who went on to become a world beater after captaining India U-19 to the title in 2008, gave a pep talk to the class of 2022 on how to approach the high pressure final. They face England, a team which last reached the title clash way back in 1998 when it won its sole trophy till date. After a tense finish in the semifinal against Afghanistan, England will be more than keen to end their title drought of the last 24 years.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Winter Games open with a bang and echo of Cold War

With China president Xi, his Russian counterpart Putin and nearly two dozen world leaders in attendance, China pick an athlete with a Uyghur background to help light the cauldron during a festive opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics

Opening ceremony, a mix of politics and sport

CHINA MIXED politics and sport with a boldness unseen since the Cold War on Friday, with President Xi Jinping announcing a new alliance with Russia's Vladimir Putin just hours before presiding over a spectacular Olympics opening ceremony.

Held in the famed Bird's Nest stadium before a crowd thinned out because of COVID-19, the opening ceremony easily cleared the high hurdle of spectacle expected of China. Three thousand performers took to a stage comprised of 11,600 square metres of high-definition LED screens.

Dancers poured into the stadium waving glowing green stalks to mark the first day of spring on the Chinese calendar, followed by an explosion of white and green fireworks that spelled the word "Spring".

Lasers carved imagery from each of the previous 23 Winter Games. The block was then "broken" by ice hockey players, enabling the Olympic rings to emerge, all in white.

Triumphant fireworks were launched into the night sky after Xi declared the games open. But the most consequential pyrotechnics may have come hours before the ceremony, when Xi and Putin unveiled their alliance, proclaiming friendship between their countries with "no limits".

It was a stark reminder that the games were being held on a backdrop of geopolitical rivalry unseen since the tit-for-tat Cold War boycotts of the 1980s, when the United States refused to attend the Olympics in Moscow and the Soviet Union stayed away from Los Angeles. With tensions on both sides of the Eurasian land mass at their most taut for decades, Putin and Xi publicly took each other's sides over a range of grievances, most notably Ukraine, where the West accuses Putin of preparing for war.

REUTERS

The Bird's Nest Stadium in Beijing during the opening ceremony. *Reuters*

India walk out 23rd, Arif leads four-member contingent

Skier Arif Khan led a small four-strong Indian contingent during the Winter Olympics opening ceremony amid a diplomatic boycott of the event by the country. The 31-year-old Arif will be the lone Indian competitor at the Games, having qualified in Slalom and Giant Slalom events.

India sent a six-member contingent to the Games including a coach, a technician and a team manager.

Arif is the first Indian to secure qualification in two events of the same edition of the Games and his competitions are slated for February 13 and 16. India was the 23rd contingent to walk in during the grand ceremony at the iconic Bird's Nest stadium here as China welcomed athletes from 84 countries.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

World leaders queue up

For all the talk of a diplomatic boycott, Chinese leader Xi Jinping managed to attract a globe-spanning roster of presidents, royals and other dignitaries to the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics. The fact that most of them represent countries that are unlikely to win any medals — if they're even competing at all — didn't seem to matter. The guest list for Friday included Russia's Vladimir Putin, the five Central Asian nations that were once part of the Soviet Union, the leaders of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, and Pakistan's leader Prime Minister Imran Khan.

REUTERS

Uyghur athlete lights torch

In a climactic moment to end the ceremony, China chose two athletes — including one it said was of Uyghur heritage — to deliver the flame to the Olympic cauldron and officially start the Games.

The moment was tinged with layers of symbolism — a man and a woman working together, a nod to China's Olympic history — but it was the choice of Dinigeer Yilamujiang, a cross-country skier who the Chinese said has Uyghur roots, that confronted head-on one of the biggest criticisms of the country's role as host.

The Chinese Communist Party state has conducted a mass detention and re-education campaign targeting Uyghur Muslims in the western region of Xinjiang that the United States has declared as genocidal.

Athletes light the Olympic torch during the opening ceremony. *Reuters*

It was among the reasons that several countries, including the United States, took part in a diplomatic boycott of the Games.

Lighting the Olympic cauldron is a central ritual for each opening ceremony, as hosts invent ever more spectacular ways to ignite the flame that stays alight during the sporting festival. The chief director of this year's ceremony, Zhang Yimou, had promised a novel showstopper.

In the final act of the curtain-raising event, a group of six former Chinese athletes representing previous decades completed a relay that circled the stadium with torches, passing the flame on to the next. In the final handoff, it was delivered to Yilamujiang and Zhao Jiawen, a men's Nordic combined athlete. Walking together, they placed it in the center of a giant snowflake — another recurring symbol of the ceremony — that was raised in the center of the stadium.

NYT

Vol XC- 75 Regd.No. DL-21046/03-05 R.N.I. No.506/57. Printed and Published by R.C.Malhotra on behalf of The Indian Express (P) Limited and Printed at The Indian Express (P) Limited Press, A-8, Sector-7, Noida -201301 and D B Corp Ltd, Dainik Bhaskar Village Unan Tola, Near Danapur Cantt, Shivylya Road, Post Khagaul, Shahpur, Patna (Bihar) and Published at The Indian Express (P) Limited, Mezzanine Floor, Express Building, 9&10, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi 110002. Editorial office: The Indian Express (P) Limited, Mezzanine Floor, Express Building, 9&10, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi-110002. Phone: 0120-6651500. Advertising office: The Indian Express (P) Limited, B1/B, Sector-10, Noida-201301. Phone:01206651291. Chairman of the Board: Viveck Goenka, Chief Editor: Raj Kamal Jha, Editor: Unni Rajen Shanker, Editor (Delhi): Rakesh Sinha ****
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