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## Out in cold after criticising Govt, Shah Faesal is back in IAS



Resigned in 2019; withdrew it later

**DEEPTIMAN TIWARY**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 28

KASHMIRI IAS officer Shah Faesal, who resigned from the bureaucracy in 2019 to float a political party and was detained after the splitting and downgrade of Jammu and Kashmir, has been reinstated in the services, Home Ministry officials confirmed to *The Indian Express*.

Sources said Faesal, who quit politics, has been taken back into the Indian Administrative Service following clearance from the Ministry of Home Affairs and is likely to be posted in the National Security Council Secretariat in Delhi. Notably, Faesal's resignation had never been accepted by the government and he even

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## In a first, IndiGo uses Indian navigation system to land aircraft

**PRANAV MUKUL**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 28

AN INDIGO-OPERATED ATR 72-600 aircraft landed at Kishangarh airport Thursday, using an approach process guided by India's own satellite-based augmentation system named GAGAN, or GPS-aided GEO Augmented Navigation. With this trial landing at the small airport near Ajmer in Rajasthan, India joined a small group comprising the US, Japan and Europe with its own satellite-based augmentation system (SBAS).

While the SBAS developed by the US, Japan, Europe and India are already operational, there are several more under development. These include China's BeiDou SBAS, South Korea's Korea Augmentation Satellite System (KASS), Russia's System for Differential Corrections and Monitoring (SDCM), and the Southern Positioning Augmentation Network (SPAN) of Australia and New Zealand.

The test flight that landed at Kishangarh is a part of the approval process with aviation

**EXPLAINED**  
Other sectors too benefit

WHILE GAGAN is primarily meant for aviation, it will provide benefits to several other segments such as intelligent transportation, maritime, highways, railways, security agencies, telecom, etc. Once fully rolled out, it will make several smaller airports such as those in the North-East capable of having compliant aircraft land in low-visibility scenarios.

safety regulator DGCA, which includes training of pilots, validation of approach and simulator sessions. The flight was performed with a DGCA team on board and after the approval, the procedure will be available for usage of commercial flights. The SBAS is a navigation system, which builds on the Global

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## 'INDIGENISE CRITICAL PARTS'

# Must be ready for brief ops at short notice: IAF chief

Mentions Ladakh to stress preparedness for long

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 28

AIR CHIEF Marshal V R Chaudhari said Thursday that the Indian Air Force needs to prepare itself for intense, small duration operations at short notice. He also said it needs to be ready for short, swift wars and long standoffs like the one in eastern Ladakh.

Addressing a conference on logistics management in the IAF, Air Chief Marshal Chaudhari said the "current geo-political situation necessitates the Indian Air Force to prepare for intense and small duration operations at short notice. This new paradigm of high intensity operations, coupled with minimal build-up time, would require major changes in terms of (operational) logistics."

Logistics support in such a scenario would be extremely challenging, he said, because the



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, MoS Defence Ajay Bhatt and Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar in New Delhi on Thursday. **PTI**

IAF has a "fairly vast and diversified inventory".

"To address issues like availability of spares, I feel we need to re-evaluate demand forecasting methods and stocking philosophies. The way forward will be to have a serviceability-linked inventory management system.

Flexible stocking policies with modern forecasting techniques would help in demand sensing and prepositioning of items at bases. We must also review our procurement strategies in order to reduce lead time for supplies and pre-empt problems of

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**



## From Vedic maths to zoonotic diseases: What ministries want in school curriculum

**SOURAV ROY BARMAN**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 28

AN ONGOING inter-ministerial consultation on revising the country's school curriculum has seen a push to incorporate "emerging topics" such as "catastrophic consequences of zoonotic diseases", vedic mathematics, coding and Swachh Bharat to "reflect current realities and priorities".

The suggestions are being examined by experts involved in revising the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), which will subsequently inform the changes in the NCERT textbooks. Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan is in Bengaluru to hold discussions with members of the national steering committee leading the process.

The Ministry of Education launched the inter-ministerial

consultation earlier this month. Records show that the Environment Ministry, Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) have shared lists of suggested topics.

On April 22, the DST proposed that the school curriculum should introduce students to the concepts of "traditional knowledge, coding, patents, intellectual property rights and vedic maths".

The MoHUA, in its proposal on April 21, said: "We need to inspire and motivate children and school students to be the messengers and facilitators of swachh behaviour" by incorporating concepts on sanitation as "formal part of school syllabus".

A section on Swachh Bharat Mission, of the scheme's rural as well urban aspects, would

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## Remains found in Punjab well traced to 1857 rebellion: Study

**ANJALI MARAR**  
PUNE, APRIL 28

THERE WERE 246 of them. They were soldiers, aged between 21 and 49 years. And they all came from the Gangetic plains and were killed in a Punjab town — by the British during the 1857 rebellion.

Eight years after skeletal remains were found in an abandoned well in Amritsar district's Ajnala town, researchers have solved the mystery of their origin through DNA testing.

The study, published Thursday in the journal *Frontiers in Genetics*, shows the skeletons were that of soldiers belonging to the Gangetic plain region, comprising people from the eastern part of West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. It even identified them as soldiers of the



Researchers sort through the remains. **Express**

26th Bengal Native Infantry regiment of the British Indian Army — who were assaulted before being shot at close range.

Archaeologists say the site is the largest to possess skeletal remains linked to any single event of the 1857 Indian rebellion.

The remains were first discovered in 2014 by a group of amateur, local archaeologists.

The same year, the government tasked a group led by forensic anthropologist J S Sehrawat from Panjab University to scientifically investigate the matter.

Teeth, jaw fragments, vertebrae, skulls, phalanges (bone of the finger or toe), femur (thigh bone), clavicles (collar bone), bones of arms along with some coins, jewellery and medals were unearthed from the well site.

A total of 9,646 teeth samples were recovered. Of these, over 4,000 have been analysed so far.

Sehrawat told *The Indian Express*: "On the basis of trace elements and ancient DNA analysis, the average age of the soldiers was calculated to be between 21 to 49 years, with an average age of 33 years. As the

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## Seven held in Ayodhya for bid to defile places of worship: UP Police

**ASAD REHMAN**  
LUCKNOW, APRIL 28

SEVEN PERSONS were arrested in Ayodhya on Thursday for throwing objectionable posters and torn pages of religious texts outside three mosques and a shrine in what police said was their attempt to disturb the peace to protest against "the recent incident in Delhi".

The accused have been identified as Mahesh Kumar Mishra, Pratyush Srivastava, Nitin Kumar, Deepak Kumar Gaur alias Gunjan, Brijesh Pandey, Shatrughan Prajapati and Vimal Pandey — all residents of Ayodhya district. Police said while the youngest, Gaur, is 22

years old, the oldest, Mishra, is 37.

The accused have been booked under IPC Sections 295 (injuring or defiling places of worship with intent to insult the religion of any class), and 295-A (deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs).

In a statement, Ayodhya police said Mishra was the "mastermind", and the acts were planned "in opposition to the recent incident in Delhi". Police sources said the reference was to the violence in Delhi's Jahangirpuri earlier this month.

According to the police, objectionable items were thrown outside three mosques — Taatshah

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## Between lines of language faceoff: South is new No. 1 in cinema stakes



Stills from *RRR* and *Pushpa: The Rise*, among the highest grossing films this year

**PAGE 1**  
**ANCHOR**

**ROHAN NAAHAR**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 28

AS POLITICAL leaders across parties in Karnataka weighed in on a debate triggered by an exchange of words between Bollywood star Ajay Devgn and Kannada actor Kiccha Sudeep, former Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy tweeted that what lay at the heart of it was a simple fact: "Devgn must realise that Kannada cinema is outgrowing Hindi film industry."

In recent months, films such as *Pushpa: The Rise*, *RRR* and most recently, *KGF: Chapter 2*, have broken box-office records, signalling a seismic shift in a marketplace long dominated by Hindi films. In 2019, Bollywood's share at the domestic box office was around Rs 5,200 crore, while

all South Indian film industries together accounted for around Rs 4,000 crore. By 2021, as per a new EY-FICCI report, Bollywood's earnings of Rs 800 crore were one-third of the Rs 2,400 crore made by South Indian films.

The political row erupted after Devgn stirred a Hindi vs regional languages debate following a statement by Sudeep at a recent press event that Hindi could no longer be considered the "national language" as audiences had a clear appetite for regional cinema. Devgn tweeted to Sudeep Wednesday, saying that if he didn't consider Hindi the national language, why did South Indian filmmakers release dubbed Hindi versions of their films in North Indian markets. Hindi is our mother tongue and national language and will remain so, Devgn said.

Sudeep later clarified that the context in which he made the

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

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Chief Commissioner Of Income Tax.

**Dr. Bala Prasad (Retd. IFS)**  
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**AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022**

	Particulars	Quarter Ended 31/03/2022 (Audited)	Year Ended 31/03/2021 (Audited)	Year Ended 31/03/2022 (Audited)
<b>Net Profit 109.28%</b>	Total Income from Operations (Net)	3948.55	14496.21	15671.70
<b>NIM 3.15%</b>	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	813.62	954.13	1955.60
<b>PCR 94.79%</b>	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	813.62	954.13	1955.60
<b>CRAR 16.85%</b>	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	355.23	550.25	1151.54
<b>Gross NPA 3.94%</b>	Paid up Equity Share Capital	6730.50	6560.16	6730.50
<b>Net NPA 0.97%</b>	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) - as on date	5913.93	4400.40	5913.13
	Securities Premium Account	328.31	94.95	328.31
	Net Worth	10512.38	8019.20	10512.38
	Paid up Debt Capital / Outstanding Debt	50.29	61.47	50.29
	Debt Equity Ratio	0.42	0.39	0.42
	Earnings Per Share (of ₹ 10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations)	0.53	0.88	1.72
	Capital Redemption Reserve	---	---	---

**Note:** The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly / Annual Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 and 52 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly / Annual Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange websites (BSE: www.bseindia.com and NSE: www.nseindia.com) and Bank's website (www.bankofmaharashtra.in)

**Place: Pune**  
**Date : 28/04/2022**

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# 3 West Bengal

## WAR OF WORDS OVER FUEL VAT

# Mamata tells Centre to cut fuel, LPG prices; will not meet with PM in Delhi

Says Centre 'not taking any responsibility' of students returning from Ukraine

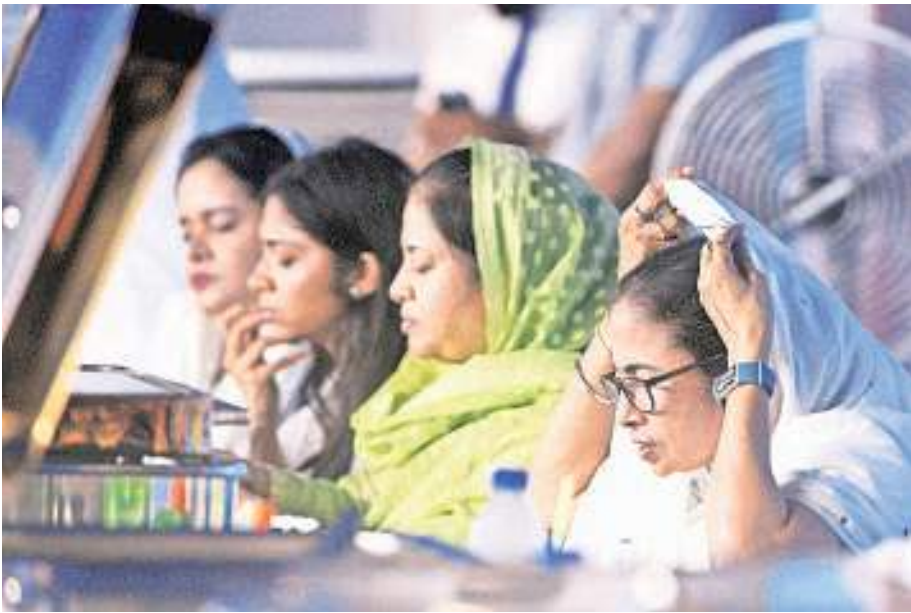
EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, APRIL 28

A DAY after criticising Prime Minister Narendra Modi for asking Opposition-ruled states to reduce VAT on fuel, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday demanded that fuel and LPG prices be reduced immediately.

Accusing the central government of shifting the blame for the rising price of fuel on state governments, Banerjee said: "There is no point in writing a letter to the Centre (over several issues) as they do not respond. Yesterday (Wednesday), the agenda of the meeting was Covid-19, not the targeting state governments over fuel prices. Let me tell you in days to come, the fuel prices will be increased further. That's why they are shifting the blame on state governments (before the increase). They (the Centre) have earned Rs 17.3 lakh crore from the people after increasing the fuel prices on fourteen occasions. The Centre will increase the price, then take away money from the state and will not clear our dues. But they will always shift the blame on us."

"We feel the prices of domestic gas (LPG) must be slashed by Rs 300, which they increased in recent months. The prices of petrol and diesel must be slashed immediately. When crude oil prices had decreased globally, the Centre had not reduced the fuel prices. Why the prices were not slashed at that time?" Banerjee asked while addressing a press conference at the state secretariat.

On Wednesday, Banerjee had



Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee at an iftar in Kolkata, Thursday. CMO

joined a chorus of opposition leaders, criticising the Prime Minister for asking the non-BJP ruled state governments to reduce VAT on the fuel prices.

Banerjee, meanwhile, said during her two-day visit to Delhi, she won't be able to have a separate meeting with the Prime Minister due to time constraints.

Banerjee will reach the national capital on Friday night to attend the 'Chief Justices-Chief Ministers Conference' on Saturday. She will return to Kolkata on Saturday evening.

"I will be going to New Delhi tomorrow (Friday) night and return on Saturday evening. I have engagements on the occasion of Labour Day on May 1. After that, I also have several engagements on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr celebrations. So, this time there cannot be a separate meeting with the PM," said Banerjee.

The Chief Minister announced that her government would accommodate the students who returned home to West Bengal leaving their stud-

ies in Ukraine due to the ongoing war, and lashed out at the Centre for "not taking any responsibility of these students".

"Even after two months, the Central government has not yet taken any responsibility for the students who returned from Ukraine. They have just asked the students to go to Poland and Hungary for their studies. But, we have come up with an idea to help these students as it is not possible for them to spend a huge amount of money again for their education in another country," said Banerjee.

According to the state government, a total of 422 students were brought back to West Bengal from Ukraine. Out of which, 412 are medical students — 409 MBBS students and three dental students. There are also six engineering students and one veterinary student. Along with the students, there were three labourers. After a meeting with Ukraine-returned students with the Chief Minister on March 16, CVs and all other particulars

from them were collected and shared with the departments concerned for their admission. For the sixth-year medical students, a total of 23 students, will be allowed to undergo an internship at the state government medical colleges as per norms.

For the fifth-year and fourth-year students (total of 135), they will be allowed to undergo 'observing seat' at different medical colleges in a distributed manner i.e. 15-20 students per college. For the third-year and second-year students (total of 172), they will be allowed to attend 'practical classes' at the different government colleges. For the first-year and second-year students (total of 78), all those who are NEET qualified for the current year (2021) (i.e., a total of 69 students), have been allowed to appear for counselling immediately at private medical colleges against the management quota seats for fresh admission. Colleges have been requested to offer concessions in fees charged to these students.

All six engineering students

### SOURAV MEETS CM

Kolkata: Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday held a meeting with former Indian cricket team skipper and BCCI president Sourav Ganguly at the state secretariat here.

Asked to comment on the meeting, Banerjee said, "Sourav had come. There was no talk regarding the upcoming IPL matches. We were just engaging in a casual chat. A land was given to the Cricket Association of Bengal for the setting up of a stadium, but it turned out to be a wetland. Therefore, a stadium cannot be set up there. So, discussions are going on over an alternative plot of land." **ENS**

have been offered seats in private engineering colleges under the JIS group, two of them have joined while others are in the process of joining, said the release from the government.

For the dental students, one student who has completed his studies will be allowed to do his internship at Government Dental College in Kolkata, while the remaining two students in the second year will be allowed to do observership and practical classes at the government dental colleges. Veterinary student Aniket Banerjee has been provided admission at the West Bengal University of Animal and Fishery Sciences in the ensuing session. Out of the three workers, who have returned from Ukraine, two persons (Amit Biswas and Samir Biswas) have been accommodated as DRW (a casual worker) with the Nadia DM office and their families are being provided with a loan to start a small business. The third person (Suman Adhikari) has left for a job in Dubai, said the state government.

## Jute price capping: BJP MP Arjun Singh writes another letter to Union minister

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, APRIL 28

BJP MP Arjun Singh, who had sent a letter to Union textile minister Piyush Goyal on April 19 informing him about alleged corruption in the Jute Corporation and sought his response within a week, has made a copy of the letter public while stating that he has so far not received any reply from the Union minister.

Singh said he had written a second letter to Goyal, seeking his appointment so that he could explain to him the issues involved with the price capping policy.

In the meantime, the Indian National Trimmool Trade Union Congress (INTTUC), a workers' organisation of the ruling Trinamool Congress, has announced to launch a protest on the issue of corruption. INTTUC state president Ritubrata Bandyopadhyay said, "A protest meeting has been organised on the behalf of the jute workers on May 4 in front of the jute commissioner's office."

Arjun Singh, however, expressed his willingness to support the cause of the jute workers and



Arjun Singh says he has sought Goyal's appointment

any protest in their favour. "It is in the support of the jute workers. They (INTTUC) should call everyone and protest together. They haven't called me, if they do, I will see if I can go," said Singh. Responding to Singh's statement, TMC Rajya Sabha MP Sukhendu Sekhar Roy said, "It is our party's programme, but if someone wants to come, he is free to come."

The Centre has fixed a price cap of Rs 6,500 per quintal on raw jute. The upper cap of Rs 6,500 per quintal was fixed by the jute commissioner's office on September 30, 2021 for 2021-22. However, jute mill owners, workers and unions are claiming that the capping is forcing them to close jute mills as they are incurring huge losses. Market prices are around Rs 7,200 a quintal and they are forced to sell at 6,500 a quintal, they said, demanding the Centre to revoke the price capping.

## CPI(M) inducts four new faces in Bengal Secretariat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
KOLKATA, APRIL 28

THE CPI(M) on Thursday inducted four new faces in its West Bengal Secretariat, filling up vacancies that were created after senior leaders like Biman Bose and former secretary Surjyakanta Mishra eased themselves out to make way for fresh blood in the party leadership.

A party official said Debalina Hembram, Bibesh Sarkar, Jiaul Alam and Debabrata Ghosh were enrolled into the state secretariat, which now comprises 15 members, on the inaugural day of its two-day meeting. Mohd Salim was recently elected the CPI(M)

state secretary in place of Mishra, while octogenarian Left Front chairman Biman Bose had also decided to step down from the state committee, apart from Mridul De, Ashok Bhattacharya, Minati Ghosh and Rabin Deb.

Newly inducted Hembram is from Bankura and Ghosh from Hooghly, while Sarkar and Alam are from the north Bengal districts of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri, respectively, the CPI(M) official said.

The other members of the state secretariat include Ramchandra Dome, Sridip Bhattacharya, Amiya Patra, Sujan Chakraborty, Abhas Roy Choudhury, Sumit Dey, Samik Lahiri, Kallol Mazumder, Anadi Sahoo and Palash Das.

## TMC MLA from Basanti alleges threat to life, seeks more security

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, APRIL 28



Mondal says he complained against extortionists

As an MLA, I have to move around in different places in my constituency. But, after getting threats, I have been feeling helpless. So, I approached police, seeking a higher security cover."

The TMC MLA move, however, drew sharp criticism from the opposition BJP. "When an MLA of the ruling party, who was also a former state minister, feels helpless after receiving life threats, then one can imagine how pathetic the law and order situation in the state is. No one is safe here," said state BJP president Sukanta Majumdar.

Attacking the BJP, TMC state vice president Jay Prakash Majumdar said the BJP leaders

"do not have the moral right to speak" on this issue. "Their leaders in the BJP-ruled states move around with a large security convoy. Even here, their MLAs have central forces personnel for their security. So, the BJP has no moral right to speak on this," he said.

Meanwhile, TMC MP Mahua Moitra appealed to the people to lodge a complaint with the police or reach out to her office if anyone makes an extortion call or tries to dupe them on the pretext of providing a government job.

In a Facebook post, Moitra wrote: "The CM (Mamata Banerjee) has made it clear that no one should use the party's name to make any extortion bid or dupe people in the name of providing a government job. If you come across any such attempt, then lodge a written complaint with the police or with my office. Do not fear. It does not matter how influential that person is because no one will be spared."

## WAS SUFFERING FROM CANCER

## Veteran journalist Shyamal Baran Roy passes away at 58

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, APRIL 28



Shyamal Baran Roy

Roy was very popular for his flair for writing and deep knowledge of various issues

disciple of the Ramakrishna Math and had attended the con-ferment of Sainthood ceremony of St (Mother) Teresa in Rome.

Roy, who worked with Press Trust of India (PTI) for several years, had taken voluntary retirement a few years ago.

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**POST GRADUATE MEDICAL ADMISSION COUNSELLING (PGMAC)-2021**  
for MD / MS / PGD / DNB (Degree & Diploma) in Govt./ Private Medical Colleges of Bihar

Advt. No.-BCECEB(PGMAC)-2021/16 Dated 28.04.2022 [bceceboard.bihar.gov.in](http://bceceboard.bihar.gov.in)

**Notice for Fresh MOP-UP Counselling (PG Medical)**

In continuation to Adv. No. BCECEB(PGMAC)-2021/12 dated 24.03.2022 & 2021/13 dated 07.04.2022, Fresh Online applications and submission of Application form are invited from qualified, eligible and interested NEET(PG)-2021 candidates who has not submitted application for appearing in earlier offline Mop-up Counselling of PGMAC-2021 held from 26.03.2022 to 29.03.2022, for appearing in Fresh Offline Mop-up Counselling for allotment of seats against vacant seats of PG Courses in Govt. and Private Medical Colleges of Bihar.

- Those candidates who have already duly submitted the Online Application Form earlier for appearing in Mop-up Counselling held from 26.03.2022 to 29.03.2022 in the light of advertisement no. BCECEB(PGMAC)-2021/10 dated 12.03.2022 **need not to apply again.** Those candidates will be automatically included in the merit list to be prepared for Fresh Mop-up Counselling, if found eligible.
- As per MCC Ref. No.- U-12021/06/2021-MEC dt. 20.04.2022, candidates joined in Round-2, whether through All India Quota or State Quota will not be eligible to participate in Fresh Mop-up Round.
- The online Registration and submission of Application Form will start from 29.04.2022 and close on 30.04.2022.**
- Eligibility criteria for counselling, Fee payment procedure, instructions and other details are available in the prospectus of PGMAC-2021 and the **related detailed Advertisement No. BCECEB(PGMAC)-2021/15 Dated 28.04.2022** which can be downloaded from the Board's website : [bceceboard.bihar.gov.in](http://bceceboard.bihar.gov.in).

Controller of Examination

**भारतीय कंटेनर निगम लिमिटेड**  
**CONTAINER CORPORATION OF INDIA LTD.**  
(भारत सरकार का नवहन उपक्रम)  
(A Navratna Undertaking of Govt. of India)  
Regd. Office & Investors Relation Centre: CONCOR Bhawan, C-3, Mathura Road, New Delhi-110076. CIN : L63011DL1983OC003915 | Tel. Nos.: 011-4122 2800/60700, E-mail: [investorrelations@concorindia.com](mailto:investorrelations@concorindia.com) | Website: <http://www.concorindia.co.in>

### Notice

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Regulation 47 read with Regulation 29 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, that a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company will be held on 19th May, 2022 to inter-alia consider and approve the Audited Financial Results of the Company for the quarter and year ended on 31st March, 2022 and declaration of Final Dividend for 2021-22, if any, to the shareholders.

Further, in terms of SEBI (PIT) Regulations, 2015, as amended, the Trading Window for dealing in Equity Shares of the Company is closed for all designated persons for the period from 01st April, 2022 till the expiry of 48 hours after declaration of the Financial Results of the Company for the quarter and the year ended 31st March, 2022.

This information is also available on the website of the Company and the websites of the Stock Exchanges where the Company's shares are listed viz. BSE Limited ([www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com)) and the National Stock Exchange of India Limited ([www.nseindia.com](http://www.nseindia.com))

For & on behalf of Container Corporation of India Limited

Place: New Delhi Date: 27.04.2022 Sd/- Executive Director (Finance) & CS

**बैंक ऑफ बरोडा**  
**Bank of Baroda**  
**ZONAL STRESSED ASSET RECOVERY BRANCH**  
21A, Sadananda Road, 2nd Floor, Kolkata - 700 026  
Tel. No. 033-2419 6434 / E-mail: [armcal@bankoffbaroda.com](mailto:armcal@bankoffbaroda.com)

**Letter No.: BOB/ZOSARB/2022-23/103**  
**1. M/s Little Heart Children's Hospital Pvt. Ltd. (Borrower)**, Holding No. 2717/1, T. G. Samanta Road, J.L. No. 213, Ward No. 22, Mouza- Kenduadihi, P.S. Bankura, Dist. Bankura, West Bengal, Pin-722102  
**2. Mr. Dipankar De**, (Director - M/s Little Heart Children's Hospital Pvt. Ltd.), Vill. and PO Bankadaha, Dist. Bankura, West Bengal, Pin-722164  
**3. Mr. Gopal Hazra**, (Director - M/s Little Heart Children's Hospital Pvt. Ltd.), Vill. and PO Bara Gadra Sarenga, Sub Division Katra, Dist. Bankura, West Bengal, Pin-722150  
**4. Mr. Abhik Hazra**, (Director - M/s Little Heart Children's Hospital Pvt. Ltd.), Banshi Sarenga, Sarenga, Dist. Bankura, West Bengal, Pin-722150  
**5. Mr. Kousik Roy**, (Director - M/s Little Heart Children's Hospital Pvt. Ltd.), Mouza- Jharbani (Paschim), J.L. No. 489, Amalgore Garbeta, Paschim Medinipur, Medinipur, West Bengal, Pin-721211  
**6. Mr. Kartik Charan**, (Director - M/s Little Heart Children's Hospital Pvt. Ltd.), Mouza- Chhotabokadaha, J.L. No. 148 (Part), Bankadaha, Bishnupur, Bankura, West Bengal, Pin-722164  
**7. Mr. Pinku Kumar Das**, (Director - M/s Little Heart Children's Hospital Pvt. Ltd.), Palashpa I (J.L. No. 143), Palash Pai - 1, Khanakul, Hooghly, West Bengal, Pin-711401  
**8. M/s Rahul Health Care Pvt. Ltd. (Guarantor)**, College Road (Rash Tala), Bishnupur, PO and PS Bishnupur, Dist. Bankura, West Bengal, Pin-722122  
**9. M/s New Land Agro Industries Ltd. (Guarantor)**, Bankadaha, PS Bishnupur, West Bengal, Pin-722164

Dear Sir,  
**Re: Declaration of M/s Little Heart Children's Hospital Pvt. Ltd. and its Directors / Guarantors as Willful Defaulters**  
We refer to our show cause notice no. BOB/ZOSARB/2021-22/698 dated 01.06.2021 for declaring M/s Little Heart Children's Hospital Pvt. Ltd. and Mr. Gopal Hazra, Mr. Koushik Roy, Mr. Pinku Kumar Das, Mr. Dipankar De, Mr. Abhik Hazra, Mr. Kartik Charan (Directors), M/s New Land Agro Industries Ltd., M/s Rahul Health Care Pvt. Ltd. (Guarantor) as Willful Defaulters on the following grounds:  
• The borrower did not deposit any amount from sale proceeds of stock/realization of book debts in the account, thereby diverting the funds.  
• They have closed their business and no trace of the borrower/guarantor.

As you are aware that our branch had sent the show cause notice referred above by registered post/speed post/courier on 04.06.2021, which you have received (as observed from your letter dtid. 24.06.2021 seeking extension of time to submit reply to SCN issued). Even after receipt of the above referred show cause notices, we have not received any representation or response from you.

In the light of the aforesaid facts and circumstances and perusing the documents on record the Committee of Executives on Willful Defaulters (COE) of bank has decided to declare M/s Little Heart Children's Hospital Pvt. Ltd. and Mr. Gopal Hazra, Mr. Koushik Roy, Mr. Pinku Kumar Das, Mr. Dipankar De, Mr. Abhik Hazra, Mr. Kartik Charan (Directors), M/s New Land Agro Industries Ltd., M/s Rahul Health Care Pvt. Ltd. (Guarantor) as 'Willful Defaulters' on the grounds mentioned in the show cause notice, after concluding that the borrower has defaulted in meeting its payment/repayment obligations to the lender and has not utilized the finance from the lender for the specific purposes for which finance was availed of but has diverted the funds for other purposes.

The decision of the COE was conveyed vide our letter No. BOB/ZOSARB/2021-22/866 dated 25.11.2021 as the letters were returned undelivered paper publication done on 06.12.2021 with an opportunity for submission of further representation, if any, for consideration by the Review Committee on Willful Defaulters. In terms of RBI guidelines and to comply principles of natural justice. The representation dated 11.12.2021 received from the borrower Directors Mr. Abhik Hazra, Mr. Kartik Charan, Mr. Gopal Hazra and Mr. Dipankar De in response to the decision of COE was placed before the Review Committee.

In the aforesaid circumstances, and after perusal of documents on record and representation received, Bank's Review Committee on Willful Defaulters in its meeting held on 25.03.2022 confirmed the decision of the Committee of Executives on Willful Defaulters (COE).

Thus after following the due procedure, it has been decided to declare M/s Little Heart Children's Hospital Pvt. Ltd. and Mr. Gopal Hazra, Mr. Koushik Roy, Mr. Pinku Kumar Das, Mr. Dipankar De, Mr. Abhik Hazra, Mr. Kartik Charan (all Directors), M/s New Land Agro Industries Ltd., M/s Rahul Health Care Pvt. Ltd. (Guarantor) as Willful Defaulters. Bank reserves the Right to publish the name and photograph of Willful Defaulter in News Paper and will initiate the necessary recovery action as per extant guidelines issued by Reserve Bank of India.

This communication is issued as per the directions of the Review Committee on Willful Defaulters.

This is for your information.

Yours faithfully,

(Chief Manager)



## Kamal Nath quits as CLP leader; Cong picks Govind

IRAM SIDDIQUE  
BHOPAL, APRIL 28

AFTER MORE than two years as Leader of Opposition in Madhya Pradesh Assembly, former chief minister Kamal Nath Thursday stepped down as leader of Congress Legislature Party (CLP). The party named seven-time MLA Govind Singh as his replacement.

Kamal Nath, who is also the state Congress president since 2018, took over as Leader of Opposition after his 15-month-long government fell on March 20, 2020 with the exit of Jyotiraditya Scindia and his 25 loyalist MLAs. "This is to inform you that the Congress president has accepted



Kamal Nath with Govind Singh and other senior Congress leaders. Express

your resignation from the post of leader, Congress Legislature Party, Madhya Pradesh with immediate effect. The party wholeheartedly appreciates your contribution as the CLP leader," said AICC general secretary K C Venugopal in a communication to Kamal Nath.



## REMEMBERING THE LEGEND

An art installation on Satyajit Ray to celebrate his birth centenary at Nandan Complex in Kolkata on Thursday. Partha Paul

### 34 NEW COVID-19 CASES IN BENGAL IN LAST 24 HRS

Kolkata: West Bengal on Thursday logged 34 new Covid-19 cases with no deaths, the state health department's bulletin said. The state reported 21 recoveries in the last 24 hours. The death toll stands at 21,201 and the positivity rate stands at 0.33 per cent. **ENS**

### Reconsider early summer vacation decision: Teachers' group to Mamata

Kolkata: An association of primary teachers in West Bengal on Thursday urged Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to reconsider the decision to have a 45-day summer vacation, starting from May 2, due to the prevailing heat wave conditions.

PURULIA HITS 44.3°C

## Heatwave in Bengal, Met says no respite till this weekend

ENS & PTI  
KOLKATA, APRIL 28

PURULIA AT the edge of Chota Nagpur plateau recorded a searing 44.3 degrees Celsius, the highest maximum temperature on Thursday in West Bengal, as its neighbouring districts of Bankura, Jhargram and Paschim Bardhaman also reeled under heatwave conditions, the weather office said.

Purulia's maximum temperature of 44.3 degrees Celsius meant a departure of 6.5 degrees above normal, while that of Asansol (42.6 degrees C) in Paschim Bardhaman, Jhargram (42 degrees C) and Bankura (42.4 degrees C) was 4.5 notches above average.

Kolkata recorded the day's maximum temperature at 37.3 degrees Celsius, while the highest relative humidity reached 85 per cent, causing discomfort among the people out at work and students of schools and colleges, the weather office said.

While some private schools

in the city have gone back to the online teaching mode, the state government has announced that summer vacation will be advanced owing to the excessive heat.

The Met Office has forecast heatwave condition in several south Bengal districts for next two to three days.

According to a Met department official, there are slim chances of rains over south Bengal on Saturday.

"For next two to three days, there will be no change in the present weather condition. Heatwave condition will prevail in several districts such as Purulia, Bankura, East Burdwan, West Burdwan and Birbhum. In some places rains could occur on Saturday. But the real chances of rain will be favourable over south Bengal districts since May 2," said the official.

The Met Office has, however, said that the sub-Himalayan districts in north Bengal are likely to receive light to moderate rainfall in the next two to three days.



Hardik Patel with Congress leaders at an event to mark his father's death anniversary. Nirmal Harindran

## Hardik will have key role in polls, says Congress's Gujarat in-charge

PARIMAL DABHI  
VIRAMGAM, APRIL 28

CONGRESS LEADERS turned up in strength for the death anniversary of Hardik Patel father on Thursday in Viramgam, asserting that the Patidar leader has a "key role" to play in the upcoming Assembly elections.

With Hardik's list of BJP invitees largely staying away, the state Congress working president returned the favour by saying it could be said that the issues he had with the Congress had been resolved. "Our aim is to form a Congress government in 2022 (the coming Assembly elections), and Hardik Patel will have a key role in it," Raghu Sharma, in-charge of Congress in Gujarat who was present at the Viramgam event, said. Asked about Hardik's statements expressing unhappiness within the party, he added: "Hardik is the future and an inseparable, strong pillar of the Congress. He will continue to work for the party, his future is bright."

The death anniversary of Hardik's father Bharatbhai, who succumbed to Covid-19, saw recitation of Ram Dhun and Sundar Kand and Hindu priests from different sects.

The entire top leadership of the Gujarat Congress was present, including state president Jagdish Thakor, Leader of Opposition Sukhram Rathva, local Congress MLA Lakhabhai Bhargwad, former Leader of Opposition Paresh Dhanani, Dasada MLA Naushad Solanki and former state president Siddharth Patel.

## COURT RESERVES ORDER ON MEVANI BAIL

**Guwahati:** A local court in Assam's Barpeta district on Thursday reserved its order on Gujarat MLA Jignesh Mevani's bail plea in connection with a case of allegedly assaulting a woman police officer. The court will pass the order on Friday, Mevani's advocate Angshuman Bora said.

According to him, the prosecution tried to get an adjournment but the court "declined it" and ordered the prosecution to submit its arguments on Thursday itself.

On Tuesday, the Civil Judicial Magistrate Court had sent Mevani to five-day police custody. **ENS**

## NOTICE

In-continuation to this Office Advertisement dated 26.04.2022 regarding application for the appointment of Vice Chancellor, Sardar Patel University, Mandi, Himachal Pradesh. The format of application for the post of Vice Chancellor can be downloaded from the official website of the Raj Bhavan i.e. [www.himachalrajbhavan.nic.in](http://www.himachalrajbhavan.nic.in). 0594/HP

## E-Tender Notice

N.I.T. No.: WB/MAD/ULB/RSM/06/22/2nd Call dated 28.04.2022. Name of the work: Annual Maintenance Contract of Servers with Computers, Laptops, printers, CCTV Management and Talai Network System at various offices/units under Rajpur-Sonarpur Municipality (2nd Call). a) Date of uploadation: 29.04.2022 at 17-30 HRS b) Date of Prebid meeting: 02.05.2022 at 12:00 HRS c) Last Date & Time limit for Submission of E-Tender: 10.05.2022 upto 12:00 HRS. d) Date & Time for Opening of Technical Bid: 12.05.2022 after 13:00 HRS. e) Date & Time for Opening of Financial Bid: To be notified. For more information please visit <http://www.wbtenders.gov.in>. Sd/- Executive Officer Rajpur-Sonarpur Municipality

## "IMPORTANT"

Whilst care is taken prior to acceptance of advertising copy, it is not possible to verify its contents. The Indian Express (P) Limited cannot be held responsible for such contents, nor for any loss or damage incurred as a result of transactions with companies, associations or individuals advertising in its newspapers or Publications. We therefore recommend that readers make necessary inquiries before sending any monies or entering into any agreements with advertisers or otherwise acting on an advertisement in any manner whatsoever.

## SALUTE THE SOLDIER

**KUT-AL-AMARA DAY**  
You laid down your lives and made the supreme sacrifice in the highest traditions of the FIFTH ROYALS. Your inspiring and selfless deed has always been a source of motivation to each one of us.  
Jem Gangaram Desai, Hav Krishnarao Pawar, Sep Prahlad Saw, P/Lnk Ananda Ganapati Yadav, Nk Babu Rewane, V/C Sep Baban Jathar, Sep Rajaram Nikam, Sep Dilip Krishna More, Nk Muguttrao Jagdale, Sep Shrikant Hadkar, Sep Govind Sontakke, Sep Kondekar Madhukar S, Nk Vishnu Patil, Sep Dnyanoba Takalkar, Sep Vithal Misal, Sep Bhagat Sanjay Dagadu, Lnk Ananda Chawan, Sep Arjun Jadhav, Sep Vilas Salunkhe, Sep Mohan Karlekar, Sep Kashiram More, Sep Balaji Sawant, Sep Yadav Dattatray, Sep Patil Narayan Babu, Sep Namdeo Chawan, Lnk Tukaram Wagmode, Sep Anil Kumar Kadam, Sep Raghunath Prasad Patel, Sep Mahadeo Kadam, Lnk Ganapati Petkar, Sep Ramchandra Kadam, Sep Gaikwad H Babasaheb, Sep Laxman Gawas, 2Lt MR Ghanekar, Sep Vithoba Patne, Sep Shiram Tatod, Sep Dayanba Gawas, Sub Tukaram Nikam, Sep Yashwant Mane, Capt Vinay R Sachan, Sep Dhondu Mahadik, Hav Shripati L Chougale, Sep Govind Masalkar, P/Lnk Bharat Mhaske, SM Sep Krishna Kale, Hav Tukaram Yadav, Capt N Murlidharan Sep Patil Prakash Bhagwan, Sep Krishna Patil, Hav Kisan Jagdale, V/C Nb Sub Namdeo Kore, Sep Pachange Pakkad Dagdu, Sep Krishana Salunke, Nk Bajirao Jadhav, SM Nb Sub K Tukaram Mundhe, Sep Shrikant Bodake, Lnk Jagnnath Pawar, Nk Eknath Kardile, V/C CHM R Soma Gawade, Maj Akash Singh, SC P/Lnk Jagu Bache, Lnk Clk K Purushottaman, Hav B Gulab Ghale, Nk Nale Dinkar Maruti, Lt Ronald Mathew Serrao, Lnk Sadashiv Bait, Hav Sudhakar Jadhav, Hav C Hambirao Bapurao, CHM Goma Gawas, Sep Eknath Mane, Nk Vilas Joti Powar, NK(TS) Ilake Pandurang J Hav Sandipan Naikode, Lnk Maruti Madilgekar, Lnk (TS) Vasudeo R Sawant, Lnk Kadam Sambhaji Y  
**Fondly remembered**  
**COMMANDING OFFICER & ALL RANKS**  
**FIFTH ROYALS.**




**RASHTRIYA RAKSHA UNIVERSITY**  
(An Institute of National Importance)  
Pioneering National Security and Police University of India  
Lavad - Dehgam, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, INDIA -382305  
Phone No. 079-68126800

**SASTRA/NCOM/001/2022**  
**INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR COMMERCIALISATION OF NAVAL INNOVATION**  
Security and Scientific Technical Research Association (SASTRA) constituted as a Section 8 company under the aegis of Rashtriya Raksha University is inviting Expression of Interest from MSMEs/SHGs/Companies for commercialisation of patented products through transfer of technology development by India Navy's Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO).  
The products are as under:  
1. NavRakshak® Isolation Gown  
2. NavRakshak® 95FFP-2 Antimicrobial Mask  
3. Compact Automatic Poisonous-Gas Absorption Module (CAPAM)  
4. Modular Small Arms Employment System (MOSES)  
5. Magnetometer Sensor Based Search (MSBS)  
For more details about the products, kindly visit <https://rru.ac.in/tender/>  
All interested bidders will need to send their Expression of Interest till 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2022, at [msme@rru.ac.in](mailto:msme@rru.ac.in)  
**Dt. 28/04/2022** **INF/207/22-23** **Registrar I/c**

**BELDANGA MUNICIPALITY**  
Murshidabad  
E-tender is invited by the authority of Beldanga Municipality from bonafide outsiders for:-  

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Ref. of Tender	Estimated Cost
1	Renovation/ Refurbishment of Urban-Health & Wellness Centers (U-H&WC)	WB/MAD/ULB/9EL/ NleT-01/2022-23	27.68 Lakh
2	Construction of segregation unit under SWM	WB/MAD/ULB/9EL/ NleT-02/2022-23	17.66 Lakh
3	Widening and strengthening of B. Road	WB/MAD/ULB/9EL/ NleT-02/2022-23	10.16 Lakh

  
Last date for submission of tender on 13.05.2022.  
For details visit [www.municipalitybeldanga.org](http://www.municipalitybeldanga.org), [www.wbtenders.gov.in](http://www.wbtenders.gov.in)



**Asansol Municipal Corporation**  
Asansol  
**Notice Inviting E- Tender 2nd Call**  
E. Tender Notice No. ET-83/WS/Eng/2021 dated 30-10-2021  
Memo No. 33/WS/Eng/2022 dated 27-04-2022  
Name of the work:- Construction of Dustbin Base of different places of Jamuria Borough No-I under Asansol Municipal Corporation.  
Please visit to website [www.asansolmunicipalcorporation.com](http://www.asansolmunicipalcorporation.com) or [www.wbtenders.gov.in](http://www.wbtenders.gov.in)  
For details, intending contractors may also contact Eng. Dept. of this office and office notice Board.  
**Sd/-**  
**Executive Engineer**  
Asansol Municipal Corporation




**Regional Office: Greater Kolkata Region**  
GN 38/2, Sector V, Salt Lake, Kolkata - 700 091  
Barasat Branch: 65/10 K N C Road, Opposite LICHL, Barasat Area office, PO- Barasat, North 24 Parganas, PIN-700124. E-mail: [barasa@bankofbaroda.com](mailto:barasa@bankofbaroda.com)

**E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE**

**SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES “APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6)]**  
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.  
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda, Secured Creditor, will be sold on “As is where is”, “As is what is”, and “Whatever there is” for recovery of below mentioned account/s. The details of Borrower/s/Guarantor/s/Secured Asset/s/Dues/Reserve Price/e-Auction date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below -  

Sr/ Lot No.	Name & address of Borrower/s/Guarantor/ s/ Mortgagor (s)	Detailed description of the immovable property with known encumbrances, if any	Total Dues	Date & Time of E-auction	Reserve Price EMD amount Bid Increase Amount	Status of Possession (Constructive /Physical)	Property Inspection date & Time
1.	<b>KARIMULLA GAZI (Borrower)</b> S/o Sowkat Ali Gazi <b>MAINAR KHAMAM (CO Borrower)</b> W/o Karimulla Gazi, both at Vill +PO- Nabapally, P.S.-Barasat, District- North 24 Parganas, West Bengal-700126	All that piece and parcel of a self contained Flat on the 2nd floor, measuring an area 727.20 sq. ft. including 20% super built up area of the multi storied building Namely Taru Gopal Apartment, underneath of the Proportionate share of Land measuring about 02 Cottah 08 Chittack 03 sq.ft., jaying and situated at Mouza- Baluria, R.S. and L.R. Dag No.-1076, R.S.-No.-227, Khatian No.-216, L.R. Khatian No.-564/1, J.L.No.-37, bearing deed I-1928 dated 02 September 2014, within the local limits Barasat Municipality under Holding No.-189/2, ward No.-5(old) and now 26, P.S.- Barasat, Dist.—North 24 Parganas, West Bengal-700124 Butted & bounded by: On the North by: Open to Sky On the South by: Flat No.B and Stair case, On the East by: Open to SKY On the West by: Open to Sky and Stair case	<b>Rs.16,92,182.01</b> (inclusive of interest upto 14.07.2021) and interest thereon together with Incidental Expenses, Cost, Charges etc	31.05.2022 from 2 p.m to 6 p.m	Rs.15,87,000/-  Rs.1,58,700/-  Rs.10,000/-	Physical	Any Working Day with prior appointment (10.00 AM to 03.00 PM)


  
For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer to the link provided in <https://www.bankofbaroda.in/e-auction.htm> and <https://bapi.in>. Also, prospective bidders may contact the authorized officer: **Mr. Sudhir Kumar Gupta**, Mob. Nos. 8335075427/9472702471  
**Authorised Officer**  
Bank of Baroda  
**Date: 29.04.2022, Place :- Barasat**



**GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE**  

SR. NO.	NAME OF BOARD/ CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT/EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1.	UHBVN	SQL SERVERS STANDARD EDITION LICENSE FOR CLOUD HOSTING WITH NIGAMS TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION	25.04.2022 16.05.2022	EMD 1.08 LACS	<a href="http://uhbvn.org.in">uhbvn.org.in</a> , <a href="mailto:gem.gov.in">gem.gov.in</a> TENDER NO GEM/2022/01226 667 dated 25.04.2022	9988779248 <a href="mailto:cemmm@uhbvn.org.in">cemmm@uhbvn.org.in</a>

  
9280/HRY FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT: [www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in)



**OFFICE OF THE ADDL. CHEIF ENGINEER M-3 D.Y. SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (T) M-3 DELHI JAL BOARD : GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI H-BLOCK : SECTOR-15 : ROHINI : DELHI-89 E-mail Id:- [eeetenderingm3.djb@gmail.com](mailto:eeetenderingm3.djb@gmail.com)**  
**PRESS NIT No. 06 (2022-23)**  
**Press Notice Tender**  

S. No.	Name of Work	Amount put to Tender Estimated cost	EMD/ Tender Fee	Date of release of tender procurement solution/ I.D. No.	Last date/time of receipt of bid through e-procurement solution
1.	P/L 400 mm dia M.S. connection line from A-5 RW to feeding main of Palla RWTW for improving water supply at Holambi/Kalan and SST UGR under ACE(M)-3. (Re-invite)	Rs. 90,21,961/-	Rs. 1,80,500/- Rs. 1000/-	28.04.2022 28.04.2022	13.05.2022 Upto 3.00 PM
2.	P/L 800 mm dia MS water main for making interconnection from G.T. Road near Singhola Red Light to DDA Command Tank No.-1, Sector A-6, Pocket-11, Narela in AC-01 Narela under EE (NW)-II (Presently under ACE (M)-3) (Re-invite)	Rs. 10,71,26,326/-	Rs. 21,42,600/- Rs. 1500/-	29.04.2022 2022_DJB_221238_1	13.05.2022 Upto 3.00 PM

  
Further details in this regard can be seen at <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>.  
ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER) Sd/-  
Advt. No. J.S.V. 69 (2022-23) Dy. Superintending Engineer (T) M-3  
**“STOP CORONA: Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene”**



**RASHTRIYA RAKSHA UNIVERSITY**  
(An Institute of National Importance)  
Pioneering National Security and Police University of India  
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**DIRECTORATE OF INSTITUTIONAL FINANCE & STATE LOTTERY**  
**Ph : 0389-2322291 : Fax : 0389-2320755**  
**e-mail :ifsl\_mizoram123@yahoo.in : Webssite: www.ifsl.mizoram.gov.in**  
**No. F.23012/19/21-DTE(IF&SL)/253 Dated Aizawl, the 28th April, 2022**  
**INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (Abbreviated)**  
Director, Institutional Finance & State Lottery, Mizoram, on behalf of the Governor of Mizoram, invites Expression of Interest from the interested and eligible Firms/Proprietorship concerns/Companies Registered/ LLP or other Legal entity registered under the applicable law for selection and appointment as Selling Agent (s) for sale of Paper Lotteries with Bumper draws conducted by the State of Mizoram.  
The last date of submission of Expression of Interest is upto 18th May, 2022 till 12:00 P.M and the same shall be opened on 20th May, 2022 at 1:00 P.M and onwards in the Office Chamber of Principal Secretary to the Government of Mizoram, Finance Department, MINECO, Khatla, Aizawl.  
Detailed terms and conditions may be obtained from the office of the undersigned during office working hours from 28th April, 2022 to 17th May, 2022 upto 4:00 P.M on payment of a non-refundable amount of Rs. 2,00,000/- (Rupees two lakh only), as tender fee by Demand Draft/Pay Order to be drawn on any Scheduled/ Nationalized Bank having its Bank branch at Aizawl in favour of the Director, Institutional Finance & State Lottery, Government of Mizoram.  
**Sd/-**  
**(JENNIFER. HL. DUHAWMI)**  
**Director Institutional Finance & State Lottery**  
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EXPLAINED YOUR MONEY

# After revised pricing, should you invest in LIC's IPO?



SANDEEP SINGH & GEORGE MATHEW

INDIA'S LARGEST financial institution, Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), which manages around Rs 40 lakh crore of public money, is getting listed on the stock exchanges with a Rs 21,000 crore initial public offering (IPO) early next month.

### How is the IPO priced?

LIC on Wednesday priced its IPO, the largest in the history of the capital market despite a reduction in size, at Rs 902-949 per share. LIC has offered a discount of Rs 60 for policyholders and Rs 45 for retail investors

and employees. The IPO will open on May 4 and close on May 9.

The government will sell 22.13 crore shares through the offering. The anchor book will open on May 2, and the issue will open for retail investors two days later. Investors can bid in multiples of 15 shares. The size of the IPO was cut from Rs 65,000 crore to Rs 21,000 crore as the Russian invasion of Ukraine and sustained selling by foreign portfolio investors (a net of Rs 1,48,078 crore since the beginning of December 2021) affected the stock markets.

### How should investors view the issue?

A couple of leading mutual fund managers said the reduction in valuation has made the issue attractive. "While there is a lot of inherent strength in the company and there are growth prospects, the valuations too seem fine now after the revisions. As the market is not witnessing a mad bull run that was being seen over the last year, there is a possibility that investors may not get immediate listing gains. But it will generate decent

returns over the next three to four years," a leading fund manager said.

"There is a lot of strength in the company. There are many categories where LIC is not present on the business front, and so there is a lot of scope for it to explore these and grow. As LIC had a monopoly, one can only lose market share from such a position. It is, however, important to note that the company still maintains around a 60% market share and it could be a good company to invest with a medium-to-long-term view," said another fund manager.

Some see the listing as part of a strategic vision of the government aimed at long-term value creation for shareholders. "Our take is that we won't be able to determine the true value in the case of LIC as it is a very big entity in itself. There are two ways to look at it: one in the present case where everyone is buying policies to safeguard themselves from uncertainties... second, due to huge buying power in the hands of consumers, the margins might reduce. One can subscribe with a long-term perspective," said Manoj Dalmia, founder and director, Proficient Equities Limited.

### How does the valuation compare with that of other insurers?

Yash Gupta, analyst at Angel One Ltd, said that at the offer band, the IPO is valued at a Price/Embedded Value (P/EV) of 1.06-1.1 on its September 2021 EV of Rs 539,686 crore, which is at a significant discount compared to the P/EV for listed private life insurance companies. HDFC Life Insurance is trading at a P/EV of 3.9, SBI Life at 3.2, and ICICI Pru Life at 2.5 on their respective December 21 EVs.

"Although LIC valuations appear to be cheap compared to listed private players, investors need to keep in mind that LIC has a lower VNB margin (value of new business) of 9.9% in FY2021 compared to private players that have VNB margins of 22-27% due to higher share of participation and group products. Despite lower margins and inferior business mix, we believe that the IPO is being priced reasonably and offers value to investors with a long-term view," Gupta said.

There is, however, a section of the market that is not fully convinced about the valuation. "The ongoing volatility in stock mar-

kets due to the Russia-Ukraine war has forced the government to cut the issue size to 3.5%. However, the price band is kept on the higher side, which is not an attractive price for adequate return growth. We recommend that investors may subscribe for listing day gains and wait for lower levels for long-term investment," said Ravi Singh, Vice-President and Head of Research, ShareIndia.

Tuhin Kanta Pandey, Secretary, Department of Investment and Public Asset Management, said, "This is a fair and attractive valuation... We want to champion LIC as a long-term value creator in the equity markets." He said the issue is right-sized considering the capital market environment and will not crowd out capital and monetary supply even under the current constraints.

### How big is LIC?

LIC, formed by merging and nationalising 245 private life insurance companies on September 1, 1956, with an initial capital of Rs 5 crore, now manages around Rs 40 lakh crore assets. It is the fifth largest life insurer

globally and the largest asset manager in the country. As on December 31, 2021, it covered 91% of all districts and had 1.33 million individual agents, and had a market share of 61.6% in terms of premiums or GWP, 61.4% in terms of New Business Premium, 71.8% in terms of number of individual policies issued, and 88.8% in terms of number of group policies.

### What are the advantages of listing?

LIC's profile will get a boost. Investors can trade in its shares or keep them long-term. LIC will become more transparent and answerable to shareholders for any mismanagement. It will have to follow the listing guidelines of stock exchanges and SEBI regulations.

While Pandey has ruled out a follow-on issue in the current financial year, markets are expecting more offers in the next financial year. Moreover, the insurtech industry will benefit. "Most of the public insurers in the country were still evaluating digitisation of customer journeys, which will get a boost post the LIC IPO," said Surjendu Kuila, co-founder and CEO, Zopper.

## SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

# States vs Centre on fuel taxes

The Prime Minister has noted that certain states have not reduced VAT; states have attributed rising fuel prices to central taxes. How is fuel taxed, and how are collections shared between the Centre and states?

AANCHAL MAGAZINE & KARUNJIT SINGH  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 28

THE CENTRE and the states are at loggerheads over taxes and duties on petrol and diesel. While the Centre feels the states are not reducing VAT in line with the Centre's cut in excise duty, the states have expressed concerns over their fiscal cushion, especially with the GST compensation regime due to end in June.

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Maharashtra, West Bengal, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Jharkhand have not reduced VAT, and urged "all states to work as a team in this time of global crisis following the spirit of co-operative federalism".

From opposition-ruled states, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said the state government has lost Rs 1,500 crore on account of a Re 1 subsidy it provides on petrol prices, and that the Centre owes West Bengal Rs 97,000 crore. Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray issued a statement detailing the Centre and the state's share of taxes on fuel and saying the former owes Maharashtra Rs 26,500 crore. Telangana CM K Chandrasekhar Rao said the state had not hiked fuel prices since 2014; Kerala Finance Minister K N Balagopal said the price hike was due to the cess and surcharge levied by the Centre.

As fuel prices soared in November 2021, the Centre, for the first time in over three years, cut central excise duties on petrol (by Rs 5 per litre) and diesel (by Rs 10 per litre). Twenty-one states, including 17 ruled by the BJP, and some Union Territories then cut VAT in the range of Rs 1.80-10 per litre for petrol and Rs 2-7 per litre for diesel. The revenue loss to states due to this is estimated at 0.08% of GDP, as per the RBI's State Finances report for 2021-22.

But the relief these moves provided was outweighed by a series of 14 price hikes in 16 days, following the lifting of a 137-day freeze after state elections in March.

### Fuel levies as revenue share

Excise duty and VAT on fuel constitute an important source of revenue for both the Centre and the states. Excise duty on fuel makes up about 18.4% of the Centre's gross tax revenues. Petroleum and alcohol, on an

TABLE 1

### PRICE BREAKUP IN DELHI (₹/LITRE)

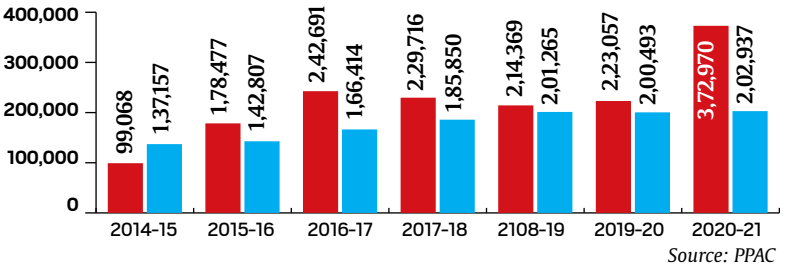
	Petrol	Diesel
Base price	56.32	57.94
Freight etc	0.20	0.22
Excise duty	27.90	21.80
Dealer commission (avg)	3.86	2.59
VAT	17.13	14.12
Retail price	105.41	96.67

Source: IOCL; last updated on April 16

CHART 1

### CENTRAL EXCISE & VAT/SALES TAX ON PETROLEUM PRODUCTS (₹ cr)

Dec-April 2021-22 (P) — Excise duty: ₹ 2,62,967 cr; Sales tax/VAT: ₹ 1,89,125 cr



Source: PPAC

average, account for 25-35% of states' own tax revenue, as per the RBI's Study of Budgets 2020-21. Of the revenue receipts of states, central tax transfers comprise 25-29%, and own tax revenues 45-50%.

During April-December 2021, taxes on crude oil and petroleum products had yielded Rs 3.10 lakh crore to the central exchequer, including Rs 2.63 lakh crore as excise duty, and Rs 11,661 crore as cess on crude. For the same period, Rs 2.07 lakh crore accrued to the states' exchequer, of which Rs 1.89 lakh crore was through VAT, as per the Petroleum, Planning & Analysis Cell (PPAC).

This compares with Rs 4.19 lakh crore (Rs 3.73 lakh crore excise duty; Rs 10,676 crore cess) collected by the Centre and Rs 2.17 lakh crore by states (VAT Rs 2.03 lakh crore) in 2020-21.

Petroleum taxes with states are shared out of basic excise duty. The Centre also levies additional excise duty and cesses on petroleum products. In 2020-21, the total central excise duty (including cesses) collected from petrol and diesel was Rs 3.72 lakh crore. The total tax devolved to state governments from the corpus collected under the central excise duty was Rs 19,972 crore.

Central and state taxes currently account for about 43% and 37% of the retail price of petrol and diesel respectively in Delhi. Credit ratings agency ICRA had noted in February that the Centre would have to forgo revenue of about Rs 92,000 crore in FY23 to restore excise duties on petrol and diesel to pre-pandemic levels. The levies on fuel and liquor have also become an important source of revenue for states as other indirect tax revenue is routed through the GST regime.

Sunil Kumar Sinha, Principal Economist, India Ratings and Research, said the switch to GST has severely curtailed the states' flexibility to adjust revenues according to the situation. "So at the moment, the only components which they can adjust are the fuel tax and excise duty on liquor," Sinha said, noting that this is why states are not willing to accept interference from the Centre on these taxes.

### How fuel is taxed

States apply an *ad valorem* VAT or sales tax on the base price, freight charges, excise duty and dealer commission on petrol and diesel. Therefore, state collections also rise as the Centre hikes excise duties. Prior to the cut in excise duties on November 4, the Centre had increased excise duties by a total of Rs 13 per litre on petrol and Rs 16 per litre on diesel compared to pre-pandemic levels.

Delhi imposes 19.4% VAT on petrol while Karnataka levies a 25.9% sales tax on petrol and 14.34% on diesel. Certain other states impose an *ad valorem* tax in addition to a flat tax per litre. Andhra Pradesh, for instance, levies Rs 4 per litre VAT and Rs 1 per litre road development cess on autofuels in addition to VAT (31% on petrol; 22.5% on diesel).

Other states have sales taxes with a fixed floor in rupee terms on the sale of petrol and diesel but apply an *ad valorem* tax as prices go higher. Uttar Pradesh, for instance, charges whichever is higher between 19.36% or Rs 14.85 per litre on the sale of petrol.

While state VAT collections have risen along with higher fuel prices and previous hikes in excise duties, the states' share of excise duties on fuel was reduced in the FY2022

Budget. It cut the Basic Excise Duty (BED) on petrol and diesel by Rs 1.6 and Rs 3 per litre respectively, cut the special additional excise duty on both by Rs 1 per litre, and introduced an Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess (AIDC) of Rs 2.5 per litre on petrol and Rs 4 on diesel. While reducing the states' share, this did not impact pump prices since collections from cesses are not part of the shareable pool.

### Tax revenues & price trends

The Centre's excise duty collections moved upward during 2014-15 to 2016-17, then showed moderation for next two years, before picking up again since 2019-20 after excise duty was raised in 2019 (see Chart 1). Every rupee hike in excise duty roughly yields Rs 13,000-14,000 crore annually, conditional on global prices and consumption levels.

Oil marketing companies (OMCs) have been revising prices since last month in line with rising crude prices, after a freeze of 137 days. Ordinarily, the prices of petrol and diesel are revised daily in line with a 15-day rolling average of benchmark prices. However, OMCs had held prices constant starting from the excise cut on November 4, until the end of elections in five states in March.

Since the revisions began in March, OMCs have hiked petrol prices by Rs 12 per litre and diesel prices by Rs 10 per litre. The price of LPG too has increased: a 15 kg cylinder now costs Rs 949.50 (up Rs 50) in Delhi, and a commercial 19 kg cylinder Rs 2,253 (up Rs 250).

The price of Brent crude has increased by about \$25.53 per barrel since November 4 to \$106.48 per barrel. India imports about 85% of its crude oil requirements.

# The Hattis of Himachal Pradesh, and their demand for ST status

MANRAJ GREWAL SHARMA  
CHANDIGARH, APRIL 28

HIMACHAL PRADESH Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur announced this week that Union Home Minister Amit Shah had assured him that the Centre would consider favourably the state government's request for inclusion of the Hatti community in the list of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the state. Thakur said the state government would complete all required formalities for getting tribal status for the Hattis.

With Himachal Pradesh headed to Assembly elections later this year, the ruling party's outreach to the estimated 3 lakh-strong community is politically significant. Earlier this month, they had threatened to boycott the elections if their demand for ST status was not met.

The Hattis have a sizable presence in about nine Assembly seats in the Sirmaur

and Shimla regions. Their population is concentrated in the four Assembly constituencies in Sirmaur district — Shillai, Paonta Sahib, Sri Renukaji, and Pachhad (all part of the Shimla Lok Sabha seat).

The BJP won 44 of the 68 Assembly seats in the 2017 elections, but the 2022 elections are likely to be tougher for the party, with the Aam Aadmi Party, upbeat after its spectacular win in Punjab, also in the fray.

### Community and land

The Hattis are a close-knit community who take their name from their traditional occupation of selling home-grown crops, vegetables, meat, and wool at small-town markets known as *haats*. Hatti men traditionally don a distinctive white headgear on ceremonial occasions. Thakur said the Hattis live in 154 panchayat areas, and members of the community numbered 2.5 lakh in the 2011 Census.

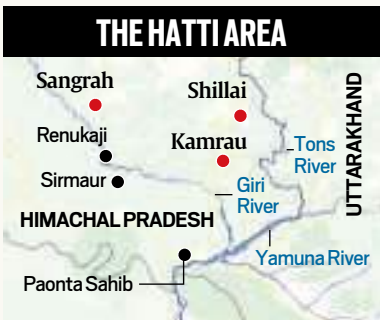
The Hatti homeland straddles the

Himachal-Uttarakhand border in the basin of the Giri and Tons rivers, tributaries of the Yamuna. The Tons marks the border between the two states, and the Hattis living in the trans-Giri area in today's Himachal Pradesh and Jaunsar Bawar in Uttarakhand were once part of the royal estate of Sirmaur. Jaunsar Bawar was conquered by the British in 1814. The two Hatti clans have similar traditions, and inter-marriages are common.

Within the Hatti community, a fairly rigid caste system operates — the Bhat and Khash are upper castes, and the Badhois are below them. Inter-caste marriages have traditionally been discouraged. The Hattis are governed by a traditional council called *khumblis* which, like the *khaps* of Haryana, decide community matters.

### Demand for ST status

The list of STs in Himachal Pradesh includes Gaddis, Gujjars, Kinnaras (Kinnauras), Lahaulas, Pangwalas, and some other



smaller tribes. The bulk of the tribal population lives in remote, high altitude areas in the districts of Lahaul, Spiti, Kinnaur, and Chamba. The tribal population of the state was 3.92 lakh (about 6% of the total) in 2011.

The Hattis have been demanding ST status since 1967, when tribal status was accorded to people living in Jaunsar Bawar in Uttarakhand, which shares a border with

Sirmaur district. Over the years, various *maha khumblis* passed resolutions pressing the demand.

"[Hattis of Jaunsar Bawar] share similar culture and socio-economic conditions with the Hattis residing in Sirmaur," Chief Minister Thakur said. "In 1967, their family members who were in Jaunsar were declared tribals but those who remained in Himachal were not given the same status or benefits." Since getting the benefit of reservations, the Jaunsar Bawar area has produced a sizeable number of civil servants.

Due to topographical disadvantages, Hattis living in the Kamrau, Sangrah, and Shillai areas of Himachal Pradesh have lagged behind in both education and employment.

### Political promises

In its Lok Sabha election manifesto in 2009, the BJP promised, for the first time, to give ST status to the Hattis. This led to the consolidation of the community behind the

party, which has repeated the promise in its subsequent manifestos. The BJP has gained from Hatti support in the parliamentary elections in Shimla, which was once a Congress stronghold. In 2014, Rajnath Singh, who was then national president of the BJP, promised the Hattis ST status at a rally in Nahan in Sirmaur.

In 2016, then Congress Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh moved a file to the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs asking for tribal status to the trans-Giri region, and Dodra Kwar in Rohru on the basis of a study conducted by the Tribal Affairs Institute, Shimla.

The Union Ministry, however, said that the ethnography report about the Hatti community was inadequate, and sought a full-fledged ethnographic study. In March this year, the Jai Ram Thakur government sent a detailed ethnographic proposal to the Centre, seeking the inclusion of the Hattis of the trans-Giri area in the ST list of Himachal Pradesh.





JAISHANKAR MEETS HASINA

India looking at resuming Bangla bus, rail link ‘after Eid’

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 28

INDIA IS looking at resuming cross-border bus and railway services with Bangladesh “shortly after Eid”, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Thursday. Jaishankar said this while making a press statement in Dhaka, where he met Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Foreign minister A K Abdul Momen.

Bangladesh PM’s spokesperson Ihsanul Karim Hasina told PTI in Dhaka that Hasina underlined the importance of connectivity between the two neighbours and offered her country’s main seaport – Chittagong Port – to India’s landlocked northeastern states such as Assam and Tripura.

She told Jaishankar that the enhanced connectivity was needed for mutual benefit, while it would particularly benefit India’s northeastern region in using Chittagong port, Karim said. “If the connectivity is increased...states like Assam and Tripura can have access to the seaport in Chattogram,” she said.

She said that initiatives were taken to resume cross-border routes between Bangladesh and India which were stopped during the 1965 India-Pakistan war, when Bangladesh was the east-



Jaishankar with Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina in Dhaka. PTI

ern wing of Pakistan.

Karim said several bilateral and international issues were discussed during Prime Minister Hasina’s more than half-an-hour-long meeting with Jaishankar.

Jaishankar handed over an invitation to Hasina on Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s behalf to visit New Delhi. “Thank Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her warm reception. Conveyed personal greetings of PM @narendramodi. Our bilateral relations are moving from strength to strength under the guidance of the two leaders,” he tweeted.

Jaishankar later held “positive discussions” with his Bangladeshi counterpart AK Abdul Momen. “Agreed that our close neighbourly partnership is progressing steadily. Our shared

endeavour would be to take it forward. Looking forward to hosting him for the Joint Consultative Commission,” he tweeted. Jaishankar said he expects early commissioning of new projects with Bangladesh in different sectors, including power, energy and connectivity.

Defence cooperation, water-sharing of Kushiara and Feni rivers, the Covid-19 situation and impacts of the Russia-Ukraine war on the global economy came up prominently in the discussion between Jaishankar and Hasina, Karim was quoted as saying by Bangladesh media.

Momen also hosted an iftar party followed by a dinner in Jaishankar’s honour at the Foreign Service Academy. Jaishankar would leave Dhaka for Bhutan on Friday morning.

Not feasible for state to slash fuel tax: TN finance minister to PM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
CHENNAI, APRIL 28

TAMIL NADU Finance Minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan said the Union government’s taxes “continue to be exorbitant” and that “it is neither fair nor feasible for the state government to further reduce taxes”.

A statement issued by Rajan late on Wednesday, in response to Prime Minister Narendra Modi criticising states including Tamil Nadu for not reducing taxes on fuel, said the “sole, simple, and fair approach to improve the situation for all, is for the Union government to remove the levy of cesses and surcharges and revert to rates that prevailed in 2014.”

The Union government’s levies on petrol have gone up substantially in the past seven years since Prime Minister Modi took charge for the first time in 2014, Rajan said.

“Though the revenue to the Union government has increased manifold, there has not been a matching increase in the revenue to states. This is because the Union government has increased the cess and surcharge on petrol and diesel while reducing the basic excise duty that is shareable with the states,” Rajan’s statement said.

ASSAM VISIT

Working towards removing AFSPA from Northeast: PM

TORA AGARWALA  
GUWAHATI, APRIL 28

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Thursday said the Centre is working towards lifting the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) from the Northeast region.

“For long, many states of the Northeast have been under AFSPA. But in the last eight years, because of peace and better law and order situation on ground, we have removed AFSPA from many parts of the region,” said the Prime Minister, addressing a ‘Peace, Unity and Development’ rally in Diphu in Assam’s Karbi Anglong district.

Earlier in the day, he inaugurated three colleges for veterinary science, agriculture, model government colleges in Diphu. He also launched the Rs 1,150 crore Amrit Sarovar Project to rejuvenate 2,950 water bodies across Assam. In Dibrugarh, he later inaugurated seven new cancer care hospitals, as well as laid the foundation stone for seven more.

The Prime Minister said that since 2014, violent incidents had reduced by 75 per cent in the region. “That is why we were able to lift AFSPA from first Tripura, then Meghalaya,” he said.

“In Assam, the AFSPA has been in force for three decades, and the previous governments kept extending it. But in the last few years, the situation has improved so much that AFSPA was removed from 23 districts of Assam,” he said, adding that the Centre was working towards removing the Act from Nagaland and Manipur as well.

The demand to repeal the AFSPA, which gives sweeping pow-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma at a rally in Assam’s Karbi Anglong district on Thursday. PTI

ers to the armed forces to arrest without warrants and even shoot to kill in certain situations in ‘disturbed areas’, got a renewed push after 14 civilians were killed in a botched security ambush in Nagaland’s Mon district in December last year.

In his speech, Modi complimented the Chief Ministers of the region for their efforts in solving the decades-old interstate boundary disputes. He said the BJP’s double-engine government had worked towards bringing peace and development in Assam.

“Since 2014, there has been peace and development in the Northeast,” he said, citing the peace accords in Assam’s Karbi Anglong, Bodo region and Tripura.

In Dibrugarh, while inaugurating the cancer hospitals, the Prime Minister said cancer is detected in

big numbers in Assam and the Northeast. “The most impacted are the poor and the middle class. There was a time a few years ago when poor and middle class patients had to go far away to big cities for treatment. This was a big financial burden on them,” he said, adding that the scenario had changed in the past five years.

“Assam has a big network of cancer care hospitals courtesy the work of former Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, current Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Tata Trusts,” he said.

The new hospitals – being built at a cost of Rs 4,000 crore – are a collaborative initiative by the Assam government and Tata Trusts. A PIB release said the project is aimed at building “South Asia’s largest affordable cancer care network with 17 cancer care hospitals spread

across the state”.

Under Phase 1, seven hospitals have been built at Dibrugarh, Kokrajhar, Barpeta, Darrang, Tezpur, Lakhimpur, and Jorhat, while three are under construction. Phase 2 will witness hospitals in Dhubri, Nalbari, Goalpara, Nagaon, Sivasagar, Tinsukia and Golaghat.

Ratan Tata, Tata Trusts chairman, who was present at the inauguration, said it was an “important day in the history of Assam”. “Higher level healthcare facility for cancer treatment which was earlier not available in the state is being brought here. Cancer is not a rich man’s disease,” he said.

Chief Minister Sarma said it was a dream come true for Assam. “We are now providing the largest cancer care treatment network of its kind in South Asia. This is a huge milestone for us,” he said.

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Sl. No.	NAME & ADDRESS OF CUSTOMERS	LOCKER NUMBER
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2.	DILIP MAITRA, 7/1, GARCHA 1ST LANE, SINGHI PARK, KOL-29	G-193
3.	MOUHA KINI, 200, R B AVENUE, KOL-29	G-187
4.	BIKASH BISWAS, 200, R B AVENUE, KOL-29	G-169
5.	ANIMA CHOWDHURY, 16/7, DOVER LANE, BL-D2, FL-52, KOL-29	G-299
6.	KUSHAL BHOWMIK, 12E, CHANDITALA LANE, KOL-40	G-455
7.	BIBHU ROY, 21C, HINDUSTHAN PARK, KOL-29	G-371
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11.	ANUVA DAS, H/NO. P-569, SALT LAKE EXTN, SARAT BOSE ROAD, KOL-29	G-89
12.	BANI CHAKRABORTY, 163 RASH BEHARI AVENUE, KOL-29	G-80
13.	GOUTAM SARKAR, AS-3/2 GOLF GREEN PHASE-1, KOL-95	S-407
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17.	MANAS MAITRA, BALAJI RESIDENCY FLAT NO. 1B, KOL-42	S-156
18.	NILAKSHI DUTTA, 7, SARAT CHATTERJEE AVE, KOL-29	S-314
19.	SUMAN MAJUMDAR, 49B, GOBINDPUR RD, 4-3-B1, GOLE PARK, KOL-45	S-386
20.	SAROJ DUTTA, G-7, GEETANJALI PARK, BRAHMA PUR, KOL-96	S-106
21.	TUSHAR BAG, 35, HALTU MAIN ROAD, JADAVPUR RUBI PARK, KOL-78	S-487
22.	INDIRA MUKHERJEE, 56/1, BOSEPUR PURBA PARA, KOL-78	S-210
23.	DEBASISH SAHA, 48, ASHOK RD, GANGULY KOL -84	S-35
24.	JAISHREE SINHA, 3A, MAHANIRBAN RD, KOL-29	S-145
25.	RAJ MOHAND, VENKATESWARA LODGE, 113, PRINCE GOLAM MOHD RD, KOL-29	S-232
26.	RAHUL SEN, 138, LAKE TERRACE, KOL-29	S-146
27.	BRATATI BANERJEE, FLAT NO-6, MAYUKH, DHAKURIA, KOL-31	S-43
28.	K SIVSANKARAN, SREE NILAYAM, NEAR LABOUR CENTRE, KATTOOR, POTHRISSUR-680702	S-60
29.	SRIDHAR NATTRAJAN, 1, PRINCE GOLAM MD RD, P.O. KALIGHAT, KOL-26	S-48
30.	SANKAR KR BASU, 26L, GARIAHAT RD, KOL-29	G-288
31.	P EKKA, OFFICER SBI DUMDUM AIRPORT BRANCH, KOL-29	G-488
32.	AJIT GHOSH, 82A, K SEN RD, KOL-42	S-124
33.	INDRANI ROY, 72/A, MAHANIRBAN RD, KOL-29	S-271
34.	SUSOVAN MUKHERJEE, A/32, BAGAJATIN PARK, HSG SOCIETY, PANCHASSAYAR, KOL-94	G-434
35.	UJJAL MALLICK, FLAT NO. 21, BLOCK-3, 28/1A, GARIAHAT ROAD, KOL-29	G-383
PARK CIRCUS BRANCH (01749)		
1.	MD HUMAYUN, 21/A, NASIRUDDIN ROAD, CIRCUS AVENUE, KOLKATA -700017	G-111
2.	SK AZIZ, 32, FUZULI HAQUE SAREENE, KOLKATA - 700017	G-125
3.	MASWOOD CHOWDHURY, 70 E, TILJALA ROAD, 4TH FLOOR, KOLKATA - 700046	G-148
4.	RITUPARNA MISHRA NEE MAJUMDAR, 8/2h/69, URUDAS DUTTA GARDEN ROAD, KOLKATA - 700067	G-05
5.	GITA ROY, 9, SYED AMIR ALI AVENUE, KOLKATA -700017	GA-146
6.	ANJALI SHAHA, 26, CONGRESS EXHIBITION ROAD, KOLKATA - 700017	GA-25
7.	FARAH ZAMA, C/O DR. M ALAM, 1B, GEBLUT STREET, KOLKATA - 700013	GA-4
8.	SK REZAUR RAHMAN, 33, BECKBAGAN ROW, KOL-700017	GB-23
9.	A B M SALEH, 4, SURHAWARDY AVENUE, 1ST FLOOR, KOLKATA - 700017	GB-39
10.	MUKUNDA LAL PODDAR, 14/98, GOLF CLUB ROAD, KOLKATA - 700033	GB-70
11.	UMA DUTTA, 37, SYED AMIR ALI AVENUE, KOL-700017	GB-97
12.	BUDDHADEB CHATTERJEE, C/O NATION MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL, KOLKATA - 700014	NG-44
13.	SABANA KHAIRI, 45, DILKUSHA STREET, KOL - 700017	NG-69
14.	VINOD KUMAR TIWARI, 9, SYED AMIR ALI AVENUE, KOLKATA - 700017	S-11
15.	TAYEBA AHMED, 18/1 C, GORA CHAND LANE, KOL-700014	S-14
16.	SUBRATA GUHA THAKURTA, 50, LOWER RANGE, FLAT 2C, 2ND FLOOR, KOLKATA - 700017	S-2
17.	GAYATRI AGARWALA, 9, SYED AMIR ALI AVENUE, KOLKATA - 700017	S-33
18.	NANDINI JAGTLANI, 12 B, MANDEVILE GARDEN, 3F WALLACE GARDEN, KOLKATA - 700019	S-45
19.	ABUL MANSUR, 9, SYED AMIR ALI AVENUE, KOL-700017	11
20.	SABYASACHI MANDAL, 3A SAMSUL HUDA ROAD, KOLKATA - 700017	17
21.	PRASANTA KUMAR GHOSH, MINATI APARTMENT, MAA MAYATALA, GARIA MAIN ROAD, FLAT NO. 5B-BLOCK, 2ND FL, KOL - 700084	21
22.	D N ADDY, 50, KARAYA ROAD, KOLKATA -700017	60

Sl. No.	NAME & ADDRESS OF CUSTOMERS	LOCKER NUMBER
24.	NETAI SAHA, 26, CONGRESS EXHIBITION ROAD, 3RD FLOOR, NEXT TO TOPSIA POLICE STATION, KOL-700017	72
25.	AMITAVA BOSE, 15, MAYFAIR ROAD, FLAT NO. 5/A, KOLKATA-700019	86
26.	PARESH CHANDRA ROY, PAYAMANTI CO-OP HSG SOCIETY, E.K.T.P PHASE - 1, FLAT NO. C 1/8, KOL-700017	115
27.	SABITA SAHA, 26, CONGRESS EXHIBITION ROAD, 3RD FLOOR, NEXT TO TOPSIA POLICE STATION, KOL-700017	116
DHAKURIA BRANCH (01405)		
1.	CHUNI GOPAL BANERJEE, 1/50/1 BUJOYGARH, KOLKATA-700032	164
2.	PRANAB KUMAR DAS, 28/21, STATION ROAD DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	S00038
3.	ARCHANA DAS, 4 GARIA 5th LANE, KOLKATA-700084	588
4.	SANKAR GHOSH, 166A, SARAT GHOSH GARDEN ROAD, FLAT 201, KOLKATA-700031	337
5.	SATYA BRATA NAG, 20A, GANGULY PARA LANE, DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	287
6.	SANDHYA GHOSH, 63K, SELIMPUR LANE, DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	37
7.	AMITA SENGUPTA, 5, MAHARAJA TAGORE ROAD, DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	178
8.	RADHA SHYAM SAHA, 12 & 14E, GARIAHAT ROAD (SOUTH), KOLKATA-700031	246
9.	JABA ROY, 15, MUKHERJEE PARA LANE, NEAR DHAKURIA RLY STATION, KOLKATA-700031	257
10.	SHANTA BANERJEE, 21, BENI BANERJEE AVENUE, DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	1113
11.	MANISHA BHATTACHARYA, C/O SARMISTHA SANYAL, 126, KENDUA MAIN ROAD, KOLKATA-700084	1123
12.	ARUNDHATI SEN, 40/8, GARIAHAT ROAD (SOUTH) , DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	1189
13.	DEBABRATA MITRA, 35, TANUPUKUR ROAD, PO DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	S00060
14.	MALA SEN MAJUMDER, 18/2, SELIMPUR LANE, PO DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	S00099
15.	MAYA MUKHERJEE, 42, SARAT GHOSH GARDEN ROAD, PO DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	S00132
16.	PARES NATH ROY, 12 & 14E, GARIAHAT ROAD (SOUTH), KOLKATA-700031	855
17.	BISWANATHI BURMAN, 12 & 14E, GARIAHAT ROAD (SOUTH), KOLKATA-700031	955
18.	BISHNU DAS MUKHERJEE, 13/2 K. P. ROY LANE, DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	1034
19.	RANJUSHREE MITRA, 16/1, TELIPARA LANE, PO DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	549
20.	BAISHAKHI ROY, 702/A, BLAOCK P, NEW ALIPORE, KOLKATA-700053	546
21.	PRANTOSH KUMAR CHOUDHURY, C/21/1, GHOSH PARA PATULI, KOLKATA-700084	315
22.	SIPRA CHATTERJEE, C-3, SUBHRAJYOTI APARTMENT, 8/1/3A, PADDAPUR ROAD, KOLKATA-700092	369
23.	NITA SARKER, O-27, PANCHASAYAR, NEW GARIA, KOLKATA-700094	352
24.	NARENDRA KUMAR PAUL, 36/D, BANERJEE PARA LANE, DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	443
25.	SUBODH CHANDRA DUTTA, MAYUKHAPTS, FLAT 9, 2nd FLOOR, 100/11/A, SREERAMPORE ROAD(N), GARIA, KOLKATA-700084	440
26.	BENU GOPAL MAJUMDER, 4/6, BANK PLOT, DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	446
27.	REBA PAUL, 16/2, GARIAHAT ROAD, PO DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	300
28.	RANAJIT MUKHERJEE, 427, G T ROAD, PASCHIM PADIRIPARA, CHANDANNAGAR, HOOGHLY-712136	497
29.	NIRMALENDU BHATTACHARYA, 5B, BANERJEE PARA LANE, DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	25
30.	APARNA BOSE, 44, RAHIM OSTAGAR ROAD, LAKE GARDENS, KOLKATA-700045	459
31.	ASHIM KUMAR ROY, 1/430, GARIAHAT ROAD SOUTH, DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	503
32.	KHAGENDRA NATH SINHA, 4A, NARKEL BAGAN, JADAVPUR, KOLKATA-700068	946
33.	BHARATI MUKHERJEE, 14/C, DHAKURIA STATION ROAD, KOLKATA-700031	421
34.	JAYASREE BISWAS, 17, MUKHERJEE PARA LANE, DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	1183
35.	INDRANI BHATTACHARJEE, 81/4, RAJA S C MALLICK ROAD, KOLKATA-700032	540
36.	DIPALI GHOSH, 1, BENI BANERJEE AVENUE, DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	309
37.	AMIT MUKHERJEE, 69/B, SELIMPUR ROAD, PO DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	32
38.	ASHIS KUMAR DAS, 36, DURGAPUR LANE, PO ALIPORE, CHETLA, KOLKATA-700027	78
39.	BIDHU BHUSAN DAS, 155/F, SARAT GHOSH GARDEN ROAD, DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	877
40.	ATINDRA CHANDRA GHOSHAL, 28/32, DHAKURIA STATION ROAD, KOLKATA-700031	972
41.	SITAL PRASAD GHOSH, FLAT NO. 303, 2nd FLOOR, 33/1, SARAT GHOSH GARDEN ROAD, DHAKURIA, KOL- 700031	16
42.	KALYANI RAY, 8/44B, FERN ROAD, KOLKATA-700019	353
43.	JYOTIRMAYI BANERJEE, 132/4, SARAT GHOSH GARDEN ROAD, ROY PARA, DHAKURIA, KOLKATA-700031	5
If the hiring charges due to the Bank are not paid within 30 days from the date of publication of the notice, the Bank shall invoke the provision under the lease agreement and arrange for break open of the locker at entire risk and cost of hirer.		
Date: 29.04.2022, Place: Kolkata Authorised Officer, State Bank of India		

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS 2023

Chouhan back in favour for MP but BJP may go without CM face in Chhattisgarh

LIZ MATHEW  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 28

WHILE THE BJP is almost certain to fight the next Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh under the leadership of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, the party is unlikely to project a chief ministerial candidate for the polls in Chhattisgarh, where there has been a strong demand for change in the state unit leadership, sources said on Thursday.

Both states are expected to go polls before November 2023. On Thursday, the BJP senior leadership held meetings with key leaders of the core groups of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh in Delhi. The meeting on Madhya Pradesh, attended by BJP national president J P Nadda, general secretary (organisation) B L Santosh and party state in-charge P Muralidhar Rao apart from the state leaders, decided to expedite preparation works such as filling up vacancies in the council of ministers, state-run boards and commissions while stepping up organisational activities at the booth level, sources said. They said the central leadership “has no plans or discussions” on change of leadership at the party level or the government level ahead of the state elections



MP Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan



Former Chhattisgarh chief minister Raman Singh

Losses in Chhattisgarh

THE BJP central leadership has taken a serious view of the Khairagarh bypoll defeat, in which the party candidate lost by a margin of more than 20,000 votes, earlier this month, according to a leader familiar with the develop-

ments. In the 2018 elections, the tally of the BJP, which was in power in Chhattisgarh for three consecutive terms, went down from 49 to 15 seats in the 90-member Assembly. A year later, the party lost Dantewada in a bypoll.

as Chouhan — a four-term chief minister — “has regained” the national leadership’s “confidence with his effective leadership”.

During a recent visit to Bhopal, senior party leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah praised Chouhan for the way his government has been implementing the welfare schemes initiated by central government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The sources said the state BJP unit was

also upbeat with activities at the district to booth levels. But the situation in Chhattisgarh, where the party is in the opposition, is different, the sources said.

The rift-ridden state unit has not shown any sign of revival, with one faction alleging that the dominant faction led by former chief minister Raman Singh is calling the shots without taking others into confidence. A national BJP vice-president,

NAVAL COMMANDERS' CONFERENCE

Russia-Ukraine war shows necessity of self-reliance: Defence Minister

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 28

“THE COUNTRY’S sovereignty and prosperity depend on the nation’s armed forces and the need for a strong and credible Navy cannot be over emphasised,” Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Thursday. He said he was conscious of the importance of long-term funding for the sustained growth of the Navy and the Navy’s consistent performance in optimally utilising the allocated budget.

“The endeavours of the Navy to meet all commitments and remain combat-ready, despite various challenges, are well appreciated,” Singh said.

Addressing the Navy’s top brass on the concluding day of the Naval Commanders’ Conference, which began on April 25, Singh said he was “cognisant that India’s maritime character and its vital geo-strategic location have played a primary role in our growth as a nation and evolution as a civilisation”.

With increasing dependence on the seas for national development and engagement with the world, he added, the Navy continued to protect India’s maritime interests and enabled a safe and secure environment in the region. “Over the years, the Navy has maintained a high tempo of operations and has established a credible and responsive presence in the Indian Ocean Region through mission-

based deployments, which reaffirm Navy’s position as a preferred security partner in the region,” Singh said.

The ongoing Russia and Ukraine conflict had again highlighted that being self-reliant without dependencies was a vital necessity, he said, adding that the Navy had been at the forefront of the government’s “Atmanirbhar Bharat” project and must continue to lead the way and remain a necessary guarantor of India’s maritime trade, security and national prosperity.

He said the Navy had re-invested 64 per cent of its capital budget into the domestic economic and the percentage share of modernisation budget was

bound to grow up to 70 per cent towards indigenous procurement in the current financial year.

“It is heartening that out of 41 ships and submarines that are on order, 39 are being built in Indian shipyards. While the Navy has been at the forefront of indigenisation, it is important for us to leverage on the momentum that we have gained thus far. I urge the senior leadership to maintain their focus on futuristic capability development, to ensure that the nation’s maritime power grows in tandem with our economic interests,” he said. He also mentioned the country’s first Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC), Vikrant, that would be commissioned this year, calling it a “milestone event”.



# A Gift of Modern Highways worth ₹ 8,000 Crore for the People of Telangana

"Our Government is leaving no stone unturned to build next-generation infrastructure to ensure better mobility, connectivity, productivity, sustainability and safety"  
**Narendra Modi**, Prime Minister

## Foundation Stone Laying & Dedication to the Nation of 12 National Highway & 7 CRIF Projects Total Length 460 KM

on 29th April, 2022 (Friday) | Time: 10.30 AM | Venue: GMR Arena, Beside Novotel Hyderabad Airport

### Dedication to The Nation

4-laning of Ramsanpalle to Mangloor Section of NH-161  
(Project Length: 47.00 Km, Cost of Project: Rs.1614 Cr.)

4-laning of Mangloor – Telangana / MH Border Section of NH-161  
(Project Length: 49.00 Km, Cost of Project: Rs.1312 Cr.)

### Foundation Stone Laying

6-laning of Kalkallu – Gundlapochampally of Nagpur - Hyderabad Section of NH-44  
(Project Length: 17.00 Km, Cost of Project: Rs.955.50 Cr.)

6-laning of Gundlapochampally – Bowenpally of Nagpur - Hyderabad Section of NH-44  
(Project Length: 10.00 Km, Cost of Project: Rs.521.50 Cr.)

6-laning of Thondupalli – Kothur of Hyderabad – Bangalore Section of NH-44  
(Project Length: 12.00 Km, Cost of Project: Rs.541.60 Cr.)

4-laning of Hyderabad (ORR near TSPA Junction) to Mannegeuda Section of NH-163  
(Project Length: 46.00 Km, Cost of Project: Rs.928.41 Cr.)

Construction of 2-lane with Paved Shoulders from Duddeda to Jangaon  
Section of NH-365B (Project Length: 46 Km, Cost of Project: Rs.423.48 Cr.)

Construction of 2-lane with Paved Shoulders from Valigonda to Thorur Section of NH-930 P  
(Project Length: 69 Km, Cost of Project: Rs.549.28 Cr.)

Construction of L B Nagar to Malkapur Section of NH-65 to 12-Lane Road (6-Lane Main Carriageway  
with 6-lane Service Road) (Project Length: 23 Km, Cost of Project: Rs.545.11 Cr.)

Construction of 4-lane of Hanmakonda – Mulugu Section of NH-163  
(Project Length: 30 Km, Cost of Project: Rs.317.19 Cr.)

Construction of 6-lane with Paved Shoulders from Hyderabad to Bhupalapatnam  
Section on NH-163 (Project Length: 4 Km, Cost of Project: Rs.48.32 Cr.)

Construction of Flyover at BHEL junction on Pune-Hyderabad Section of NH-65  
(Project Length: 2 Km, Cost of Project: Rs.96.51 Cr.)

7 Number of various works under Central Road Infrastructure Fund (CRIF) in  
Sanga Reddy, Vikarabad, Ranga Reddy & Medchal Malkajgiri Districts  
(Length: 106 Km, Cost: Rs.154 Cr.)

### BENEFITS OF PROJECTS

- Fast & safe movement in and around Hi-tech city of Hyderabad due to 12-lane Highways and new flyovers at junctions
- Enhanced connectivity of Hyderabad with neighbouring states of Karnataka & Maharastra to further economic activities
- Connecting tourist and religious places like Bhadrachalam temple, Sammakka Saralamma Temple and Bhoodan Pochampally
- Modern 4 lane road network to further intra-state connectivity of Warangal, Mulugu and neighbouring areas of Hyderabad
- Strong inter-district road network to ensure all-round development of the region
- Strong road network to especially benefit farmers, entrepreneurs and traders

By

**Nitin Gadkari**

Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways

In the august presence of

**G. Kishan Reddy**

Union Minister for Culture,  
Tourism and Development of North Eastern Region

**General (Dr.) V.K.Singh (Retd.)**

Union Minister of State for Road  
Transport & Highways and Civil Aviation

**Vemula Prashanth Reddy**

Minister for Roads & Buildings,  
Legislative Affairs & Housing, Government of Telangana

### Members of Parliament

Dr. K.Keshava Rao  
Dharmapuri Srinivas  
K.R.Suresh Reddy

V. Lakshmikantha Rao  
Joginipally Santosh Kumar  
Badugula Lingaiah Yadav

Kotha Prabhakar Reddy  
Manne Srinivas Reddy  
Bheemrao Baswanthrao Patil

Dr. Gaddam Ranjith Reddy  
Komati Reddy Venkat Reddy  
Anumula Revanth Reddy

Pasunoori Dayakar  
Maloth Kavitha  
Pothuganti Ramulu





The IndianEXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

# WITH DUE RESPECT

Delhi High Court's comments on Umar Khalid's political vocabulary strike a jarring, and disquieting, note

ON WEDNESDAY, HEARING the bail application of student and activist Umar Khalid in the larger conspiracy case of the 2020 Northeast Delhi riots, the Delhi High Court asked if it is “proper” to use the term “jumla” for the Prime Minister of India. The day after, that is not the question. It is: What does it mean when a high court asks what it did? That the Division Bench of Justice Siddharth Mridul and Justice Rajnish Bhatnagar should be so easily offended on the PM's behalf, that it should speak of a “laxman rekha” for criticism of government, points to more disturbing things. These are times when the ruling establishment has made a dismal habit of labelling dissenters and political opponents as “anti-national”, and harsh laws like the UAPA are being weaponised to target critics. These are times, too, when the courts are not as vigilant against the misuse of law to cramp citizens' freedoms, and when they all too often give the executive the benefit of doubt. In times like these, especially, Delhi HC's objections to words used by Umar Khalid in a speech in Amravati in February 2020 strike a jarring note.

The Delhi HC has also flagged “oont pahad ke neeche aa gaya (idiomatic Hindi for cutting the arrogant down to size)” and the use of expressions like “inquilabi” and “kran-tikari (revolutionary)” in the speech. The court's picking on satirical or polemical words and innocuous phrases underlines a deepening worry about the Delhi riots cases — that dots are being joined loosely and indiscriminately, between legitimate protests against a law, CAA-NRC, in which Khalid also participated, and the communal violence that broke out in Northeast Delhi which left 53 dead. The central pillar that holds the prosecution's edifice is the criminalisation of the protest by linking it to the violence and, by invoking the UAPA, even to terror. Another bench of the Delhi HC, last year, spoke wisely and sharply against this, while granting bail to Khalid's co-accused, Natasha Narwal, Devangana Kalita and Asif Tanha: “... it seems that in its anxiety to suppress dissent, in the mind of the state, the line between the constitutionally guaranteed right to protest and terrorist activity seems to be getting somewhat blurred. If this mindset gains traction, it would be a sad day for democracy”. The Supreme Court intervened within days of that HC order, though, and while it did not cancel the bail, it said that the reading down of the anti-terror law is “not to be treated as precedent by any court”.

But that reading down of the harsh law, the underlining of crucial distinctions between “protest”, “law and order”, “security of the state” and “terror”, and the court's warning that “wanton use of serious penal provisions would only trivialise them” is a judicial moment to hold on to. It gives reason to hope that the excesses of the executive will be checked by the court. One hopes, with due respect, that the court, through its remarks on Khalid's vocabulary, was merely being provocative in the back-and-forth that marks the adversarial process of justice. Because when citizens' freedoms are threatened, the only bulwark is a judiciary that will speak up without ambivalence or delay, on substance rather than style. To flag what can, or cannot, offend the PM is not the responsibility of an independent judiciary.

# LET THEM LEARN

Kerala move to study Gujarat scheme stokes political controversy. But states must share ideas to improve governance

KERALA'S PINARAYI VIJAYAN-LED government has done well to ignore the Opposition's barbs on sending the chief secretary, V P Joy, to Gujarat to study the latter's “dashboard” scheme. Joy, who arrived in Ahmedabad on Wednesday, praised the scheme that allows the chief minister to monitor progress of public works and programmes across ministries and the working of bureaucrats in real time from his office.

It is a sign of polarised times that even a courteous exchange of views or the sharing of ideas that can benefit citizens get caught up in political polemic. Institutions such as the National Development Council (NDC) — presided over by the prime minister, with Union ministers, chief ministers, members of the Planning Commission, now NITI Aayog, ministers of state with independent charge, as members — were built in the 1950s as a platform for states to share ideas and learn from each other. The NDC ceased to be a lively platform long ago and the Narendra Modi government had proposed to wind up the Nehru-era institution. Instead, the Modi government reconstituted the Planning Commission as NITI Aayog and re-imagined it as a resource centre — “a repository of research on good governance and best practices in sustainable and equitable development...” — for states. However, political rhetoric and showmanship often gets in the way.

State governments should showcase their success stories and invite other governments to learn from them. Gujarat could learn ways to improve school education from Kerala while Tamil Nadu should be a model for states such as UP in optimising welfare schemes and building a robust public health system. Jammu and Kashmir's record on land reforms, working of Panchayati Raj institutions in Karnataka, and rural cooperatives of Maharashtra could be profitably studied by other states. Of course, political considerations will remain. For instance, the CPM expelled two-time MP, AP Abdullakutty, from the party in 2009 for praising the “Gujarat model” — he has since joined the BJP. The Congress seems to have taken the baton from the CPM in censuring engagements with the “enemy” — recently, it threatened disciplinary action against party leaders speaking at the CPM party congress. But all parties must recognise when the drawing of rigid political lines becomes counter-productive, when it starts looking like a self-goal.

# UMRAN MALIK

From Kashmir, a son of a fruit-seller, a boy who began as a net-bowler, who is yet to play for the country, offers hope

FOR THE PAST few years the Indian Test team has had a potent pace attack that has been the envy of the world. But there has never been someone quite like Umrans Malik. You can marvel at Jasprit Bumrah's physique and the intelligence in his bowling, appreciate Mohammad Shami's seam positions, smile at Umesh Yadav's swing at pace, nod at Mohammad Siraj's springy zest. But Malik injects a never-before feeling: A visceral thrill at watching a ball rush through the air. There have been highly skilful fast bowlers and more are mushrooming, but Malik hurls intimidatory blurs, adrenalin-kickers, cannonballs to satiate cricket devotees' lust for pace.

His background adds romance to the story. From Kashmir, a son of a fruit-seller, a boy who began as a net-bowler, and who is yet to play for the country. What he offers is hope, and his emergence upholds the cherished belief that in sport, particularly cricket at least, an Indian with a talent will be identified, nurtured, and celebrated — regardless of class, race, religion, region or language.

But at the core, the real deal is Malik's pace. It may not last too long, and he will probably need more than that to become a great bowler. But that sobering thought can wait. In the here and now, it's how he takes the pitch out of the equation, how he makes fierce Australians go weak in their knees, how he makes international batsmen flinch in pain. He is growing as a bowler: Toes and heads are being threatened, LED-balls are lighting up eagerly, stumps are flying, and as Jeff Thompson, probably the fastest bowler that ever was, once said, he can smell fear in the batsmen. For the first time, an Indian bowler can say the same.



MADAN SABNAVIS

THE UNION BUDGET 2022-23 received a great deal of attention even before the financial year began due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and the consequent rise in inflation. There has been considerable speculation on whether the fiscal targets will be altered due to the evolving conditions. The government, however, is quite sure of the numbers and has not spoken about the need to revisit them. Let's see how things have changed since February.

To begin with, the critical estimate of GDP growth assumed for this year has certainly changed, with the RBI also adjusting its earlier forecast. However, the budget was conservative to begin with, assuming an 11.1 per cent growth estimate on which its revenue collection targets were based. Given that real GDP growth has been scaled down by the RBI to 7.2 per cent, and as inflation has gone up, on balance, the 11.1 per cent assumption looks tenable. Hence, inflation has been a positive for the government in this respect.

Another positive that emerged last year was that overall tax collections were even more buoyant than expected. From the budgeted figure of Rs 22.17 lakh crore, the revised estimates raised the target to Rs 25.16 lakh crore. In comparison, actual collections have turned out to be even higher at Rs 27.07 lakh crore. Budgets normally calculate taxes as a per cent of GDP; and this ratio rose by almost 1 percentage point to 11.7 per cent in 2021-22, up from the revised estimates of 10.8 per cent. If this buoyancy is maintained, then the government can expect the 2022-23 target of Rs 27.57 lakh crore to be exceeded by around Rs 2.5 lakh crore (of this, around 30 per cent will go to the states). The Centre would potentially get an extra Rs 1.75 lakh crore. But will this scenario materialise?

This additional revenue would ideally flow from enhanced GST collections, corporate tax, and customs. Central to GST collections increasing is private consumption. Today, high inflation erodes the purchasing power of households, which will divert a larger portion

Russia-Ukraine conflict has upended many assumptions in the Union budget, complicating fiscal management

The budget had assumed that interest rates would be stable. However, conditions have changed quite quickly with bond yields moving up by almost 50 bps for the 10-year G-secs. The market expectation is that the benchmark can touch a level of 7.4-7.5 per cent if conditions do not improve in the global arena. This will mean that the entire Rs 15.95 lakh crore of gross borrowing will have to be carried out at a higher cost. This can result in an additional Rs 8,000 crore of interest if the 50 basis points increase holds through the year. There could be an upward bias if rates go up further.

of their incomes for necessities that have become expensive. Therefore, there will be uncertainty here. Corporates did well last year as they did manage to pass on higher input costs to the consumers, especially in the second half of the year. Can they do it for the second time is the question. High growth in trade volumes led to the government raking in higher customs collections. With global growth set to slow down in 2022, a similar flow is unlikely. Therefore, higher tax collections cannot be taken for granted on account of the buoyancy witnessed last year.

At the same time, the government will be watchful of excise collections as it is possible that rising fuel prices will lead to lower consumption. Interestingly, overall consumption of petro products increased in March 2022 even as the daily price hikes set in. Also, in case crude oil continues on the current path and remains in the region of \$100-120/barrel, a call may have to be taken by the government on the excise duty: Once the prices of diesel and petrol remain at a new threshold, there will be a tendency for freight rates to be increased permanently. This will have a secondary impact on inflation. A careful assessment will be needed on this front.

Further, on the revenue side, the LIC disinvestment that was to happen last year will materialise this year. The disinvestment has been pushed through for May, but would be of a much lower amount (around Rs 21,000 crore) than envisaged earlier. But this does send a strong message that the government is determined to go through with the disinvestment. It will be interesting to see if this would be a part of the Rs 65,000 crore target for this year. At any rate, other big-ticket disinvestments have to be considered this year.

On the expenditure side, too, there is uncertainty on account of the price rise. The biggest concern will be the fertiliser subsidy, which has been a volatile expenditure item. Higher prices of natural gas have meant that fertilisers have been more expensive and so, the budgeted amount of Rs 1.05 lakh crore

will have to be revisited. With inflation already high and agriculture expected to be the bright spot again, the government cannot risk ignoring the subsidy element on fertilisers because there can be an impact on farm product prices.

The food subsidy will also need to be examined. The minimum support price (MSP) has become even more significant today because there is a corresponding commitment to procurement. The present rise in food prices globally has meant that there is a good global market, especially for wheat. Exports for wheat and maize might rise but can distort the procurement process. The MSPs may have to be made more attractive to ensure that there are adequate stocks with the FCI. Under normal circumstances, this may not have mattered but the decision to extend the free food scheme for the first six months of the year does mean that stocking has to keep pace.

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Therefore, the course and length of the war are critical. The longer the conflict continues the greater will be the impact. While the government has adeptly managed the fiscal numbers in the last couple of years, this year will be particularly challenging considering the nature of the shock.

*The writer is chief economist, Bank of Baroda and author of Lockdown or Economic Destruction. Views are personal*



SHALU AGRAWAL AND KARTHIK GANESAN

# SHOCK-PROOFING POWER

Efficiency of thermal plants must be increased and regulators empowered

IN OCTOBER LAST year, India witnessed significant power shortages stemming from the low inventory of coal at the power plants. After seven months, we are back to square one as reports of coal-shortage induced power outages across states continue to pour in. On the one hand, there is a rush towards buying expensive coal and power on the exchanges. On the other, states like Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat have asked industries to reduce consumption to manage the power deficit. As economic activity resumed after the Covid-induced lockdowns, the demand-supply mismatch for commodities such as coal widened globally, leading to a surge in prices. Geopolitical tensions have exacerbated the existing crisis. Amidst such unprecedented volatility, how can the Indian power sector become more resilient to future shocks?

Global supply disruptions due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict have sent coal prices touching historical highs. The cost of imported coal in India is expected to be 35 per cent higher in the fiscal year 2022-23 compared to the past year. Subsequently, power producers paid a premium of up to 300 per cent in March to secure coal supplies in the domestic spot market.

Even as coal stocks available with state thermal power plants fell, India also witnessed a sudden rise in energy demand in March — the hottest in its recorded history. This pushed peak power demand to 199 GW in the middle of March. The last week of March saw a 13 per cent higher demand over past year trends, accompanied by high electricity prices on the power exchange.

Despite two decades of sectoral reforms, the aggregate losses of discoms stand at 21 per cent (2019-20). This is reflective of both operational inefficiency and poor recovery of dues from consumers, including those affiliated to state governments and municipal bodies. These losses are also the reason for discoms not being able to pay the generators on time, resulting in payment delays to Coal India, which, in turn, is reluctant to supply coal on request.

This has left distribution companies (discoms) with two options: Procure expensive power, but face uncertainty in revenue recovery or resort to power rationing, as several states are doing.

The Ministry of Power has taken a host of measures to alleviate the crisis. This includes giving directions to ensure maximum production of coal at captive mines, rationing of coal to non-power sectors, and a price cap of Rs 12 per unit on electricity traded on exchanges. But we need to do more to enhance the sector's resilience to such disruptions from exogenous factors.

First, create an enabling ecosystem to ensure power plants work efficiently. India has about 200 GW of coal-based generation capacity which accounts for nearly 70 per cent of the total electricity generated in the country. However, according to a CEEW assessment, a disproportionate share of generation comes from older inefficient plants, while the newer and efficient ones remain idle for want of favourable coal supply contracts or power purchase agreements. Revisiting fuel allocation and supporting the priority dispatch of efficient plants could help India reduce coal demand by up to 6 per cent of our annual requirement, and set aside more coal for the proverbial rainy day.

Second, enable discoms to undertake smart assessment and management of demand. We have advanced tools for medium- and short-term demand forecasting. However, few discoms have embraced these to inform their procurement decisions. With more than 90 per cent of power being procured through long-term con-

tracts, discoms have little incentive to dynamically assess and manage demand. Introducing time-of-day pricing and promoting efficient consumption behaviour would help shave peak demand and avoid panic buying in the market.

Third, empower electricity regulators to help bring down discom losses. Despite two decades of sectoral reforms, the aggregate losses of discoms stand at 21 per cent (2019-20). This is reflective of both operational inefficiency and poor recovery of dues from consumers, including those affiliated with state governments and municipal bodies. These losses are also the reason for discoms not being able to pay the generators on time, resulting in payment delays to Coal India, which, in turn, is reluctant to supply coal on request. Besides the ongoing initiatives like introducing smart meters and network strengthening, empowering regulators would be critical to infuse payment discipline across the supply chain of the electricity sector and to keep cost recovery as a key metric.

Given the country's development aspirations, India's power demand is set to rise substantially and become more variable. Increasing climatic and geopolitical uncertainties underscore the need to become more efficient in the way we generate, distribute and consume energy. We need to act now for the long-term resilience of India's power sector.

*Agrawal is a Senior Programme Lead and Ganesan is a Director at the Council on Energy, Environment and Water CEEW, Delhi*

## APRIL 29, 1982, FORTY YEARS AGO

### BRITAIN STEPS UP HEAT

BRITAIN HAS SET the stage for a military showdown with Argentina by announcing that a full sea and air blockade would be imposed on the Falkland Islands in the next 48 hours. The Defence Ministry said any Argentine ship or aircraft found in the 200-mile radius “no-go” zone declared around the South Atlantic islands would be regarded as hostile. Official British sources said friendly governments were being kept informed of Britain's moves to regain the colony. Sources close to Prime Minister Thatcher said: “We haven't declared war on Argentina and we shall not do so. But I wouldn't exactly describe

us as being in a state of peace at the moment”.

### AMRITSAR CALM

BARRING MINOR INCIDENTS of violence at two places, peace prevailed in Amritsar, though the authorities have extended the curfew by another 24 hours. A peace march led by the Union Home Minister, Zail Singh, and the Chief Minister Darbara Singh saw the participation of prominent political and religious leaders.

### UN CENSURES ISRAEL

OVER BITTER AMERICAN protest, the UN G

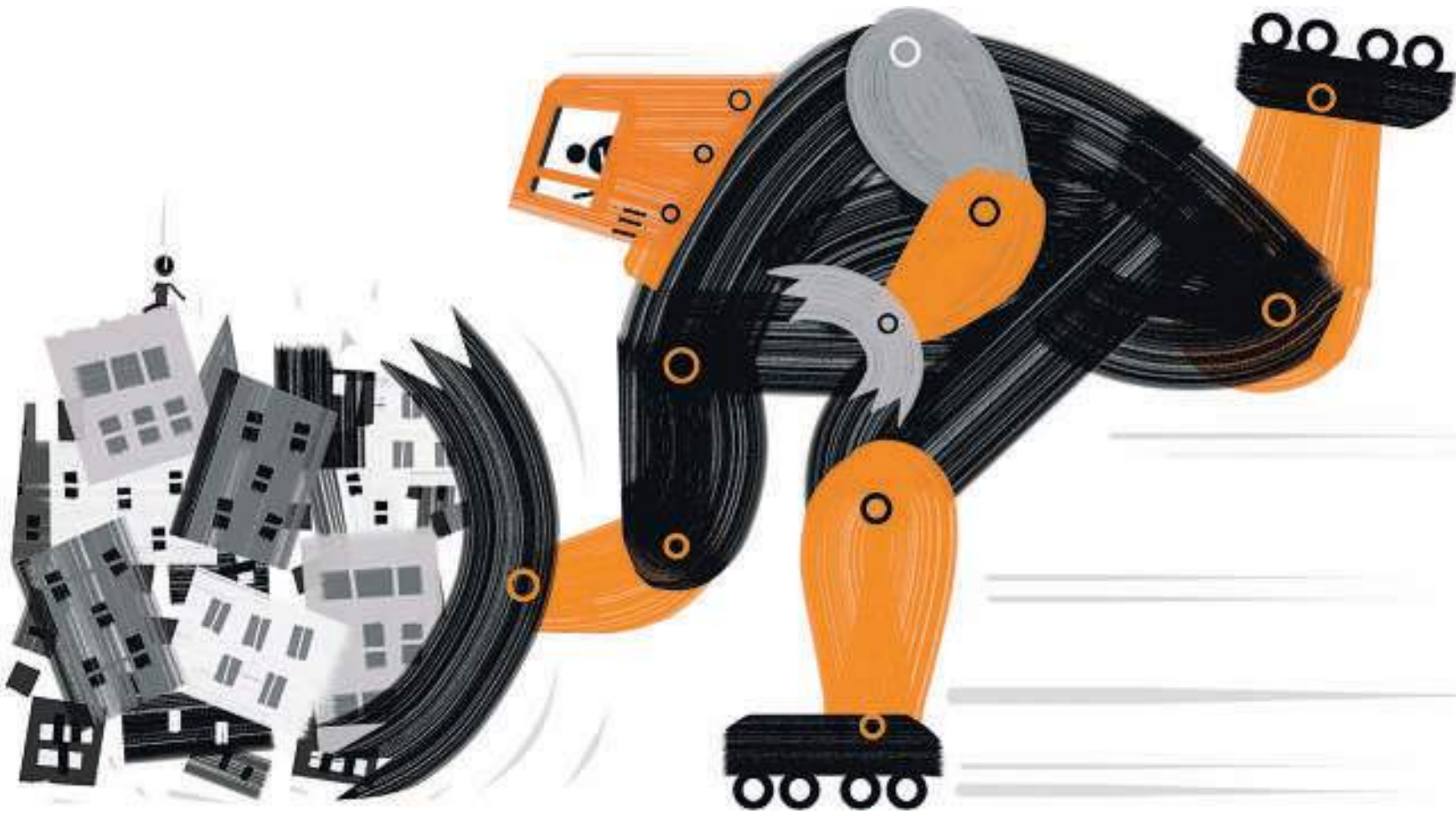
neral Assembly on Wednesday adopted a resolution for Palestinian statehood. It branded Israel “not a peace-loving” UN member and condemned the US support for it.

### VELAYATI IN DELHI

THE FOREIGN MINISTER of Iran, Ali Akbar Velayati, met External Affairs Minister, P V Narasimha Rao on April 28. Velayati is in Delhi on a five-day official visit. According to a spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, Velayati explained to Rao that the purpose of his visit was to consolidate Iran's relations with India in the political, economic, commercial, industrial and other fields.



9 THE IDEAS PAGE



C R Sasikumar

The return of instant justice

Tendency of law enforcement agencies to pronounce verdicts and dispense punishment, without going through due process, signals a setback to the quest for a more humane justice system



V N RAI

IN FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY'S all-time great novel *Crime and Punishment*, the hero Rodion Raskolnikov initiates a classical discourse on the sociology of crime and the rationale of society punishing the "criminal". It was a common belief till the second half of the 19th century, when this immortal character was created, that a criminal is a cursed creature who deserves exemplary punishment, that too publicly. Justice was often instant with very few rights available to the person facing the "judge". In many cases, a person declared guilty was stoned, beheaded or hanged to death in full public view.

The changing face of the criminal, crime and punishment offers fascinating insights into the changing value systems of society. Acts considered criminal a few hundred years ago do not attract punishment today. Most societies don't punish extramarital relationships and LGBT people are not seen as deviants. Similarly, the rights of a person charged to defend himself reasonably have been recognised as part of natural justice. It is like the journey of a state towards civilisation. A more civilised society means more compassion towards a delinquent. The purpose of punishment changes from the destruction of the soul and body of a recalcitrant to facilitating him to become an integral part of the nation. Nation-states that top the human development ladder have abolished capital punishment. In India, the courts award such punishment in the rarest of the rare circumstances.

Civilised societies have also recognised the rights of the accused as part of natural justice. Instant justice has become a thing of

the past and an accused is provided a lawyer, his right to appeal a sentence is honoured and a person is generally considered innocent until proved otherwise. The sudden appearance of a bulldozer denies a victim any opportunity to avail any of these — *vakil, dalil* and appeal. He is simply condemned to watch an arrogant bureaucracy demolish his property helplessly.

In independent India, which is trying to modernise very fast, instant justice has been abolished from the books but is deeply entrenched in the psyche of the people. Ram Manohar Lohia, a dominant presence in the political discourses of this country till the late 1960s, described this tendency as "cruel cowardice". He gave the example of the average Indian who dared not oppose the goonda of his locality but never missed the chance to give a blow to the pickpocket caught at a bus stop.

The Indian state displays this tendency at times, though not as brazenly as it has done of late. From my UP experience, I can admit that there was always a complicit state that looked the other way when a "dreaded outlaw" was gunned down by the police in an "encounter", but such acts were rarely celebrated. Except for a brief period when V P Singh was the chief minister and the state publicly extolled encounters, which were mostly fake, governments are not known to acknowledge them openly. A state may take some corrective measures, though unwillingly, only when there is a public outcry or judicial intervention. It is after a long gap that important political and executive functionaries have started speaking publicly in favour of instant justice. The police have been given the role of investigator, judge and executioner and they are really enjoying it. In the last few years, hundreds of people who were yet to be declared guilty by a court of law were, reportedly, shot in their legs and maimed.

The most unfortunate part of the story is that a large number of people support this cruelty. A few years ago, youngsters who had sexually assaulted and murdered a doctor

The Indian state displays this tendency at times, though not as brazenly as it has done of late. From my UP experience, I can admit that there was always a complicit state that looked the other way when a 'dreaded outlaw' was gunned down by the police in an 'encounter', but such acts were rarely celebrated.

were taken out of jail and killed by the police in a manner which could have shaken the conscience of any civilised society. However, the people of Hyderabad celebrated this ghastly violation of the law. Perhaps the traditional attraction for instant justice discouraged citizens from asking questions about the inability of the justice dispensation system of the country to punish such heinous criminals in a short time frame. My memory of UP has numerous anecdotes of people coming out on the streets and celebrating the killing or maiming of a person by the police who otherwise could not be punished by a court of law. This shows both attraction towards instant justice and the acceptance of an outdated legal framework, not equipped to meet the challenges of modern-day life. The state also appears to be happy about this uncivil acceptance, as bringing fundamental changes in police procedures, prosecution and courts will involve expenditure, and instant justice is cheap. The time has come when the nation has to choose between an expensive civilised justice dispensation system or a brute tradition in which the police dons the cap of investigator, judge and hangman.

Recent instances of bulldozing residential or commercial dwellings of people who the rulers of the day think have committed unpardonable crimes have opened the Pandora's box from where some very uncomfortable questions are emanating about the character of the Indian state. Instant justice makes an individual barbaric and similarly, instant justice makes a society barbaric. The bulldozer culture is turning the Indian state into an uncivilised and barbaric state. If this is not stopped immediately we will lose whatever little we have achieved through our wonderful Constitution in the last seven decades. Our journey to make our society democratic and amenable to the rule of law will turn into a nightmare.

Rai, a retired IPS officer, is the author of *Hashimpura 22 May, a chronicle of the 1987 custodial killings*



CHETANA SACHIDANANDAN

PRIYAM WAS THE life of the party at the day-care centre. A bright-eyed boy who captured the heart of the caretakers and played with abandon. Sometime after his second birthday, all this started changing. He stopped playing with his toys, he seemed more interested in organising them now. He stopped talking, not responding even when called by name. He stopped smiling at people and making eye contact. Then the rhythmic movements started; rocking his body, banging his head or repeatedly tapping on the table. One day he banged his head so much that when his father came, hurriedly summoned by the caretaker, there was a trickle of blood running down his face. That was his last day at the centre; they refused to keep him after that.

Nancy was different. Growing up in a family with siblings and grandparents, she was used to people. But outsiders were studiously ignored. She heard all the questions and comments but never acknowledged them. Loud noises, rough-textured clothes, squishy toys, strong-smelling foods, all caused strong aversion. Now 10, she ventures out to play with other kids. She is often confused by the endless chatting of the other kids. She cannot fathom why they can't just

come, play and go home. She comes home crying most days because the others refused to include her in their play. She is smart, she understands that she is doing something wrong, but does not know what.

After multiple visits to the paediatrician and clinical psychologists, numerous questionnaires, behavioural evaluations through observations and play, both Nancy and Priyam were diagnosed to have Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). People with ASD have difficulties in social interaction and communication, show repetitive behaviours like rocking movements or repeating certain words over and over again and are obsessive about routine and order in their daily lives. Between one in 50 to one in 150 people have a diagnosis of ASD in countries where this is being systematically done. In India, we do not have sufficiently uniform access to diagnosis to know the numbers.

A range of conditions previously known as Autism or Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) or Asperger's Syndrome now come under the common umbrella of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Like Priyam and Nancy, people with ASD have very diverse difficulties, hence the term "spectrum" is used. True to the name, brain

scans of people with ASD show a range of differences: In the volume and size of the brain and in the numbers and connectivity of neurons in the brain. But none of these differences is enough to diagnose a child as being on the Autism Spectrum. We know that the brains of ASD people are different from the brains of neurotypical people but we still do not know how that causes the behavioural changes. Autism is mostly genetic; the risk for autism increases in families with previous cases of ASD. But there is no single "autism gene" that can be tested for risk. The condition is a result of brain development being affected by a combination of nearly 100 or so genes.

High-functioning ASD kids, like Nancy, find it difficult to navigate the social world, but they are independent, able to attend mainstream schools, find employment and thrive. Many times, they excel at something that gets them noticed among their peers such as extraordinary mathematical, musical or artistic abilities. For such "high-functioning" autistic kids, these skills make their journey through life somewhat easier. But at the other end of the ASD spectrum are the children who do not speak beyond a few words, like Priyam. Some, but not all non-

verbal children, may also have an intellectual disability. These children would usually need occupational therapy to identify objects by name, to learn to ask for help and communicate with others.

In a recent study, scientists tested the communication abilities of neurotypical adults with autistic adults and autistic adults with other autistic adults. Very surprisingly, they found that autistic people could communicate with each other as well as neurotypical people can with other neurotypical adults. This study revealed that perhaps it is not just the ASD individuals who need help with communication. But rather, the rest of the society should also learn how to communicate with, work with and value the diversity of brains we have amongst us. As parents, as teachers, as friends and family, we must learn how to open our arms and minds to differences amongst us. Many autistic children go on to live happy, fulfilled, loved and loving adult lives. But this journey always begins with acceptance and engagement at home and in the immediate social circle.

The writer is a scientist at CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (CSIR-IGIB), New Delhi. Views are personal

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"When Donald Trump was hoicked off Twitter and Facebook, Mr Musk tweeted: 'A lot of people are going to be super unhappy with West Coast high tech as the de facto arbiter of free speech.' Fair point then, fair point now." — THE GUARDIAN

Making room for the victim

SC judgment on bail in Lakhimpur Kheri case shows how the trial process can be remodelled to become more participatory



UPMA GAUTAM AND PRIYA DAS

THE VICTIMS' MOVEMENT, decrying the criminal justice system's lack of a participatory approach, spread like wildfire around the world in the previous century. The movement that began in the US has withstood the test of time and is credited with establishing the present discourse on enhancing the victim's position as a stakeholder in the administration of criminal justice.

Crime, which is essentially a wrong against the state, triggers the entire state machinery (police, judiciary) to spring into action to remedy the wrong and punish the wrongdoer. The cog that sets the wheel in motion acts as a mere spectator in the entire battle fought between the prosecutor and the accused. However, the recent decision of the Supreme Court in *Jagjeet Singh and Ors. v. Ashish Mishra and Anr.* (Lakhimpur Kheri violence case) has ignited a beacon of hope in victim jurisprudence. In this judgment, the court cancelled the bail granted to the accused by the high court over the denial of a fair and effective hearing to the victim in the bail proceedings. This necessitates an inquiry into the role of the victim in an adversarial criminal justice system like ours. As former US President Ronald Reagan put it, "For too long, the victims of crime have been the forgotten persons of our criminal justice system".

A milestone in the recognition of victims in the criminal justice process was the UN Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, 1985. Victim participation is given a prominent position in various jurisdictions throughout the world and can be observed at various stages of a criminal trial, including producing evidence and questioning witnesses. It includes the right to know the status of the investigation, petition the court for further direction, being heard in the grant or cancellation of bail and advance arguments after the submission of the prosecutor's arguments. Unfortunately, in India, the victim is consigned to the shadows and often lurks in the background of a criminal trial, and even the protection of her interests is entirely dependent on the alacrity of public prosecutors who are already overloaded by the Indian court system's vast pendency.

The convenient wielding of the wand by the courts in granting bail is buttressed by the Prison Statistics of India (NCRB, 2020), according to which 39.3 per cent of convicts and 95.4 per cent of undertrial prisoners were enlarged on bail in 2020, thus affirming the canon that "bail is the rule, jail an exception". The ever-evolving jurisprudence of bail is primarily dealt with by the Code of

Criminal Procedure 1973 and supplemented by judicial precedents. Granting bail in non-bailable cases is at the discretion of the court or the officer, depending on numerous factors like nature and gravity of accusation, severity of punishment which the conviction will entail, the danger of the accused absconding, tampering with evidence, reoffending and the interest of society. It is pertinent to note here that bail is an inalienable right of the accused in bailable cases; the scope of discretion is only in non-bailable matters.

The victim's participation in bail matters is provided for in the limited circumstances of non-bailable matters or where the accused is to be released on bail in case of suspension of sentence pending appeal, where the punishment prescribed is more than seven years imprisonment, and in cancellation of bail. The opportunity of being heard here is conferred on the public prosecutor, representing the victim. The high court, in the exercise of its inherent power, can allow the complainant or the victim to intervene and oppose the bail, pending appeal.

In contrast, special legislation like the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act and POCSO Act, expressly recognise the victim's right to reasonable, accurate, and timely notice of any court proceedings, including the bail proceedings and to be informed by a special public prosecutor regarding the same. This right extends to the right of being heard at any proceeding under the act — bail, release, conviction, sentence, etc.

The V S Malimath Committee (2003) and 268th Law Commission Report of India, (2017) championed the victim's right to participate in grant or cancellation of bail and suggested "victim impact assessment" reports in bail matters, respectively. The concerns of the victim, along with the information on the physical, mental, the social impact of the crime and bail, must be given due consideration.

The victims' right to be heard at every stage of the proceedings under the SC/ST Act has been held to be inexecutable by the Supreme Court in *Hariram Bhambhi v. Satyanarayan* (2021), where non-issuance of notice to the victims for the bail proceeding was held to be incurable. However, the victim's right to be heard is completely disregarded in IPC offences, as evidenced by the frowning of the apex court in *Rasiklal v. Kishore* (2009) upon cancellation of bail (non-bailable case) on the grounds of the complainant being unheard.

The ripples created by the decision of the Supreme Court reinforcing the right of a victim to be heard in matters of bail in non-bailable cases is one of the first steps in the long journey of remodelling the Indian criminal justice system to make it more victim-inclusive at each stage. The bail application in non-bailable cases should be decided after weighing the relevant considerations and affording an adequate opportunity of hearing to the victims.

Gautam is assistant professor and Das is a PhD research scholar at USLS, GGSIP University, Dwarka

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LEARNING LOSS

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'A time to revisit the school' (IE, April 28). The need for well-organised government schools, particularly in the rural areas and aimed at facilitating learning for poor children is well stated, but the government does not seem to be alive to this issue. As against the 6 per cent of GDP required for education annually envisaged in the National Education Policy, the actual education budget has been hovering around 3.1 per cent, including this year. Much of it is in the area of digital education even as the recurring problem of understaffing and inadequate infrastructure in many schools remains unsolved. The addition of more IIMs and IITs is highlighted by the government. Efforts to rewrite history or introduce controversial religious practices could have waited till the challenge of making up for the loss of learning among the poor was sorted out.

YG Chouksey, Pune

FREEDOM, FIEFDOM

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Musk's Twitter' (IE, April 28). The title itself paints an ominous portrait of the state of free speech in present times. The digital public conversation now runs the risk of being spun by an individual. Even more concerning is the fact that Elon Musk views free speech as a binary — it either exists or does not. The extant algorithms of Twitter have been unable to moderate hate speech. A reduction in content monitor-

ing, as intended by Musk, is only going to exacerbate the issue.

Shreya Singh, Mumbai

This refers to the editorial, 'Musk's Twitter' (IE, April 28). Elon Musk's single-handed purchase of Twitter raises many red flags. As a self-proclaimed free speech absolutist, perhaps Musk would do well to remember that any kind of absolutism could easily turn into extremism. Freedom is inextricably linked with responsibility, which someone like Musk might incorrectly translate as restrictions. The world today is no stranger to how instances of hate speech, fake news, and misinformation about public health issues posted on social media platforms, when left unchecked, have led to dangerous consequences. Ownership implies control, and an individual's monopoly over public conversation is alarming.

Samiksha, Rohtak

HATE, A DISTRACTION

This refers to the report, 'Section 144, preventive arrests: Roorkee keeps the peace after SC order' (IE, April 28). The so-called Dharam Sansads, in effect insidious platforms for hate-mongering, could not be held at Roorkee after the apex court's intervention. This is just a temporary respite. The spewing of venom by hate peddlers — hand in glove with the BJP — shall grow in tandem with ballooning inflation, rising poverty and unemployment as this is the best strategy to distract attention from these burning issues.

Deepak Singhal, Noida



# 10 EXPRESS NETWORK

## Two IFS officers suspended over construction, felling of trees in Corbett reserve

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
DEHRADUN, APRIL 28

THE UTTARAKHAND state government has suspended two senior Indian Forest Service (IFS) officers over allegations of illegal construction and felling of trees inside the Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR). The reserve's director has been removed from his post.

The High Court had asked the government to take action against officials found involved in the illegal constructions and felling of trees in Pakhro and Morghati areas of the wildlife reserve.

According to three separate orders issued by principal secretary forests RK Sudhanshu Wednesday, JS Suhag, a former chief wildlife warden and the current chief executive officer (CAMPA), and Kishan Chand, the former divisional forest officer of Kalagarh Tiger Reserve, have been suspended with immediate effect.

CTR director Rahul, who uses only one name, has been attached to the office of the principal chief conservator of forests in Dehradun.

The orders cited inspections carried out at the reserve by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) in October last year and by Union Environment Ministry officials in December, 2021. It said the inspecting teams had found illegal constructions such as Kandi road, some houses in Morghati, besides a forest rest house in Pakhro.

The teams also found illegal felling of trees for the proposed tiger safari in Pakhro.

"Even after clear instructions, Suhag (the then chief wildlife warden) did not take any action in the matter," the order added.



## ELIXIR OF LIFE

Residents collect water from a tanker on the outskirts of New Delhi on Thursday. *Amit Mehra*

## Normal or more rainfall this monsoon: SASCOF

**ANJALI MARAR**  
PUNE, APRIL 28

MOST OF South Asia will receive either normal or above normal rain during the upcoming summer monsoon season, according to the consensus statement released at the 22nd South Asia Climate Outlook Forum (SASCOF). The forecast is almost in tune with the first stage Southwest Monsoon forecast for India released earlier this month by the India Meteorological Department.

As per the consensus statement, above normal rainfall has been predicted over the Himalayan foothills, parts of coastal Gujarat, north Maharashtra, Jharkhand, West Bengal, areas along Pakistan-Afghanistan border, Nepal,

Bhutan and northern Sri Lanka.

Rainfall during the June to September season will, however, be below normal over extreme southern areas of Kerala, Lakshadweep, west Rajasthan, Arunachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Kashmir, central and southern Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Myanmar.

During the Southwest Monsoon season, the maximum temperature over most of South Asia — barring Afghanistan, eastern Myanmar and Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh — will remain above normal.

SASCOF is a forum where climate experts from India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar meet twice annually to discuss the Southwest and Northeast monsoons. This year, the meet was held virtually from April 26 to 28.

## IMD: heatwave to intensify, 'orange' alert for 3 states

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 28

THE ONGOING heatwave sweeping through vast swathes of the country will intensify in the next five days, with the IMD issuing an "orange" alert for Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and parts of Maharashtra, and predicting a rise of another two degrees Celsius in northwest region.

According to an India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast issued on Thursday, a heatwave spell will persist over northwest and central India during the next five days and over east India during the next three days.

"A rise of about two degrees Celsius in the maximum temperature (is) very likely over most parts of northwest India during

the next two days and no significant change thereafter," it said.

An orange alert has been issued for Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra for next four days. The IMD uses four colour codes for weather warnings — green (no action needed), yellow (watch and stay updated), orange (be prepared), and red (take action).

Based on absolute recorded temperatures, a heatwave is declared when an area logs a maximum temperature of 45 degrees Celsius. A severe heatwave is declared if the temperature crosses the 47-degree mark.

The IMD said the heatwave could lead to "moderate" health concerns for vulnerable people — infants, the elderly, and people with chronic diseases — in affected areas.

# Repeal sedition law or stop its misuse with changes: Pawar

**CHANDAN HAYGUNDE**  
PUNE, APRIL 28

IN AN additional affidavit filed before the Koregaon Bhima Inquiry Commission earlier this month, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar has proposed amendments in some laws, including Section 124 A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which deals with sedition.

In the affidavit, Pawar stated that Section 124 of IPC "was inserted by the British in 1870 to control the uprisings against them and to suppress the freedom movement. However, in recent times, this section is often misused against people who criticise the government, suppressing their liberty and tends to stifle any voice of dissent raised in a peaceful and democratic way. Hence, it is proposed that the misuse of Section 124 A of IPC should be stopped with amendments or the said section should be repealed. I have a reason to say so because provisions of IPC and Unlawful Activities Prevention Act are sufficient for protecting national integrity."

The two-member commission, headed by retired High Court Justice JN Patel, is probing the causes of violence in Koregaon Bhima area on January 1, 2018, which had claimed one life and left hundreds injured.

Pawar had initially filed an affidavit before the commission in October 2018. After its hearings were stalled for over an year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the



Sharad Pawar. *File*

commission had summoned Pawar to depose as a witness on February 23 and February 24 this year.

But the NCP chief sought an adjournment of his hearing, saying he wanted more time for filing an additional affidavit with detailed information. Pawar filed the additional affidavit on April 11. He has again been summoned by the commission to depose on May 5 and May 6.

But in his additional affidavit, Pawar said he has "no personal knowledge of information about the sequence of events" leading to the violence. "I have no allegation to make against the political agenda or motive behind such an unfortunate incident," he mentioned.

He further proposed amendments in some sections of the Criminal Procedure Code and IPC for "handling riot-like situations and avoiding any breach of public peace."

Along with Section 124 A of IPC, Pawar has proposed amendments in Section 144 of CrPc and Section 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) of IPC, Prevention of Defacement of Property Act

1983, the Maharashtra Prevention of Defacement of Property Act 1995 and also Chapter VIII of CrPc, which deals with "security for keeping peace and good behaviour".

Pawar has asked for "uniform" and "detailed guidelines" for controlling riot-like situations, in connection with sections 129 to 132 of CrPc, which deal with dispersal of unlawful assembly.

Incidentally, Pawar had earlier raised suspicion about the role of Hindutva groups in the violent clashes. But in his first affidavit, Pawar had stated that he was "not in a position to specifically make allegations against any particular organisation" for causing the violence.

He also stated, "it is unfortunate that the state government and law enforcement authorities failed to protect the interest of the common man residing at Koregaon Bhima and around localities of Pune district. Active role of right-wing forces behind the violence at Koregaon Bhima cannot be ruled out. However, concrete evidence can be gathered only by the law enforcement agencies of the state."

Later, while addressing a press conference in February 2020, Pawar had made allegations against Hindutva leaders Milind Ekbote and Sambhaji Bhide. He had also raised doubts on the role of Pune City Police in investigating the Elgaar Parishad case, in which several prominent activists and lawyers have been arrested for their alleged links with banned CPI-Maoist.

## Severe lung infections, kidney injury common in Covid deaths: study

**SOHINI GHOSH**  
AHMEDABAD, APRIL 28

ACUTE KIDNEY injury, secondary respiratory infections and pulmonary macrothrombi (visible blood clots in pulmonary arteries) are common among patients infected with SARS-CoV-2 for more than a week, revealed autopsies of Covid-19 deceased conducted by PDU Government Medical College in Rajkot.

The findings of the autopsies conducted on 33 bodies validate previous clinical discoveries and have been published in Indian Journal of Medical Research on April 8.

The study—the first of its kind in Gujarat and led by Dr Hetal Kyada of the Rajkot-based medical college—noted that lungs bore most of the burden of Covid-19 in among the 33 subjects studied. This is in line with observations from previous autopsy studies of Covid deceased, globally and in India.

Additionally, the Rajkot study made a prominent finding of diffuse alveolar damage (DAD)—a histological feature of acute respiratory distress syndrome used to describe specific changes that occur to the structure of the lungs during injury or disease.

The study included 28 males and five females with a median

age of 61 years and an average hospitalisation rate of seven days. The patients had died between September 7, 2020 and December 23, 2020 with the average interval between death and autopsy being three hours.

All 33 patients required oxygen administration at some point during their hospitalisation with 30 of them requiring oxygen administration at the time of admission. Ultimately, 28 of them had to be shifted to invasive modes of ventilation with a median duration for mechanical ventilation being three days as their condition deteriorated gradually.

Similar to previous studies, microscopic and macroscopic evidence of secondary respiratory infections in the form of bronchopneumonia and lung abscesses were observed as a result of hospital-acquired infection. "Such nosocomial infections (contracted while in the hospital for another reason) among Covid-19 patients could be caused by prolonged hospitalisation, prolonged mechanical ventilation, central venous catheter usage, immunosuppressive medications such as steroids and tocilizumab, as well as potential lapses in routine infection-prevention measures due to overburdened hospitals during the pandemic," noted the published study.

Similar to previous studies, microscopic and macroscopic evidence of secondary respiratory infections in the form of bronchopneumonia and lung abscesses were observed as a result of hospital-acquired infection. "Such nosocomial infections (contracted while in the hospital for another reason) among Covid-19 patients could be caused by prolonged hospitalisation, prolonged mechanical ventilation, central venous catheter usage, immunosuppressive medications such as steroids and tocilizumab, as well as potential lapses in routine infection-prevention measures due to overburdened hospitals during the pandemic," noted the published study.

## Top NTA official says CUET does not take away importance of schools

**SUKRITA BARUAH**  
DELHI, APRIL 28

A SENIOR National Testing Agency (NTA) official spoke to hundreds of school administrators on Thursday to apprise them of the common entrance exam for Central universities, and told them that it would not take away from the importance of senior secondary schooling.

Dr Sadhana Parashar, senior director (examinations) at the NTA, walked heads of schools through the registration process of the Common Universities Entrance Test (CUET) and the subjects students need to opt for

to be eligible for the programmes of their choice in universities. The session, aimed at enabling school administrators to help students through the new admission process for universities, was organised by Action Committee Unaided Recognised Private Schools — an umbrella body of private schools in India — as well as Indraprastha School Complex and Delhi Sahodaya Schools Complex.

Parashar began the session by saying that the introduction of CUET should not be seen as taking away from the importance of schools or class 12 examinations. "I would like to say that the CUET is completely designed based on

the syllabus of just grade 12. So it is nowhere taking away from the board exam. In fact, it is supplementing. And the only reason the ministry has got this into being is not just because it was part of the National Education Policy, but because there was so much of variation across the boards in the country in terms of the way the evaluation was done, the way the question papers were made, (and) the typology of the questions. So, sometimes, meritorious students got left behind..." she said.

She also told school authorities that the reduction in pressure on students to score very high marks in board exams could be seen as an opportunity.

## Karnataka S-I recruitment scam: CID makes 17th arrest, a government staffer

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
BENGALURU, APRIL 28

THE CRIMINAL Investigation Department of Karnataka Police, which is probing into a scam in the examination to recruit 545 police sub-inspectors in the state, on Thursday arrested a government employee, who allegedly helped a woman candidate in the exam. This is the 17th arrest in the case.

Jyoti Patil is alleged to have

provided answers via a Bluetooth device to the candidate who appeared for the police sub-inspector recruitment exam at Jnana Jyothi English School in Kalaburagi on October 3, 2021.

The candidate obtained third rank among 25 women candidates selected from Kalyana Karnataka region, scoring 101 out of 150 marks. She is yet to be arrested.

A first division assistant in Kalaburagi Municipal Corporation, Patil is accused of

providing answers to the candidate over a Bluetooth device arrangement created by another government employee, Manjunath Malekundi, who is currently absconding.

The exam scam emerged after a candidate, Veeresh N, who obtained seventh rank among 67 candidates selected from Kalyana Karnataka region, was found to have obtained 121 marks in the exam despite answering only 21 out of 100 questions in an objective paper for 150 marks.

## Kerala: cops issue lookout circular against producer-actor in rape case

**SHAJU PHILIP**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, APRIL 28

THE KERALA Police on Thursday issued a lookout circular against Malayalam actor-producer Vijay Babu who has been booked for allegedly raping a woman actor after promising her a role in his films.

Babu has gone into hiding after the woman filed a police complaint on April 22 and alleged he had raped her multiple times over the past one month.

A separate case was filed soon after as Babu appeared in a Facebook live session and, while



Vijay Babu

pleading his innocence, revealed the woman's identity.

On Thursday, as police examined the premises in Kochi where the alleged sexual abuse had taken place, Kochi city police commissioner CH Nagaraju told reporters Babu seems to have fled the country.

"Prima facie the exploitative angle in the case is established. We have collected evidence and statements corroborating the allegations in the complaint," Nagaraju said. "If he is not return-

ing to the country to face the case, we will explore other options."

Babu, who has been active in the film industry for over a decade, is the founder of Friday Film House production company. He has six productions to his credit.

The woman had first made the allegations against Babu on a Facebook page 'Women Against Sexual Harassment'.

"He won my trust by being friendly and advising me as I was a novice in the film industry. Under the guise of a professional guide, he sexually exploited me. Disregarding my protest, he raped me several times," she wrote.

While pleading innocence during his Facebook live, Babu had said: "I am the real victim."

## Bharat Ek Khoj actor Salim Ghouse dies

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 28

FILM AND TV actor Salim Ghouse passed away on Thursday in Mumbai after suffering a cardiac arrest. He was 70. The last rites of the actor were performed early on Thursday morning.

Salim Ghouse's wife Anita Salim confirmed her husband's death. She told *The Indian Express* that after experiencing pain in his chest on Wednesday night, he passed away on Thursday morning due to a cardiac arrest.

She said, "We took him to Kokilaben Hospital last night, and he passed away this morning. He hated grieving and wanted life to go on. He didn't suffer, he wouldn't have liked being dependent



A renowned name in the theatre circuit, Salim Ghouse had a few international projects to his credit. *Twitter/CinemaRareIN*

on anyone. He was a man with a lot of self-respect. He was a multifaceted actor, a martial artist, an actor, a director and a lovely chef in the kitchen."

The Family Man actor Sharib Hashmi consoled the death and tweeted, "Pehli baar

#SalimGhouse Sahab ko tv serial #Subah mein dekha tha! Aur unka kaam behadd laajvaab laga tha !! Unki awaaz."

Ghouse started his acting journey in 1978 with the movie Swarg Narak, following which he featured in films like Chakra

(1981), Saaranish (1984), Mohan Joshi Hazir Ho! (1984), and several others.

The other films where Ghouse played prominent parts include Manthan, Kalyug, Trikal, Aghaat, Drohi, Thiruda Thiruda, Sardari Begum, Koyla, Soldier, Aks, and several others.

Ghouse was also a known face in the television industry. He essayed the roles of Rama, Krishna and Tipu Sultan in Shyam Benegal's TV Series *Bharat Ek Khoj*. He was also a part of the sitcom *Wagle Ki Duniya* (1988).

A renowned name in the theatre circuit, Salim Ghouse also had a few international projects to his credits including *Kim*, *The Perfect Murder*, *The Deceivers*, *The Maharaja's Daughter* and *Getting Personal*.

## FCRA CANCELLATION MHA allegations vague, will explore legal remedies: CHRI

**DEEPTIMAN TIWARY**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 28

THE COMMONWEALTH Human Rights Initiative (CHRI), whose registration under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) was cancelled by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) recently, said on Thursday that it had explained every alleged irregularity pointed out by the ministry but its cancellation order does not mention why they were unsatisfactory.

It said one of the grounds for cancellation is vague and cannot even be explained. The NGO said it will explore all legal remedies to reverse the cancellation.

"CHRI fully cooperated with the MHA in all the proceedings initiated since June 2021, by submitting detailed responses against the allegations contained in the suspension order, the (MHA) Audit Team's observations and the show cause notice. More than 7,500 pages of records containing details of our transactions were photocopied and submitted on MHA's demand, within the deadlines stipulated. Nothing in the cancellation order indicates, why the MHA finds our explanation unsatisfactory, unreasonable or untenable," a CHRI statement said.

"CHRI will seek all remedies in law to reverse the MHA's cancellation order. Meanwhile, CHRI will continue to work for the practical realisation of people's human rights, access to justice and access to information, as per its mandate," it said.

According to the CHRI, the MHA's April 19 order of cancellation cited three main grounds for taking action against the NGO. The first ground was that the CHRI had credited a sum of Rs 31.9 lakh in its FCRA bank account although it is not covered under the definition of "foreign contribution". The second was that the NGO provided incomplete information in FC-4 Form in financial year (FY) 2018-19 by not disclosing details of activities/projects for which foreign contributions had been received and utilised.

The third ground for cancellation was that the NGO utilised foreign contribution on activities beyond the scope of the Act for which the registration was granted.



Kolkata







## 12 THE WORLD

## TOP OF THE WORLD



Prince Andrew. AP

## UK

## Andrew stripped of 'freedom of city' honour

London: Prince Andrew has lost another ceremonial honour as groups throughout Britain cut ties to the royal disgraced by allegations of sexual misconduct. The council in the northern city of York on Wednesday night voted unanimously to withdraw the prince's "freedom of the city." The honor was awarded to Andrew in 1987 after Queen Elizabeth II made him the Duke of York. Andrew is the first person to be stripped of the status, a purely ceremonial honour that dates back to medieval times when "freemen" enjoyed special privileges. Honorees include the actress Judi Dench and Princess Anne, Andrew's sister. **AP**

## ISRAEL

## PM's family receives second death threat

Jerusalem: Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's teenage son has received a death threat and bullet in the mail, Israeli officials said on Thursday, second such warning against the Israeli leader's family this Israeli police said that both incidents were being investigated, but gave few other details, including where the items were sent and who might have sent them. Bennett has been the target of fierce criticism from Israel's hard-line right wing since forming his governing coalition last year. **AP**

## SINGAPORE

## Malaysian to be hanged wins reprieve

Singapore: A second Malaysian man due to be hanged in Singapore this week for drug trafficking won a last-minute reprieve Thursday from the top court. Datchinamurthy Kataiah, 36, was scheduled to be hanged Friday, just two days after the execution of a Malaysian man that sparked an international outcry because he was believed to be mentally disabled. Lawyer M Ravi, who earlier represented Datchinamurthy, said the Court of Appeal allowed a stay of execution pending a legal challenge on May 20. **AP**



Nearly 1,000 trade unions in Sri Lanka staged a one-day nationwide strike on Thursday demanding immediate resignation of the government. AP

## Lankan trade unions on strike, demanding Rajapaksas' ouster

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
COLOMBO, APRIL 28

NEARLY 1,000 trade unions in Sri Lanka staged a one-day nationwide strike on Thursday demanding the immediate resignation of the government, including President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, over its failure to tackle the country's unprecedented economic crisis.

The unions from a number of sectors, including the state service, health, ports, electricity, education and postal joined the strike under the theme 'Bow to the peo-

ple - government go home', urging the President, the PM and the government to 'go home'.

Teachers' trade union spokesman Joseph Stalin said the Rajapaksa government tries to hang on to power when the people have got into the streets and demanded them to go.

Ravi Kumudesh from the health workers' trade union said that after Thursday's strike, they would give the government a week to resign. "After that, we would strike continuously till the government resigns". He said that over 1,000 trade unions joined the strike.

The bank employees'

union said all banks remain closed and public transport was crippled with just a handful of government-owned buses operating. Plantation workers from the central hills also joined the token strike. "The plantation workers have joined the strike in thousands," Opposition politician Mano Ganesan said.

Meanwhile, four Sri Lankan policemen were arrested on Thursday for their alleged role in the death of a protester who died in the police firing at an anti-government protest against the fuel price hike in southwestern region of Rambukkana last week.

## SAY NOT GETTING ADEQUATE ELECTRICITY FROM INDIA

## Officials: Nepal may cut power to industrial corridors any time

SHIRISH B PRADHAN  
KATHMANDU, APRIL 28

NEPAL MAY cut power to its industrial corridors soon as the Himalayan nation is not getting adequate power supply from India, authorities said Thursday.

Currently, Nepal is receiving only 100 MW of electricity from India, against its demand for 400 MW, said Pradeep Thike, Deputy Managing Director, Planning of the Nepal Electricity Authority. "We are short of 300 MW of electricity at present because we have not received adequate electricity from India, which itself is facing a power shortage," he said.

Nepal faces a short supply of electricity during the dry season while during the rainy season, it has a surplus. This will certainly affect the power supply to

Nepal's three industrial corridors, Birgunj, Biratnagar and Bhairahawa, Thike said, adding, "we may have to cut power to these corridors at any time."

This will mainly affect large industries and small industries will not have any problem, he said. "We will also be able to supply power for lighting purposes, but not for running big machines in the industries during the dry season," he said.

However, after one or one and half months, when the rainy season arrives, the situation will improve and Nepal will be in a position to export electricity to India, he pointed out. He is, however, optimistic about importing electricity from India after a few days. The authorities in India's Bihar state have indicated that they might provide additional electricity after 2,3 days, said Thike. **PTI**

## A SHOT AT FAIR PAY

## In NYC, ads for jobs will have to say what they pay

JENNIFER PELTZ  
NEW YORK, APRIL 28

HELP WANTED. The job: putting one of the nation's most far-reaching salary disclosure laws into practice. Location: New York City.

Just four months ago, city lawmakers overwhelmingly voted to require many ads for jobs in the nation's most populous city to include salary ranges, in the name of giving job applicants — particularly women and people of colour — a better shot at fair pay. But on the cusp of implementing the measure, lawmakers will likely vote Thursday

to postpone it for five months after employers waved red flags.

The debate marks a prominent test for a burgeoning slate of US "pay transparency" laws. And the answer seems simple to Brooklyn restaurant server Elizabeth Stone. "I believe I deserve to know how much I can make as a waitress," she said.

Stone has scoured job ads that are mum about pay, leaving her wondering whether to try to move on from an employer she likes but wishes paid more, and feeling like she has no leverage to push for a raise.

"You're put in a really challenging position of not wanting

to upset your employer and not wanting to scare away an opportunity, but also wanting to fight for what you know is what you deserve," said Stone, 23, a member of restaurant workers' advocacy group ROC United.

Over the last four years, at least seven states from California to Connecticut and at least two cities beyond New York — Cincinnati and Toledo, Ohio — have started demanding employers disclose salary information to job-seekers in some circumstances. In many cases, that means upon request and/or after an interview, and there are exemptions for small businesses.

## Nepal conducts successful test flight

YUBARAJ GHIMIRE  
KATHMANDU, APRIL 28

NEPAL'S NEWLY built Gautam Buddha International Airport in Lumbini will be open for regular commercial flight from Buddha Jayanti day on May 16. Officials said a test flight was successfully completed on Thursday from Kathmandu to Lumbini by A-330 with 260 people onboard, including tourism minister Prem Ale.

Al Jazeera airlines has already confirmed that it will operate from Lumbini, the second international airport, from Day One. The new airport, which is 45m wide with a 3,000m long runway, has been built with concessional loan of Rs 11 billion from ADB.

## PUTIN WARNS WEST OF LIGHTNING RETALIATION

## Biden asks Congress to approve another \$33 billion in Ukraine aid

## AGENCIES

WASHINGTON, APRIL 28

PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN called on Congress on Thursday to approve \$33 billion in additional aid for Ukraine, arguing that American weapons and humanitarian assistance are helping to beat back Russian invaders in a conflict with enormous consequences for the United States and the world.

"The cost of this fight is not cheap," he said in a statement made at the White House, addressing domestic concerns about the expense. "But caving to aggression is going to be more costly if we allow it to happen."

"We either back the Ukrainian people as they defend their country or we stand by as the Russians continue their atrocities and aggression in Ukraine," he added.

The massive aid package would eclipse all the spending by the US so far on the war and ramp up America's investment not just in Ukraine's defence but, more broadly, in weakening Russian military capacity, a goal outlined in recent days by Defence Secretary Lloyd J Austin III.

While Biden's letter to Congress endorsed tying the Ukraine aid to a separate \$22.5 billion pandemic response package, he told reporters that did not really care whether the two measures were linked or passed separately. The President also said he is sending lawmakers a legislative plan to make it easier to seize the assets of Russian oligarchs tied to President Vladimir V Putin and direct some of those resources to the Ukrainians.

## Blasts in north Afghanistan kill nine, injure 13

Kabul: Two explosions, within minutes of each other, killed at least nine people and wounded 13 in northern Afghanistan on Thursday, a spokesman for a Taliban-appointed police chief said. The blasts targeted two separate vehicles in Mazar-e-Sharif, the capital of Balkh province, according to Mohammad Asif Waziri, the spokesman.

The source of the blasts was not immediately clear and the spokesman provided no further details. No one claimed responsibility for the attack. Taliban security cordoned off the area. **AP**

## TURKEY

## ERDOGAN HEADS TO SAUDI TO MEND TIES



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan left for Saudi Arabia on Thursday in a major reset of relations between two regional heavyweights following the slaying of a Saudi columnist in Istanbul. The visit marks the latest in Ankara's bridge-building efforts with its key regional rival. It will also be Erdogan's first visit to the kingdom since 2017, the year before the murder in Turkey of journalist Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi agents.



UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres toured areas outside Kyiv that suffered damage in the war. Speaking to journalists on Thursday, Guterres urged Russia to cooperate with the International Criminal Court. NYT

## EXPLAINED How will aid be used

OF THE money Biden is requesting now for military purposes, there would be \$6 billion to arm Ukraine directly, \$5.4 billion to replace US supplies sent to the area, \$4.5 billion for other security assistance for Ukraine. The aid is meant to signify that the US is not tiring of helping to stave off Putin's attempt to expand his nation's control of its neighbourhood, and perhaps beyond.

Earlier in the day, Russia stepped up its assaults on eastern and southern Ukraine, Kyiv said on Thursday, and President Vladimir Putin threatened "light-

ning-fast" retaliation against any Western countries that intervene on Ukraine's behalf.

"If someone intends to intervene in the ongoing events from the outside, and create strategic threats for Russia that are unacceptable to us, they should know that our retaliatory strikes will be lightning-fast," Putin told lawmakers in St Petersburg.

Moscow's offensive in eastern Ukraine gathered momentum as several areas came under heavy shelling Thursday, Ukrainian authorities reported intense Russian fire in the Donbas and near Kharkiv, a northeastern city outside the Donbas that is seen as key to the offensive.

In the ruined southern port city of Mariupol, Ukrainian fighters holed up in the steel plant that represents the last pocket of resistance said concentrated bombing overnight killed and wounded more people.



Cases have been on the upswing since late March. AP

## With 11k new cases, Taiwan faces largest Covid outbreak yet

HUIZHONG WU  
TAIPEI, APRIL 28

TAIWAN, WHICH had been living mostly free of Covid-19, is now facing its worst outbreak since the beginning of the pandemic with over 11,000 new cases reported on Thursday.

Cases have been on the upswing since late March. In April, the island's central authorities announced that they would no longer maintain a "zero-Covid" policy like the Chinese government's in which they would centrally quarantine positive cases. Instead, the government is

asking people to quarantine at home if they test positive, unless they show moderate to severe symptoms.

Chen Shih-chung, the island's health minister, announced Thursday they had found 11,353 new cases, along with two deaths. During the daily press briefing held by the Central Epidemic Command Center, he said 99.7% of the cases in the current outbreak either had no symptoms or had mild symptoms.

Most of Taiwan's 858 Covid-19 deaths came from summer 2021. Until this month, it had been the island's one major outbreak in the pandemic. **AP**

## German House approves plea to deliver arms to Ukraine

Berlin: Germany's Bundestag lower house of Parliament on Thursday overwhelmingly approved a petition on support for Ukraine backing the delivery of weapons, including heavy arms to the country. "Alongside the broad economic isolation and decoupling of Russia from international markets, the effective means to stop the invasion is to intensify delivery of effective weapons and complex systems including heavy arms," the petition read. **REUTERS**

## British man killed, another missing

London: The British government says a UK national has been killed in Ukraine, and another is missing. The Foreign Office confirmed Thursday that it is supporting the family of a British national killed in Ukraine. It also said it was "urgently seeking further information" on another Briton who is missing. The government did not provide further details. Sky News reported that the Britons were believed to have been fighting with Ukrainians. **AP**

## KARACHI UNIV BLAST

## Pakistan agencies suspect presence of more women suicide bombers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
KARACHI/LAHORE, APRIL 28

PAKISTANI INVESTIGATORS probing the suicide attack by a woman at the Karachi University that killed three Chinese teachers have not ruled out the presence of more women suicide bombers at sleeper cells of the outlawed Baluchistan Liberation Army, even as police in Lahore have arrested a suspect from Punjab University in connection with the bombing.

"Initial investigations confirmed Shaari Baloch, the suicide bomber in Tuesday's incident, was part of the banned Majeed brigade, a part of the BLA which has brainwashed these suicide bombers," an official of the Anti-Terrorism Department said.

"We are looking into possibilities that there might be more women suicide bombers brainwashed to become part of the Majeed Brigade and waiting in sleeper cells," he said. He confirmed that initial investigations had shown that Shari Baloch did not carry out the attack independently and was guided and helped by her handlers/facilitators.

The security forces on Thursday raided the house of the father of the bomber in a society located in Karachi's Scheme 33. Laptops and other evidence, including documents, were seized during the raid.

China on Thursday asked thousands of its nationals working on the \$60 billion CPEC projects in Pakistan to increase their security and watch out for terrorist risks following a deadly suicide blast. "Once again, we remind our institutions' personnel in Pakistan to heighten their security awareness and watch out for terrorist risks," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin.



An explosion triggered by a woman suicide bomber killed three Chinese teachers on Tuesday. Reuters

## PUBLIC HEALTH EXPERTS SAY PROPOSAL COULD SAVE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF LIVES

## FDA moves to ban sales of menthol cigarettes, flavoured cigars

CHRISTINA JEWETT  
APRIL 28

THE FOOD and Drug Administration on Thursday announced a plan to ban sales of menthol-flavored cigarettes in the US, a measure many public health experts hailed as the government's most meaningful action in more than a decade of tobacco control efforts.

The proposed ban is expected to have the deepest impact on Black smokers, nearly 85 per cent of whom use menthol cigarettes, compared with a rate of 29 per cent among white smokers, according to a govern-

ment survey. If effective in reducing smoking, the ban could significantly diminish the burden of chronic disease and limit the number of lives cut short by one of the most hazardous legal products available.

The proposed ban "would, among other things, improve health and reduce mortality risk of current smokers of menthol cigarettes or flavoured cigars by substantially decreasing their consumption and increasing the likelihood of cessation," the FDA commissioner, Dr Robert Califf, told a Senate committee Thursday.

Menthol is a chemical derived from the mint plant that can also be made in a lab. It is in-



The proposed ban would improve the health and reduce the mortality risk of current smokers of menthol cigarettes. AP

cluded in cigarettes to make smoking less harsh, providing a cooling sensation in the throat.

Public health experts say menthol cigarettes have been heavily marketed to Black people, to

devastating effect: African American men have the highest rates of lung cancer in America, according to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

Taking menthol cigarettes off the market is expected to further reduce smoking levels and reduce the number of young people taking up the habit. If the US experience mirrors that of Canada after it banned menthol cigarettes, 1.3 million people would quit smoking and potentially hundreds of thousands of premature deaths could be averted, said Geoffrey Fong, principal investigator of the International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Project.

"This is potentially an extraor-

dinary, landmark intervention to reduce No. 1 preventable cause of death and disease," Fong said.

The proposed ban was announced after a frenzy of lobbying by tobacco and retail interests. The proposed rule will be open for public comments for at least 60 days and then finalised with possible revisions. It is expected that it will take a least a year to go into effect. The tobacco companies are likely to contest the rule in court, which could result in a long legal battle.

Erika Sward of the American Lung Association said, once finalised, the menthol ban "will be the single most significant action taken by the FDA in its almost 13-

year history of regulating tobacco products."

The proposed rule does not cover menthol e-cigarettes. The FDA is currently reviewing all vaping products being sold in the US to determine whether to allow them to stay on the market. The agency has so far granted marketing approval to makers of some tobacco-flavoured vapes.

Public health advocates have long sought a menthol ban. When the landmark Tobacco Control Act passed in 2009, giving the FDA the authority to regulate tobacco products, menthol was exempted from the tobacco flavours that would be banned. **NYT**



Kolkata



BRIEFLY

Asia C'ship: Sindhu in last-8, Saina out

*Manila:* Star Indian shuttler PV Sindhu notched up a straight game win over lowly-ranked Yue Yann Jaslyn Hooi of Singapore in women's singles competition to advance to the quarterfinals of Badminton Asia Championships here on Thursday. The Indian men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty also made it to the quarterfinals but it was curtains for London Olympics bronze medalist Saina Nehwal and world championships silver winner Kidambi Srikanth. Sindhu, seeded fourth, who had claimed a bronze in the 2014 Gimcheon edition, defeated Jaslyn Hooi, ranked 100th, 21-16 21-16 in 42 minutes to set up a clash against third seed Chinese He Bingjiao, whom she had beaten for a bronze at the Tokyo Olympics.

Madappa in lead at Asian Games trials

*Bengaluru:* Viraj Madappa stayed ahead of the pack despite a modest one-under 71 but his lead was cut to two at the end of the third round of the Asian Games golf Trials on Thursday. Madappa's 71 brought his three-day total to 11-under 205 and he is now two ahead of Karandeep Kochhar (69) at 9-under. Rashid Khan shot five-under 67 and moved into Tied-third with Veer Ahlawat (69). As four best of the five rounds will be counted, Madappa is just one ahead of Rashid Khan and Veer Ahlawat and Kochhar, who has three 69s is fourth.

Bengaluru to host Ranji knockout games

*Mumbai:* Bengaluru will host the Ranji Trophy knockout matches, starting with the quarterfinals from June 4, with the final set to be played from June 20. The league stage of the Ranji Trophy was played before the start of the ongoing IPL and the BCCI had said that the knockouts would be played after the lucrative T20 league. It is understood that there will be no compulsory quarantine for the players but bio-bubble will be maintained. The teams and the players will have to submit a negative RT-PCR report on their arrival. The four quarterfinals will be played from June 4-8. Bengal will take on Jharkhand in the first quarterfinal. Mumbai are up against Uttarakhand while Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh will square off in the third quarterfinal.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Three Lions get a new king

Ben Stokes to lead England in Tests; pacers Broad and Anderson back in the mix

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
LONDON, APRIL 28

BEN STOKES was appointed as captain of England's Test cricket team on Thursday, taking on the high-pressure role just a few months after returning from a long spell away from the game to protect his mental health.

The all-rounder was the only credible option to replace Joe Root, who quit his position, which he had held for five years, two weeks ago with England having only won one of its last 17 Test matches.

It is the first big decision by Rob Key, the former England batsman who was recently hired as managing director of men's cricket in England in a turbulent period for the national team that is currently without a head coach.

Key said he was sure Stokes was ready to shoulder the burden of the captaincy despite missing most of 2021 to focus on his well-being and also recover from two finger operations. It could mean Stokes plays fewer one-day and Twenty20 internationals, though.

"It's just something we've got to do, we've got to manage that load, we have to prioritize at times where we think he needs to be playing. At the moment, that's going to be test cricket," Key said.

"I don't think we have to overthink this. We have to make sure he is in a good frame of mind, his body is in good shape, and then we can plan accordingly."

While announcing Stokes' new role, Key also said veteran fast bowlers James Anderson and Stuart Broad, the top two wicket-takers in England's test history, would also be available again after being controversially left out of the recent West Indies tour.

Tough road ahead

England plays Test series against New Zealand and South Africa this summer, and also completes the series against India that was cut short last year with India 2-1 ahead with one test remaining.

"Before it got announced I was doing this job, I rang them up and said, 'In my opinion you're both available for selection,'" Key said of the 35-year-old Broad and the 39-year-old Anderson.

"I can't promise you you're going to play but you are just available for selection. Ben Stokes was very clear on the fact that he wants Jimmy and Broady to come back in. It will purely be done on what's the best XI to win that first test match. Nothing more, nothing less. If they are in that, which there's every chance they will be because they are two great bowlers, then they play."

Key said new head coaches would soon be hired to lead the men's Test and limited-overs teams, insisting the same person can't handle both jobs.



The new role could mean Ben Stokes plays fewer one-day and Twenty20s. Reuters

Always got each other's backs. Congratulations mate, I'll be right with you every step of the way."

JOE ROOT  
FORMER ENGLAND TEST CAPTAIN

"It's just become a job that has become near-impossible for one coach to do," Key said. "The amount of cricket we play, with all the COVID catch-up, all that stuff, you're going to have times where you literally would be jumping on a plane to the other side of the world to coach a different format."

Getting rid of COVID bubbles for teams is expected to further ease the mental burden on players and coach staff. That should help Stokes, one of the world's best cricketers in all formats, as he settles back into the swing of a hectic cricket schedule. "He cares about the people around him,

..I rang them up and said, 'In my opinion you're both (Anderson and Broad) available for selection."

ROB KEY  
ENGLAND MANAGING DIRECTOR

he has understanding for why people struggle, he has understanding for why people might not be feeling right," Key said.

"All those traits, along with a very good cricket brain, make him the standout choice." Stokes said Root will "continue to be a key ally for me" as he takes on the captaincy. "I want to thank Joe for everything he has done for English cricket and for always being a great ambassador for the sport all across the world," Stokes said.

"He has been a massive part of my development as a leader in the dressing room."

Red-hot Liverpool check Villarreal's underdog story

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
LIVERPOOL, APRIL 28

LIVERPOOL LOOKS like being one European giant too many for Villarreal. Wins in the Champions League semifinals are rarely as routine as Liverpool's 2-0 first-leg victory on Wednesday over the Spanish underdog, which appears to have finally come unstuck on a fairytale run that has already accounted for European football royalty in Juventus and Bayern Munich.

Liverpool, still on course for an unprecedented quadruple of major trophies, proved to be a bigger test. The six-time European champions slowly dismantled the limited challenge of Villarreal on another night when they were swept along by the power of Anfield. The goals came early in the second half — and within 133 seconds of each other — as Villarreal left back Pervis Estupinan unwittingly deflected a cross by Jordan Henderson into his own net in the 53rd minute, with goalkeeper Geronimo Rulli only managing to tip a looping ball into his own net.

One goal can quickly turn into two in these energy-charged European nights at Anfield and that's what transpired again, with Villarreal still shaken up from conceding the opener when Sadio Mane ran onto Mohamed Salah's through-ball and toe-poked a low finish beyond Rulli.

The second leg takes place at Estadio de la Cerámica on Tuesday and only a major surprise will prevent Villarreal — a team only in seventh place in the Spanish league and filled with players who failed to make it in England — from bowling out, just like in 2006 in its only other appearance in the semifinals.

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp struck a cautious note despite the one-sided nature of the first leg. "Nothing has happened yet," he said. "We're playing a game and it's 2-0 at halftime. You have to be completely on alert, 100% in the right mood."

Klopp has built a formidable winning machine that looks even more complete than the team which won the Champions League in 2019, a year after also reaching the final and losing to Real Madrid under the German coach. As his players did a lap of honor inside Anfield after the final whistle, Klopp waved to the crowd and tapped the club crest on the front of his thick coat.

Another win. Likely another Champions League final. And, amazingly, the quadruple is still on for a team that has already won the English League Cup, is into the FA Cup final and is only a point behind Manchester City in the Premier League title race. It could yet be a Champions League final between the two northwest rivals, with City taking a 4-3 lead over Real Madrid into the second leg of their semifinal in Spain next Wednesday.

A sea of yellow-clad Villarreal fans — at around 5,000, they amounted to almost 10%



Liverpool benefitted from a self goal while Sadio Mane scored a second in the 2-0 win over Villarreal. Reuters

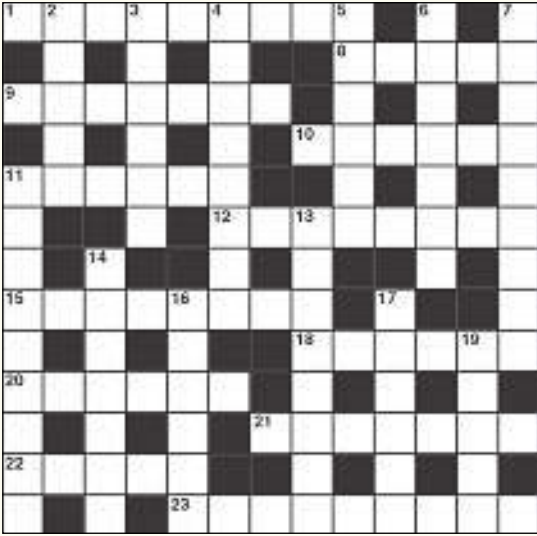
of the population of the town in eastern Spain — swarmed its way from Liverpool city center to Anfield ahead of the game. A rendition of The Beatles' "Yellow Submarine," which is the nickname of visitors, was well-received by the lively away contingent before kickoff. That was as warm as the welcome got. Liverpool snapped into tackles and pressed high from the first whistle, meaning Villarreal's players hardly got out of their half all match. "The reality is, they are in the best moment," Villarreal coach Unai Emery said of Liverpool. "They are in the favorite to win this competition."

Yet, with Emery setting up his team with his back four screened by a deep-lying and narrow midfield four, Liverpool was initially starved of space in what quickly became tantamount to an attack vs. defense exercise.

There were plenty of half-chances — Mane headed wide off his face, Salah curled over then volleyed over, and Thiago Alcantara smashed a long-range shot off the outside of the post — but Villarreal held out until half-time.

SCORELINE	
Liverpool	Villarreal
2	0
Estupianián 53' (og)	
Mane 55'	
*Aggregate 2-0	

CROSSWORD 4727



ACROSS

- 1 Majority status (9)
- 8 Morning custom which can cause laughter (5)
- 9 Teams of seven put out by the Spanish (7)
- 10 Hit with explosive - bandage needed (6)
- 11 Nominal winner (6)
- 12 The height of distinction (8)
- 15 Really look on the exams as trials of ability (8)
- 18 Suitable voice for a trio? (6)
- 20 Being rich, packed it in (6)
- 21 Add to general disorder (7)
- 22 Little in the way of pudding (5)
- 23 He may study an insect and its changing form (9)

DOWN

- 2 I held out for capital (5)
- 3 It's frivolous having a tax about it (6)
- 4 She turns into Diana (8)
- 5 Naturalist in ward for treatment (6)
- 6 Sarcastic extract from a newspaper (7)
- 7 Respect some hesitation in one's excuses (9)
- 11 Utterly incompetent (9)
- 13 An example of the position one may take up (8)
- 14 Makes one see red as green perhaps (7)
- 16 Puts up secret amendments (6)
- 17 The meal is about over (6)
- 19 Goals are redefined in Africa (5)

Solutions Crossword 4726: Across: 1 Low-down, 4 Ivory, 7 Wine, 8 Lost time, 10 Shopkeeper, 12 Owlets, 13 Dieted, 15 Churchgoer, 18 Economic, 19 Club, 20 Freak, 21 Sporan, Down: 1 Lawns, 2 Wantonly, 3 Noosed, 4 In the right, 5 Ohio, 6 Yielded, 9 Sketchbook, 11 Stroller, 12 Oneself, 14 Traits, 16 Robin, 17 Nose.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong

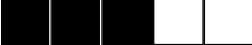


JUMBLED WORDS

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.

The good times of today, are the \_\_\_\_\_ of tomorrow. - Bob Marley (3,8)

PYAOs



LOSDHU



TRUST



AEIRGH



Answer: The good times of today, are the pes thoughts of tomorrow. - Bob Marley

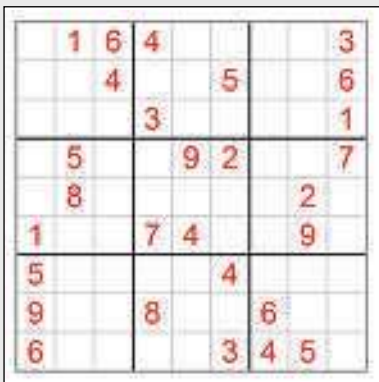
SUDOKU 4819

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



SOLUTION SUDOKU 4818



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

The better you have come to terms with whatever happened long ago, the more prepared you will be to deal with excitable emotional influences, now. It does appear as if a close partner is sending you conflicting signals. But, then, that seems to be quite normal, these days.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

Complex planetary patterns offer a sign to all, but for those who have their heads completely buried in the sand, changes are afoot. Actually, it's your attitudes which should shift, first. Success will result from taking a principled stand and it's surprising how partners respect you if you seize the moral high ground.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

You must be prepared to consider long-term arrangements, which should moderate your willingness to take risks. However, there is scope for discussions as far as joint financial arrangements are concerned. Take time off for a romantic dalliance.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

It now seems inevitable that you will have to alter your stance over home or family affairs. However, it may now be best to wait about four or five days before confirming existing arrangements. By then, current uncertainties will clear up.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

You cannot help but express your true emotions and, in the process, give other people a much firmer understanding of who you are and where you're heading. In the long run this can only be to the good, for partners will appreciate a better sense of your plans.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

You should already have taken any major decisions affecting the general structure and pattern of your life. From now on, you will have to focus on the details one by one. Start by reconsidering joint financial arrangements, especially those which you may have been entered into without enough thought.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

Whatever happens now, remember that you are in command. In the old days your sign was associated with war as much as with peace, so don't shrink from taking a tough stand if gentle persuasion doesn't work. It's about time other people saw that you meant business.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

Your private affairs are your business and nobody else's. There are therefore likely to be many instances when you have to distance yourself from people who are taking you for granted or peering too closely into your activities. They will just have to learn, won't they?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

Battles and conflicts at work must be taken in your stride as part and parcel of an inevitable teething process. New people and fresh ideas require a period of adjustment which may be difficult, even if temporary. The pleasure comes when it's all over.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

If you are tired of being put-upon or taken for granted, now is your chance to correct the balance. However, it will be naive to imagine that other people will take your complaints lying down. You should understand just how close you have come to success in a personal matter, and will be again, very soon.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

You haven't been misguided, but you may have been misinformed. However, Mercury's changing position offers hope that you will once again be able to see the broader picture, restoring a balanced perspective. You'll be more concerned with the basic facts.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

There's still plenty to be accomplished at home before you can relax. Today's lunar influences suggest that your family is more important to your happiness and security than you often imagine. Your sense of beauty is at its peak, and you'll be creating a sensitive, harmonious environment.



# J&K to IPL: Following Malik’s path

In nets fast bowlers Basit Bashir, Sharukh Ahmed Dar, Rasikh Salam are pinging batsmen with scorchers

PRATYUSH RAJ  
DELHI, APRIL 28

At the IPL 2021, Umran Malik was still a nets bowler for the Sunrisers Hyderabad and replaced T Natarajan, who went out due to Covid-19. Without the claustrophobia of the nettings, but with the nerves of the show-time arc lights showering on him, he produced the second-fastest ball of the tournament, a 152.95 kph brute against Royal Challengers Bangalore. Life has changed for Umran in the space of few months. The Jammu lad had impressed the then skipper Virat Kohli so much that he was summoned as a net bowler with the Indian team.

This year, he has taken his performance to the next level as 150 kph-plus deliveries from him have become a new norm . Not every day does one Indian fast bowler rouse an entire Wankhede stadium on its feet. A fan was holding a placard that read, 'I am here to see Umran Malik's bowling.'

What's even more impressive is that other rookie pacers from Jammu and Kashmir are following in Malik's footsteps - very quickly too.

One such promising fast bowler is Basit Bashir. The 19-year-old from Kupwara is currently a part of Punjab Kings' net-bowling contingent in the ongoing IPL 2022. The 6 feet 3-inch tall left-arm pacer, Basit, has represented J&K at U-16 and U-19 levels. He was also a part of Zonal Cricket Academy and MRF Pace Academy in the past.

Bashir was in Chennai at MRF Pace Academy when he got a call from the Punjab Kings that they wanted him as a net bowler. The coaches at the MRF pace academy allowed Bashir to join the Punjab Kings, but had one condition.

"Senthil sir (Mylvahanan Senthilnathan) told me that I must come back to the academy once my stint with Punjab Kings is over. It was the most difficult two days of my life, I had to choose between MRF Pace Academy and IPL. But luckily, I got the permission," Bashir tells Indian Express.

Fast bowling came naturally to Basit as his father, Basir Ahmed Lone, and maternal uncle Tahir Mir were fast bowlers.



Basit Bashir, 19, from Kupwara is a net bowler with Punjab Kings. (R) Sharukh Ahmed Dar, 26, with SRH bowling coach Dale Steyn.



"My father played till district, but my mamu has been part of the Jammu and Kashmir's Ranji Trophy team. My elder brother Faisal Bashir was also part of the Jammu and Kashmir U-23 camp. Cricket is in our blood, so I never had to look anywhere else for inspiration," says Bashir who was selected for U-16 trials at the Sher-i-Kashmir Stadium in Srinagar where Irfan Pathan, saw him. The left-arm pacer bagged two five-wickets hauls in three matches.

"I remember seeing Basit playing on the mountains of Kupwara. A couple of days before I went to Kupwara, there was a conflict between the army and the militants. I was staying not even 100m far from the conflict zone. The next day, I saw Basit, and I was very impressed with his bowling. So straightaway, I put him in the U-19 age group," says Irfan Pathan, who was appointed as player-cum-mentor in March 2018.

Then there is a 26-year-old swing bowler

Sharukh Ahmed Dar, who lost his cricket-loving father at the age of 14, and is a net bowler for the Sunrisers Hyderabad. Dar hails from Srinagar and is well-known, courtesy his brilliant performances in the Downtown Champions League, a T20 Tennis ball tournament, who took cricket seriously when Pathan pointed out his talent.

"Irfan sir gave me the self-belief. Within a year, I was with the senior team. And now I am with the SRH set-up and learning the trade from my all-time favourite Dale Steyn," says Dar, whose family is more into Bollywood than cricket. "In Kashmir, we all play cricket. Even in my family, my uncle used to play cricket, but never as a professional. We are more into Bollywood. My name is Sharukh, my elder brother's name is Salman, my cousin's name is Amir," laughs Dar.

"Umran has set a great example for us. If I manage to impress Dale Steyn and Tom Moody this season, maybe I will be playing

"I remember seeing Basit playing on the mountains of Kupwara. I saw Basit, and I was very impressed with his bowling. So straightaway, I put him in the U-19 age group."

IRFAN PATHAN  
FORMER MENTOR J&K

for the SRH next season," he adds, having been spotted alongside Abdul Samad, Umran Malik, and Rasikh Salam after Pathan took on the role of Jammu and Kashmir's player-cum-mentor in 2018 scouting out 100 cricketers from 22 districts of J&K for different age groups. He changed the mindset of the team. J&K even reached the quarter-finals of the 2019-20 Ranji Trophy season.

Pacer Umar Nazir Mir, 28, has played 42 first-class matches for J&K, but he feels the professionalism in the system came only after the arrival of Irfan Pathan.

"He instilled the belief that our players can play in the IPL and for India," says Nazir, who, too is a net bowler for SRH in the ongoing IPL season.

Pathan spotted Abdul Samad and Umran Malik at the Science College ground in Jammu during a camp organised for the state Ranji Trophy team.

He located Sharukh, Basit and Rasikh at Sher-e-Kashmir Cricket Stadium in Sri Nagar. Pathan was so impressed with Basit that he even went to Kupwara just to watch him play. "Guys are playing on the banks of river, and mountains, playing on the mat in canvas shoes. Even a guy who can hardly bowl 110-115, was confident enough that he can do well. The level of confidence amazed me," says Pathan.

"In 2017-18, when I was about to take up the role with Jammu & Kashmir, Kapil paaji was in that meeting with the J&K officials. I still remember his words, 'If you genuinely want to do something for the country, stop thinking about playing all those leagues and take Jammu & Kashmir cricket in your hands. Help the youngsters out there. It won't be just a cricketing assignment but a service to the nation,'" says Pathan.

## PLAYING TONIGHT

Indian Premier League

PK vs LSG, 730pm, Live on Star Sports Network

# Former knight Kuldeep makes Kolkata pay

SYNOPSIS: Kuldeep is DC's MVP. Umesh's fight goes in vain.

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY  
APRIL 28

THREE WICKETS and just two runs in Mustafizur Rahman's last over restricted Kolkata Knight Riders' total to a below-par 146/9. But Delhi Capitals made things difficult for themselves by losing two early wickets followed by three more in the middle-overs, on the heels of a 65-run third wicket partnership between David Warner (42) and Lalit Yadav. As they regained the initiative, Axar Patel's run-out was unnecessary. But KKR suffered their sixth defeat in this IPL, five on the spin, because they didn't have enough runs on the board. DC won by four wickets with an over remaining, while KKR's team selection suggested desperation.

## DC's MVP

Last year, he didn't even get a game for KKR before being unceremoniously dumped by the franchise ahead of the mega auction. Kuldeep Yadav was recovering from a knee surgery and as the 2022 IPL auction took place, he ran the risk of going unsold. DC bought him for Rs 2 crore and they are reveling in the smart pick. DC so far have four victories, with the chinaman bowler taking the Man of the Match award in all four of them, this game being the latest. He was his old franchise's nemesis in the first-leg. On Thursday at Wankhede, he spun a web around the KKR batsmen. 4/14 took his tournament tally to 17 scalps. If Umran Malik is the flavour of this IPL, Kuldeep is the resurrection story of the season.

Success begets confidence. Three years ago, Kuldeep cried on the field after being at the receiving end of a Moeen Ali batting assault. He is now playing with a smile. There's a spring in his step, his body language is positive and on occasions, like he did today, he is making the ball talk. After accounting for Baba Indrajith and Sunil Narine off successive deliveries in his first spell, Kuldeep cancelled out a KKR recovery with the wickets of Shreyas Iyer and Andre Russell in his second



Kuldeep won his 4th Player of the Match award. Sportzpics/IPL

ond, Indrajith, on his IPL debut for KKR, jumped out of the crease and was deceived by the flight. Narine was done in by the double bluff. A slip was posted, hinting a conventional away-goer. A flipper came instead that zipped off the surface and trapped the batsman leg-before. Much to the Indian cricket's delight, Kuldeep has also got his zip back.

Shreyas, the KKR captain, was trying to mount a fightback, upping the ante with a couple of fours against Axar. A Kuldeep wrong'un removed him, via a stunning catch by Rishabh Pant. Russell tried his typical strong-armed tactic but fell to Kuldeep's guile; he got stumped. Mustafizur, too, handsomely contributed to the cause, returning with 3/18.

## Umesh's fight

He is an old guard in a field of new-age speed merchants. But Umesh Yadav is having a fine IPL and today also, he spearheaded his team's pace attack. After dismissing Prithvi Shaw with an excellent return catch in his first ball, the fast bowler returned to bounce out a well-set Warner before getting rid of Pant. At 84/5, the game was wide open. Umesh returned with 3/24 from his four overs but he didn't have a pace partner to run into the DC lower-order and complement his bowling.

**BRIEF SCORES:** KKR: 146/9 in 20 overs (Shreyas Iyer 42, Nitish Rana 57; Kuldeep Yadav 4/14, Mustafizur Rahman 3/18) lost to DC: 150/6 in 19 overs (David Warner 42; Umesh Yadav 3/24).

# Too much of chopping, changing: Iyer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI, APRIL 28

KOLKATA KNIGHT Riders have completely lost the plot with as many as 19 players being used in nine games and skipper Shreyas Iyer had no option but to admit that they haven't been able to get their combination right in IPL-15. KKR have used as many as five different opening pairs and the team looked far from settled after its fifth straight defeat -- this time to Delhi Capitals by four wickets with an over to spare.

"No real excuses, we have to go back and assess where things are going wrong. A lot of chopping and changing is happening (at the top of the order), it's been difficult to set up the right combination, with all injuries not helping as well," an irritated looking Iyer said after the match here on Thursday.

He urged his teammates to play fearless cricket and not be conservative in their approach. "We need to stick together, play some fearless cricket, not be conservative with the bat. Five more matches remaining, we need to play well, show belief and give something back to the team and the management, forget about the past, start afresh and back your instinct," he said on the way forward. "You need to sit back and think where it's going wrong. We can't be overconfident, give your best, if we still lose, then it's fine," he said.

DC skipper Rishabh Pant was always confident that once they take the game deep, there was no way they won't win against KKR but he also believed that once Khaleel Ahmed is back from his hamstring injury, they will have a settled XI.

"We were thinking (of the wobble) because we lost too many wickets in the middle but at the same time we thought if we take the game deep, we can win it.

"We haven't thought (about this as the best XI) as hundred percent. Khaleel got injured and that was a forced change, once he is back then we will have our best XI."

Pant made it clear that Rovman Powell is being seen as a finisher. "We see him (Powell) as a finisher but like today when we lost too many wickets, he has to come up and do the job. We are not thinking about the points table and take one game at a time. We have to be more clear with our plans and that is something we can improve," he added.

Having decimated KKR in the first leg, Kuldeep Yadav took another four wickets against his old team to inch closer towards the Purple Cap with 17 scalps, which is currently one less than Yuzvendra Chahal. For Kuldeep, the fear of failure is no more there in him. "I might have become a better bowler, but I am mentally stronger than before. When you fail in life you pick what you can improve on and that is something I had to improve. I don't get scared of failing now."

## EMOTIONAL ROLLERCOASTER

### Pace, movement, athleticism, Umesh



Before Umran there was Umesh and he is still going strong.

Amidst the understandable buzz over the pace sensation Umran Malik, Umesh Yadav continues to show he is still fast, in form, very fit, and takes important wickets. Remarkably, despite playing for more than a decade now, Umesh hasn't lost much pace at all, and continues to swing the ball. He took out David Warner, Rishabh Pant, and Prithvi Shaw with contrasting deliveries to send another reminder about his hot form in this IPL. Shaw was shaping to flick a delivery that seemed to tail down outside leg but found it just about curving in

enough to take the leading edge. He might have got away had it been another pacer but the athletic Umesh flung himself to his left to pouch it with both hands. Later, he returned in the middle overs, to bounce out Warner on a slow pitch. With the angle cramping him, Warner almost shut his eyes and went for a swivel pull, only to top edge it to fine-leg fielder. Soon, Rishabh Pant, who must be careful about his fading form, poked at a length delivery from around the stumps and straightening outside off stump and got a nick.

## Lucky, plucky and grinning Pant

Two dismissals, the best and the not-so-best of Rishabh Pant the wicketkeeper, but he came out with a smile on both occasions. Rishabh Pant first did a split almost to take an outstanding catch and then he fumbled a regulation take, with the batsman way out of the crease, but luck was with him as the ball popped on to the stumps. When Shreyas Iyer chased a wide googly from Kuldeep Yadav but was surprised by how low it kept and only could edge his attempted cut. Pant had shuffled across, his right leg touching the end of the popping crease line, and somehow stayed low and kept going down with his right glove to pouch the ball inches off the ground and near the wide line. Two balls later, Andre Russell was left stranded by another googly. Pant grabbed at the ball and it popped out of his hands but luckily fell on the stumps.

## All hail King T'Challa Sakariya

When Chetan Sakariya took out Aaron Finch, bowled attempting a slog, he crossed his arms on his body. It's his ode to his favourite character Black Panther, from the Avengers. "I like superhero movies a lot. I am a huge fan of Avengers, especially Black Panther," he had once said of King T'Challa. Finch made it rather easy for him. He was just dropped, but went for the slog next ball, and completely missed the ball. Last year, when he was with Rajasthan Royals, he had the initials of his brother Rahul Kanjibhai (RK) on his jersey, (the brother had committed suicide) with a text that ran 'I miss you bro'.



MUNAF PATEL

MY ADVICE as a 21-year old to Umran would be: *Jaao aur josh se ball phenko. Yehi hai (Go and bowl with more vigour and pace).* Watching him run in to bowl, I feel like bowling too. It is so good to see such kids getting opportunities in the IPL. The scouts that go out to spot talent... It feels good that the world's biggest league is benefitting our players, especially those who come from small places. Otherwise who knows how he would have come in and where he would have played. Now he is the league's fastest bowler, and that makes me very happy.

The BCCI should not wait for him to perform in the domestic circuit and then bring him into the Indian team. You take him as the 17th member of the squad if you want, but do take him along. He will learn about the culture and various situations and will learn to adapt if he stays around with everyone. It is something that has to be done.

## Handle with care

When I first came on to the scene, social media wasn't as big as it is now but there was certainly excitement around. It is a natural reaction if somebody comes up from a small place where there is no infrastructure. Umran has come up the same way I did. You need to take good care of him. He will last long only if the BCCI does that.

If you see, Zaheer Khan had also arrived as a 145-plus bowler, Ashish Nehra was there, I was there, VRR Singh was there, Ishant Sharma was also quick when he came in. At present you have guys like Umesh Yadav, Navdeep Saini. There needs to be a system in place where there is a restriction on the number of matches a fast bowler plays in a year. Now, of course, technology has advanced in terms of physiotherapy and training, but still you will have to take care of him. If you use him too much, then chances are he will suffer a big injury and that means he will then have to start managing his pace. But right now, he is bowling like soney pe suhaaga.

## The importance of Steyn

Dale Steyn is with him right now, so he will get to learn a lot. That will make a huge difference. Steyn is a genuine man, he is not egoistic. And he used to bowl 145 himself.



Umran Malik's pace and accuracy has made him an instant sensation.

Whatever he can pick up from Steyn, he should. And because he is from a small place, he is like a blank paper, you can write what you want on it. He will do as Steyn says.

At that age, you do not know anything. You are from a small place, and not that mature, so you feel like you should learn from this person and that person and so on. The fact that he will be with Steyn for a few months now is a golden period for him. Jitna unsey lapet sakein, lapet lein (Whatever he can soak in, he should). This is the age to learn as well as bowl. I don't think there will be a better opportunity for him in life than this.

The way he is going, he will travel to the next Test venue (with the Indian team). But there is so much competition in Indian cricket that once you get sidelined, it takes time to make a comeback. We have so many fast bowlers. So it is not like that they will keep playing you if you do not do well.

## Adding line and length

If he can focus more on line and length, like Steyn had, then no one can stop him, and the rest is then down to his fitness. You will have to sacrifice some pace. Firstly you have to bowl in our conditions, which are not ideal for fast bowling. You either have to make it reverse or bowl with the new ball, that's it.

Most of the work is done by the spinners.

Even Steyn used to bowl 150 when he started playing international cricket. But thereafter he would hover around 140. But he had swing, and he would bowl in South Africa. So Umran will have to add that (line and length). If he can do it at the same pace, nothing can be greater than that. But even if he loses a few yards and can swing it at 145, that is excellent.

If you remain hell-bent that I will not cut down my pace no matter what, it won't work. You look at VRR or Varun Aaron. But that is only after a certain age or if you are hampered by injuries. If you are around 30, and if you can adjust yourself around 135-137 kph, you will be able to survive. Otherwise, I don't believe in cutting down on pace. Definitely not at his age.

He will have to focus a lot on his fitness. You use so much strength and it takes so much out of your body... if you have to play multi-day cricket, you will have to do it. He will have to adopt specialised training, which the BCCI anyway has these days.

He has a smooth action. It is not an action that puts too much stress on the body, like Shaun Tait's or Lasith Malinga's did. It is like Steyn's or Brett Lee's. It can be sustained for a long time. Right now, it is very natural for him. But over a period of time, there is always a chance of breaking down. But if he trains well, then it won't happen.

## Learning from the IPL

He needs to play the IPL. If you don't, there are far fewer people watching you. If you do not play the world's biggest league, what is the point? There is so much to learn in the IPL. Like the bowler (Marco Jansen) who gave 25 runs (in the last over against Gujarat Titans) was the man of the match in the previous game (against Royal Challengers Bangalore). It teaches you that you will be down one day and up the next.

Should a special fast bowler be played only in overseas Tests? Well, it is difficult to play someone only in overseas Tests. We go to England once in four years, so you cannot have Bumrah, for instance, on the bench in between. You can certainly use Umran on some of the good wickets for pacers in India such as Mumbai. You need pace to generate reverse swing anyway. If your bowlers are not generating pace, they will not get reverse swing. So even in India, you need players who can bowl fast. (*Munaf Patel is a World Cup winner and former India pacer. He burst on the scene as a tear-away but later slowed down and struggled with injuries. Munaf spoke to Abhishek Purohit.*)