



PM Narendra Modi at a roadshow in Varanasi on Friday. Varanasi votes on March 7, in the last phase. Vishal Srivastav

PM, Akhilesh, Rahul: In last lap, their paths criss-cross Varanasi

LALMANI VERMA
VARANASI, MARCH 4

AS UTTAR Pradesh headed towards the seventh and final leg of a long-drawn election, leaders of three of the principal contenders — BJP leader and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav and the Congress's Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra — led separate rallies and roadshows in a final burst of campaigning.

Campaigning in Varanasi and other districts that go to the polls

Markaz case: Centre reverses its stand on reopening, wants curbs

SOFIAHSAN
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

DAYS AFTER conveying to Delhi High Court that the mosque at Markaz Nizamuddin can be reopened in accordance with Covid guidelines issued by the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), the Centre on Friday opposed the re-opening of the entire premises — and said only a few police-verified persons may be permitted to offer prayers. The DDMA had last week ordered the lifting of all Covid restrictions in the national capital.

Advocate Rajat Nair, representing the Centre, told the court: "The locus of the petitioner (Delhi Waqf Board) is doubtful and this particular premises is part of a case property, which has been attached."

Nair was referring to the case registered by Delhi Police against the Markaz management for alleged violation of Covid curbs two years ago, leading to an outbreak among Tablighi Jamaat members. The High Court is hearing the Waqf Board's petition to ease restrictions at Markaz Nizamuddin, where public entry was banned after that outbreak.

Nair informed the bench of Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri — the case was being heard until last week by Justice Mukta Gupta — that on the occasion of Shab-e-Barat last year, authorities had permitted the offering of namaz by 50 people on the mosque's first floor.

"I have no dispute. I don't say that those people cannot continue this time at Shab-e-Barat as well as during the holy month of Ramadan. If my learned friend (lawyer on opposite side)

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DECISION 2022



CONG RALLY, SP
ROADSHOW IN
VARANASI [PAGE 9](#)

MANIPUR PHASE 2
TODAY

22 SEATS

92
candidates
in fray

8.47
lakh
voters

NDA-ruled Meghalaya ninth state to withdraw general consent to CBI

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
& TORA AGARWALA
NEW DELHI, GUWAHATI,
MARCH 4

MEGHALAYA HAS withdrawn consent to the CBI to investigate cases in the state, becoming the ninth state in the country to have taken this step in the last few years. However, unlike most of the other states, Meghalaya is ruled by Conrad Sangma's National People's Party (NPP) which is part of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance.

"It is true that Meghalaya has withdrawn consent to the CBI. We do not know the reasons," said a government official.

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ATTACK ON UKRAINIAN FACILITY, EUROPE'S LARGEST, REVIVES MEMORIES OF CHERNOBYL

Global alarm bells after fire as Russia seizes n-plant; India flags safety concern at UNSC

Delhi disapproves: Regrettable that Ukraine situation has worsened

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

SETTING OFF alarm bells across the world, Russian troops Friday attacked Europe's largest nuclear power plant in Ukraine, starting a blaze that revived memories of the 1986 catastrophe at Chernobyl.

As firefighters doused the flames and the world recoiled in horror and slammed Russian President Vladimir Putin, the UN Security Council met urgently where India said "it is regrettable that the situation in Ukraine has worsened further."

Signalling its disapproval of the Russian action, India said "any accident involving the nuclear facilities may have severe consequences for public health and the environment".

Speaking at the UNSC — on a day India abstained at the UN Human Rights Council in the latest vote on the Russia-Ukraine issue — T S Tirumurti, India's Permanent Representative at the UN, said, "An immediate cessation of violence and end to all hostilities are essential. We continue to carefully follow the developments regarding the safety and security of Ukraine's nuclear

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Surveillance footage of a flare landing at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant during shelling in Ukraine's Enerhodar city. Reuters

Told to head to safe point outside Kharkiv, 500 wait there — unsure, hungry

ABHINAYA HARIGOVIND
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

TWO DAYS after they were told by the Indian embassy to leave Kharkiv immediately for three safe points nearby, around 500 Indians have been waiting outside Ukraine's second largest city — cold, hungry, unsure where to go next.

Many stranded at Pischyn — it was one of the places they were told to head to, the other two being Babai and Bezlyudivka — are students. Unable to board trains leaving Kharkiv, they walked 11 km to Pischyn.

The March 2 embassy advisory had said "students who cannot find vehicles or buses and are in railway station can proceed on foot. Proceed immediately.



Under all circumstances, Indians must reach these settlements by 6 pm Ukrainian Time today."

From Shivpuri in Madhya Pradesh, Himanshu Raj Maurya, a first-year student of Kharkiv National Medical University (KNMU), said: "We reached here two days ago, since Pischyn was one of the places on the advisory that was issued. We are

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

2000-3000 STUDENTS STILL STRANDED

Putin's hostage claim has few takers; Delhi calls for 'local ceasefire' to help exit

All students have phones, not one said detained against choice: top official

SHUBHAJIT ROY
& RITU SARIN
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

FOR THE second time in two days, India shrugged off Russian President Vladimir Putin's claim Thursday that more than 3,000 Indian citizens are being held hostage at the Kharkiv train station in eastern Ukraine by the Ukrainian military.

New Delhi countered there were no such reports even as it called for a "local ceasefire" that could help get the stranded students — estimated at 2,000 — in eastern Ukraine to buses waiting

INSIDE

'WE WERE SCARED WE WOULD DIE'

PANIC IN CITIES AS RUSSIA TIGHTENS CORDON [PAGES 10, 12](#)

40-60 km away en route to the border out of the war-ravaged country.

Asked about Putin's statement, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said Friday: "We issued a

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Putin lied... more at stake than Russia ties: German Ambassador



Ambassador Walter J Lindner. Abhinav Saha

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE RUSSIAN invasion of Ukraine came as a surprise as "nobody would have thought that President Putin would brutally attack his neighbours. If one is to call a spade a spade, he lied to us, to everyone," German Ambassador to India Walter J Lindner told *The Indian Express* Friday.

All countries should realise, he added, that there is "more at stake than just bilateral and emotional relations with Russia" because if Moscow's aggression against Ukraine sets a precedent, "any country could be under the same threat."

Qualifying his remarks saying he would not like to comment on India's position on the matter, Lindner said: "There is a powerful nation with a strong army which was not under threat, nobody was attacking it and the leader of this nation decides my weaker neighbour has no right to exist because this nation belongs to us. So let's create some pretext and invade, change the borders, violate the sovereignty and integrity just because we can,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Firms should give investors more info, says Nykaa CEO

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

PUBLIC LISTED companies should try to open up more with investors to help them make the right investment choices, according to Falguni Nayar, founder & CEO of online beauty and personal care platform Nykaa.

"I personally feel that you must try to share more information with the investor community so that they can make certain right choices. However, you know companies like us...we have a lot of data. We are data-driven and we have a lot of data and sometimes all the data cannot be put in public domain because there are monthly differences in the numbers, there are reasons for those differences, or, you know,



Nykaa CEO Falguni Nayar, daughter Adwaita and son Anchit



investors may not understand what are the reasons for those differences," Nayar said at the The Indian Express e-Adda on Thursday.

She was responding to a question on some new-age tech

companies deviating from the practice of conducting quarterly analyst meetings and sharing profitability metrics after listing on the bourses.

"There is information that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Haryana tables Bill to stop 'forcible' conversions, Oppn members stage protest

VARINDER BHATIA
CHANDIGARH, MARCH 4

THE HARYANA government Friday introduced a Bill in the Assembly to prevent "forcible conversions", sparking heated protests from Opposition members who alleged a bid to divide communities. A Congress MLA, Raghuvir Singh Kadian, tore a copy of the Bill and was eventually suspended for the remainder of the Budget Session.

As soon as state Home Minister Anil Vij introduced the Prevention of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Bill, 2022, Opposition MLAs beginning with Kadian (Beri constituency) began raising objections. Other Congress MLAs, including BB Batra, Geeta

Bhukkal and others, termed the Bill an attempt by the BJP government to "create a divide" between Hindus and Muslims.

The Treasury benches, meanwhile, kept reiterating that the Bill does not mention any specific religion.

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, in his intervention, said the Bill does not discriminate against any religion and deals only with forcible conversions. Pointing to the Opposition legislators, the CM added: "All the people sitting on these benches can get their religion converted to whichever one they want to."

The remarks did not go down well with the legislators, with MLA Kadian tearing a copy of the

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Cricket's Maradona, bowling's Bradman, magician & a flawed genius

SANDIP G
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

AROUND 7.30 PM India time on Friday, the world of cricket lost not just one of its greatest cricketers but also one of its greatest characters. Australian leg-spinner Shane Warne was found dead in his hotel room at Koh Samui in Thailand of a suspected heart attack. He was 52, long retired but active as a commentator, his insights on the game as rare and precious as his art.

That "there was no one quite like..." is often uttered as a formality at farewells and in obituaries. But the cliché could not have been truer in Warne's case.

Few bowled leg-spin like him — 708 Test wickets and 293 ODI wickets are proof of that. Enough it would be to say that no one bowled like him, any bowler across any era.

He was the Donald Bradman of bowling. Apter perhaps, cricket's version of Diego Maradona. Like the Argentine, he glowed in the gifts nature bestowed upon him, and his quest for the pleasures of life was insatiable. Like that flawed genius of football, he made mistakes in life and the game — both were banned for consuming drugs to aid weight loss — although Warne's trip never spiralled out of control.

Control, ironically, is perhaps



SHANE WARNE
1969-2022

the last trait you would attribute to his bowling; it was all about the magic. And yet, at the heart

of it all was immaculate, often preternatural, control of cricket's most difficult art — a wrist spin-

ner with the control of a finger spinner. There was a calm purpose and the precision of a surgeon in every step. Within that three-stride run-up, he would read the batsman like a psychoanalyst, his bright blue eyes picking little clues.

And the smooth action that followed was but a ruse for the impending doom he would wreak. As he broke into the run-up, anticipation would brim. The showman that he always was, he wouldn't rush the drama. Rather, he would slow it down. His shoulders slightly slouched, the curled tip of the tongue jutting out, a smear of zinc cream on the tip of his nose, he would let those leg-breaks rip with an action

seemingly bereft of any visible strain on his body. As if this was a natural sequence of motion for him, like walking or running for the rest.

After such minimalism, would kick in the sorcery. The ball would leave his wrists as if he had, like a magician, whispered life into it. Probably, only Wasim Akram could cajole so much life from a piece of dead leather. The ball whizzed and fizzed in the air with a magnetic drift that lulled the batsman into making a final mistake.

Half of the batsmen would be caught in the hypnotic trance of the ball's flight. The rest would be bedevilled by the illusion after pitching. Few turned the ball as

precociously as Warne did. The faces of some of the master batsmen who were reduced to wrecks tell the story which, in this day and age, would have been meme-troll gold. The shock on Mike Gatting's face after the Ball of the Century. Or the awe in the eyes of Andrew Strauss, or Shivnarine Chanderpaul, or Michael Atherton.

Warne was the ultimate magician of cricket's ultimate magic. And he had all the tools that a merely good bowler could only dream of — leg-break, googly, flipper, skidder, bouncer and even some that he named himself, like the zooter, to spook the batsmen, mostly English.

Often, the tease would begin

before he had bowled the first ball. Like a boxer, he would land verbal punches to soften up batsmen, make them react, assert his one-upmanship, and it mostly worked. Before every series, especially Ashes, he would announce the launch of a new variation; during warm-ups, he would train in the farthest corner of the ground, as though he were working secretly on it.

But frequently forgotten in his bowling virtuoso was that he was a terrific fielder at slips and a freewheeling batsman, too.

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FULL COVERAGE
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WEB EXCLUSIVE

BEHIND INDIA'S REPEATED ABSTENTIONS AGAINST RUSSIA AT UN, LEGACY OF POLICIES PAST

India's abstention is being explained by experts as a balancing act of maintaining friends and partners of both sides. It is also a legacy of the Nehruvian foreign policy of non-alignment and the ways in which the two countries have interacted with each other in the United Nations

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EXPRESS AUDIO

India's reliance on Russia for arms

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

In this episode, Krishn Kaushik joins host Snigdha Sharma to discuss how much India depends on Russia for its defence requirements

FROM PAGE ONE

Alarm bells

power reactors and facilities.”

“India attaches the highest importance to ensuring safety and security of nuclear facilities as any accident involving the nuclear facilities may have severe consequences for public health and the environment,” he said.

Stressing that India accords the “highest priority” to the discharge by the IAEA of its safeguards and monitoring activities, in accordance with its Statute in an effective, non-discriminatory and efficient manner, the Indian envoy said, “We have also noted the latest information available with regard to the nuclear power plants and facilities in Ukraine, including today’s updates provided by the DG, IAEA on the current situation.”

In a dramatic visual, IAEA chief Rafael Mariano Grossi briefed the UNSC from his aircraft as he was on his way to Iran.

Earlier, firefighters put out the blaze at the Zaporizhzhia plant, located near the city of Enerhodar in south-eastern Ukraine, and Russian troops occupied the site.

Ukrainian and UN officials said no radiation was released.

The nuclear power facility was targeted two days after Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov reminded the world of his country’s nuclear arsenal and warned that “a third world war will be nuclear, and devastating.”

The Associated Press quoted Grossi saying the building at the plant that had been hit was “not part of the reactor” but a training centre.

Grossi said the Ukrainians were in control of the reactor.

Facing worldwide indignation over the attack, Russia sought to deflect blame. According to the AP report, Defence Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov blamed arson rather than artillery fire. He claimed a Ukrainian “sabotage group” had occupied the training building at the plant, fired on a Russian patrol and set fire to the building as they left.

Ukraine’s state nuclear plant operator Enerhoatom said three Ukrainian soldiers were killed and two wounded.

The attack led to calls between Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and US President Joe Biden and other world leaders. The US Department of Energy, the AP reported, activated its nuclear incident response team as a precaution.

Zelenskyy said he feared an explosion that would be “the end for everyone. The end for Europe. The evacuation of Europe.”

In his remarks at the UNSC, Tirumurti said, “While we are discussing the nuclear dimension of an unfolding conflict, this Council must acknowledge that there is a pressing humanitarian crisis confronting us in Ukraine, where safety and security of innocent civilians including several thousand Indian nationals, in particular students are at stake.”

He expressed hope that the second round of talks between the two sides contributes to the immediate establishment of a safe humanitarian corridor.

“Commitment to the principles of the UN Charter, to international law and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states are key principles in this regard,” he said, flagging India’s concerns on Russia’s move against Ukraine.

Unsure, hungry

here now, but there’s very little

food...a single slice of bread or a bowl of soup for the entire day. Buses are being arranged from here, but these are buses that we need to pay for. We were asked to pay \$500 for buses, but I don’t have a single dollar with me.”

“We were staying in the bunker at the hostel. On March 2, we headed to the railway station on foot. There were around 1,000 of us from the hostel. When we reached the station, the Ukrainians did not let us get on the train. We were told that only girls and children will get on the train, and no men would be allowed. But even the Indian girls were not allowed. There was an attack near the railway station, we panicked and went to the nearby metro station. Then the advisory to walk to Pischyn came, and we decided to walk,” he said.

Sagar Kumar Gupta, a first-year student at KNMU, pegged the number of students at Pischyn at around 500.

Ayaan Faeiz, a fourth-year student at KNMU, who is from Bhopal, said a few people had paid and taken private buses, and around 900 people are likely to still be at Pischyn.

Himanshu and Ayaan said the private buses are being arranged by agencies that help students secure admission. “For now, students are at a shelter of sorts, a campus. But how do we get to the borders with Hungary or Poland?” Ayaan said.

A first-year student at KNMU, who asked not to be named, said, “When we reached the railway station, there was panic. Very few people were able to board the train, some students were hurt. We walked to Pischyn and we had no food with us. There are around 500 to 600 people here now. The agencies arranging the buses are saying they will take us to Lviv or the border with Poland, but we are being asked to pay cash. We are closer to the Russian border than to the others.”

The Ministry of External Affairs said around 300 Indians are stranded in Kharkiv and 700 in Sumy, where fierce fighting is on. Some of the over 900 Indians in Pischyn are being taken out from there in five buses. And, on the western borders near Lviv, there are less than 1,000.

Putin claim

statement yesterday. I clarified it again...I’m not aware of any Indian being held hostage. I mean, unless you have some information that I don’t, they are having difficulty getting out because of the security situation in some places, particularly, I would say in Sumy and in Kharkiv town. But I haven’t heard anybody being held hostage.”

Pressed, he said: “You should always ask the person who makes the statements. Why us?”

Senior officials said Putin’s hostage remark is more war-rhetoric than reality. Speaking to The Indian Express, a top official in the security establishment said that almost all Indian students there had active mobile phone connections and were in touch with their parents, representatives of the Indian Government and in many cases, the media.

“None of them described any situation of them being in captivity or being held hostage or being detained against their wishes,” said the official. “Yes, they may have said some Ukrainian authorities are uncooperative and we are trying our best to work on that.”

More importantly, the official said, no price has been put for the “release” of Indian students. “No Indian student has

said that even Rs 500 has been demanded for their safe travel to evacuation sites. No demands for ransom have reached the Government. So how can we describe this as a hostage situation?” the top official said.

Meanwhile, as per Bagchi’s break-up of stranded students, there are 2000-3000 in all: 300 in Kharkiv; 700 in Sumy, where fierce fighting is on; over 900 in Pischyn, a Kharkiv suburb, from where some were being evacuated in five buses to the western border either to Lviv or Moldova where there’s another batch of under 1,000.

“The (core) problem is how to get these students from their location in Kharkiv, Sumy, and other areas to the eastern border sharing with Russia...there are buses waiting there, but that route is about 50 to 60 km away through the conflict zone. They are too far away and can’t walk that distance. We want safe passage for the students through that area...without a local ceasefire between the Russians and Ukrainians, it is difficult to take these students to the buses. We don’t want to cross the stretch where it is risky...We appeal and urge the parties to have a local ceasefire,” the spokesperson said.

On the assurance yesterday that Russia and Ukraine agreed to created humanitarian corridors to help civilians exit, Bagchi said: “We have not seen anything further to that in terms of implementation...if that happens, it will certainly help our process.”

Around 20,000 Indian nationals have so far crossed the borders of war-torn Ukraine to safety, the MEA said, as reports emerged about a Delhi student getting shot multiple times but miraculously surviving the assault.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired another meeting to review the unfolding situation in Ukraine amid the evacuation. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Union Minister Piyush Goyal and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval were among those who attended the meeting.

As India’s efforts to rescue its citizens gathered steam, it transpired that Harjit Singh, a student from Delhi’s Chhatrapur, was hit with four bullets, including one on his chest, as he attempted to flee Kyiv. The spokesperson said he was in hospital and the government is in touch with his doctors and will bear his medical cost.

Bagchi said India has evacuated a Bangladeshi national as part of its mission to bring back the stranded Indians. He said 15 flights landed in India as part of the evacuation mission during the last 24 hours, bringing back more than 3,000 people, and 16 more are scheduled over the next 24 hours.

German envoy

because we are stronger. We don’t care about UN charter, bilateral agreements.”

“If this sets a precedent, any country could be under the same threat and most of the countries in the world have a strong neighbour and there are a lot of border disputes around the globe and I think, since decades, we have agreed in the United Nations and in different regional fora that peaceful solutions of disputes is the thing to do,” said Lindner, who took over as Germany’s envoy to India in April 2019, said. He was speaking at The Indian Express’s Idea Exchange (a detailed transcript will be published March 7).

So far, India has abstained on two resolutions on Ukraine in the Security Council and one

over 3 km away.

Modi will wind up his trip -- and the party’s campaign -- on Saturday with a public meeting in support of BJP candidates in the rural part of the district.

Later in the evening, SP’s Akhilesh Yadav too conducted a road show in Varanasi, a little after Modi wound up his campaign for the day. Yadav’s ‘Samajwadi Rath’ started from the Rath Yatra roundabout in Varanasi, before proceeding to cover the three Assembly seats -- Cantonment, Varanasi North and Varanasi South.

Yadav was accompanied by the Opposition alliance’s candidates from the three constituencies -- Pooja Yadav, Ashfaq Ahmad Dabloo and Kishan Dixit.

Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, accompanied by his sister and AICC General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, addressed a rally for party candidate Ajay Rai in Pindra Assembly constituency of Varanasi.

Haryana

Bill. Speaker Gian Chand Gupta took stern note of Kadian’s act and asked him to either seek an apology from the House or face action.

Refusing, Kadian justified his act and said that he had barely torn off the “piece of paper”.

The Speaker, however, objected to Kadian’s assertions and contended: “Once a Bill has been introduced on the floor of the House, it becomes a constitutionally legal document.”

Kadian was supported by other Congress MLAs who occupied the Well of the House to lodge their protest.

While the Speaker attempted to restore order of the House, Congress legislators continued their protests, terming the Bill “unconstitutional”.

Speaker Gupta eventually asked Kadian to leave the House even as he continued to raise slogans against the Bill.

“I respect the Speaker’s feelings, but I’m not sorry for my act. I have only torn a simple piece of paper. I had torn copies of the three farm laws as well here,” Kadian added.

Saying that his “habit” of tearing papers in the House was not acceptable, the Speaker said: “The Bill can be a piece of trash to you, but not for the House. It is my duty to maintain the decorum of the House.”

As other Congress MLAs joined Kadian, he entered into a heated exchange with Vij. In the din, Kadian also allegedly passed derogatory remarks at Vij. The Treasury benches demanded Kadian’s expulsion.

Congress MLA Batra then read out the rules of the Vidhan Sabha and said the Speaker could not expel any Member of the House.

The Speaker vehemently denied this and said that he had the power to expel any Member who disrupts the smooth functioning of the House.

Meghalaya

While Meghalaya Home Minister Lahkmen Rymbui said he was “not in a position to comment” on the development, calls to Chief Minister Sangma went unanswered.

However, speaking to local reporters outside the Meghalaya Assembly on Friday, Sangma termed the development a “normal procedure.” “The decision was made quite a long time ago. I can’t remember the date,” he said.

“A lot of states have taken this decision, and it is aligned with that. Anybody who comes in here has to take con-

sent from the state. That’s all. It is a normal procedure,” he said.

Mizoram was the first state to withdraw consent in 2015, when it was ruled by the Congress with Lal Thanhawla as the chief minister. In 2018, the Mizo National Front (MNF) under Zoramthanga came to power. Although the MNF is an NDA ally, consent to the CBI was not restored.

The other states that have withdrawn consent -- Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Kerala -- are all ruled by the Opposition. They have alleged that the CBI has become the Centre’s tool to target Opposition leaders.

The withdrawal of consent means the CBI will not be able to investigate any case in the state without the state’s nod.

In Meghalaya, which goes to polls next year, the decision comes in the backdrop of corruption allegations against the Chief Minister’s brother, James P K Sangma. He has been accused of corruption in the implementation of the ‘Soubhagya Scheme’ -- for providing electricity connections to all households -- with the Congress demanding a CBI probe.

Earlier, the Chief Minister divested James Sangma of the Home portfolio following more allegations that he had allowed syndicates to carry out illegal mining and transportation of coal.

In November 2018, the West Bengal government withdrew general consent, hours after Andhra Pradesh, then ruled by TDP, did so. After the government was replaced by that of Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy in 2019, Andhra restored consent. Chhattisgarh withdrew consent in January 2019, followed by Punjab, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Kerala and Jharkhand in 2020.

Nykaa CEO

may be very competitive. I do not justify what others are doing. I think our own effort is going to be more about sharing as much as we can share in a safe manner so that investors who have chosen to invest or may choose to invest can make reasonable decisions based on that information,” she said.

Nykaa went public last year and its IPO was oversubscribed nearly 82.5 times, fetching a valuation of more than Rs 95,000 crore at its listing debut in November.

Along with her son Anchit, who looks after the beauty e-commerce business, and daughter Adwaita, who heads the fashion vertical, Nayar was interacting at the e-Adda with Anant Goenka, Executive Director, Indian Express Group, and Anil Sasi, National Business Editor, The Indian Express.

When asked if policy and regulatory intervention was required for new-age tech companies going public, Nayar said: “I can’t speak for them, I think SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India) is quite vigilant or you know they want to be quite on top of it at least with what we saw with our own document. They were quite thorough and I would have expected them to be similarly thorough for other companies. I can’t speak for the companies but I think SEBI as a regulator already is there and they are being quite mindful of trying to govern a new sector.”

Last year, in addition to Nykaa (F&N E-Commerce Ltd), several tech start-ups, such as Zomato, Paytm (One97 Communications Ltd), PolicyBazaar (PB Fintech Ltd) and Cartrade, hit the market with IPOs. While most of them

saw an overwhelming response from the public markets, the share prices of a number of them have witnessed sharp corrections over the past three months.

Responding to a question on the valuations of tech companies in the absence of profitability, and whether there was room for corrections, Adwaita said: “Businesses have to transition to delivering meaty profitability and so I think, just being in the trenches of trying to build Nykaa, we found that it is actually so difficult to build a business at scale with reasonable profitability. My own personal opinion is some of the valuations floating around for start-ups, where there is clearly no business model and there is no path to profitability, do require a correction.”

Responding to a question on the beauty and personal care (BPC) consumer’s profile in India, Anchit said: “You look at all the data, it tells you that India is very early in its consumption journey. The per capita spend on BPC in India is only \$14 annually. That number is close to \$300-\$400 in the West and it’s somewhere around \$75 to \$100 in China. So if you look at the data, it tells you that today where India is in terms of its consumption journey in BPC is where China was exactly 15 years ago in 2006.

“So I mean, there’s a total difference in terms of the purchasing power, the awareness, the education for a small town consumer in India versus that in LA in the US. I think that is what excites us so much that we’ve been able to build a business of our scale when we’re so early on in our journey as a country. The opportunity is massive and the addressable market is growing leaps and bounds.”

The Express e-Adda is a series of informal interactions organised by The Indian Express Group and features those at the centre of change.

Previous guests at the e-Adda, as these discussions moved online during the pandemic, include Infosys Non-Executive Chairman Nandan Nilekani, Union External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways and MSMEs Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Education Ramesh Pokhriyal, AIIMS Director Dr Randeep Guleria, former Chief Economic Advisor Arvind Subramanian and Kotak Mahindra Bank MD & CEO Uday Kotak.

Shane Warne

with a Test highest of 99. His incredibly astute cricket brain, capable of spotting technical and mental weakness, prompted many down under to consider him the greatest captain Australia never had. Warne finally ended up the greatest captain Rajasthan Royals ever had, as he plotted their fairy-tale triumph in IPL-1.

The blond hair, the beach-bum persona and off-field antics embellished his halo. He was caught smoking secretly after he had signed an anti-smoking campaign; fined for providing information to a bookmaker in 1994; suspended for 12 months in 2003 for taking a banned diuretic. He dated several women, including celebrities such as Liz Hurley. He trash-talked, infuriated and incensed different people at different times, but the flaws did not diminish his aura, only burnished it.

Warne was 52 when he died, but in the eyes of the cricketing world, he would remain ever youthful, ever Mr Hollywood. He did his bit to keep up that image, sweating

in the gym to get fitter than ever before, and undergoing hair-transplants and cosmetic surgeries. Somewhere deep inside, he seemed unwilling to part with his long-parted youth. But in the end, for once, he had to leave in the middle of an unfinished spell, a glorious spell that only he could have bowled.

Markaz case

accepts that order, I have no dispute about that but if he is asking for reopening of the entire premises, then I have some submissions to make,” Nair said.

When the court asked the counsel whether he had seen the latest DDMA order, he responded that it “was subsequent”. Nair submitted that authorities had initially opposed the reopening of the site but later, considering its religious nature, permitted five people to offer namaz five times a day and on occasions like Shab-e-Barat and the month of Ramadan, permitted more people “pursuant to their verification by the local SHO”.

Submitting that the same arrangement can be made this time, he argued: “There is no person who has come forward placing documents as to who is the rightful owner of this particular property...to whom Waqf has granted lease”.

Advocate Wajeeh Shafiq, representing the Waqf Board, submitted that the court was being misled by the Centre. He argued that when 50 people were permitted, there were certain DDMA guidelines in place, which now stand withdrawn completely.

“They are only keeping it locked. Admittedly, it is a mosque. It is a gazette-notified mosque. We have the statutory right to control, manage and administer these properties. They are intermeddling with our rights,” submitted Shafiq.

Observing that the DDMA’s Covid guidelines would apply to Markaz Nizamuddin as well, the court had in November 2021 ordered a joint inspection of the religious site. The inspection report, which is on record, states that the madrasa, mosque and hostel at Markaz Nizamuddin are separate from each other.

On February 22 this year, the Waqf Board sought the immediate reopening of the mosque and told the court that the month of Ramzan begins around April 2 and that Shab-e-Barat is in the month of March. In response, the Centre and Delhi Police had told the court that key areas at the site were earmarked during the inspection and that the only question was on the number of people to be allowed inside to offer prayers. Justice Gupta had then recorded in her order: “Learned counsel appearing for Union of India states that as regards opening of the Masjid is concerned, the same will have to be in terms of the orders of the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) and he will file a status report in this regard before the next date.” On Friday, Justice Ohri asked the Waqf Board to place on record the latest DDMA order and listed the matter for next hearing on March 11.

The Delhi Waqf Board in the petition filed in February 2021 has submitted that Masjid Bangle Wali, Madarsa Kashif-ul-uloom, and the attached hostel situated at Basti Hazrat Nizamuddin have been locked since March 2020.

The Centre earlier had told the court the premises have been kept “under lock and key” in view of the fact that the Markaz management is itself under investigation in the case registered last year by the Delhi Police’s Crime Branch.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

3 WEST BENGAL

UKRAINE CRISIS

Need adequate flights to bring back Indians, CM tells Centre

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, MARCH 4

CHIEF MINISTER Mamata Banerjee on Friday questioned the Central government over its policy to bring back stranded Indian students from war-torn Ukraine.

"I am very much worried about the lives of the Indian students held up in Ukraine. Life is very precious. Why is it taking so much time to bring them back? Why were things not done earlier?" Banerjee tweeted.

"I urge the Central government that (an) adequate number of flights be arranged immediately and all the students brought back as soon as possible," she further wrote.

Even previously, Banerjee had hit out at the Central government has issued a notification to regulate mobile application-based cab services in the state in terms of fare and security of passengers. The Transport Department released the notification on Thursday, fixing the fare and laying down norms to control surcharge on the fares of app-based cabs.

Before leaving for Varanasi on



Members of the All India Peace and Solidarity Organisation at a rally seeking immediate return of Indian nationals from Ukraine, in Kolkata on Friday. Partha Paul

Wednesday to campaign for the Samajwadi Party (SP) in the on-going Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, Banerjee told reporters, "I wrote to the PM on the Ukraine issue. But my question is why couldn't these students be brought back earlier. The Central

government is responsible for not bringing them back on time."

However, she had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi extending her unconditional support to the Union government on the prevailing Ukraine crisis.

"I am sure you already know

in times of grave international crisis, we keep aside our domestic disagreements to stand united as a nation. We do this to make sure that our dignity as a nation is unchallenged and unviolated," she wrote.

In her letter, Banerjee also emphasised on accelerating the evacuation process for Indians stuck in Ukraine. "Indeed, particularly with regard to the evacuation of the stranded Indians in Ukraine, and, specifically, in giving a quick helping hand to our students there in distress, we stand united under our Tricolour, irrespective of party or politics," she wrote.

Also, in her letter, Banerjee urged the prime minister to call an all-party meeting so that a national resolution can be made on the situation in Ukraine. She wrote, "I would request you to accept my unconditional support during the ongoing international crisis and to consider whether you would like to have an all-party meeting now for consolidating our national resolve to come out of the crisis with our heads held high."

Govt stipulates new norms to regulate app-based cab services

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, MARCH 3

THE WEST Bengal government has issued a notification to regulate mobile application-based cab services in the state in terms of fare and security of passengers. The Transport Department released the notification on Thursday, fixing the fare and laying down norms to control surcharge on the fares of app-based cabs.

The app aggregators increased the fares arbitrarily on various grounds and several complaints were received by the government in the recent years, the notification said.

The government also made insurance for cab drivers mandatory. The base fare of AC taxis has been fixed at Rs 36.5 and not more than 50% higher fare can be charged for AC taxis. The maximum base fair will be Rs 56.25.

The government has fixed per kilometre fare for an AC taxi at Rs 18.75. Also, an app-based cab can be rented for a maximum of 50% of the fare. As a re-

sult, the maximum fare per kilometre will be Rs 28.

At times, app-based cabs used to charge extra fare, especially during festival time or when it rained. But they will not be able to do so anymore.

The state government also laid down rules for cancellation of cab rides. It states that those (passenger or driver) who cancel the ride will have to pay 10% of the proposed fare.

The passenger does not have to pay pick-up charges in any way, if the place from where the driver is to pick is within 3 kilometres.

Besides, the app aggregator must have a server in the state, the notification says. Any state agency can access data from that server at any time, it adds. The data must be stored for a minimum of 3 months to two years.

In addition, the cab must have a vehicle-tracking system for passenger safety. The driver should have two years of cab driving experience and have health insurance of Rs 5 lakh, the norms say.

Probe ordered after flight ferrying Mamata runs into turbulence

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, MARCH 4

THE WEST Bengal government on Friday ordered a probe after a chartered flight ferrying Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee from Lucknow to Kolkata ran into major air turbulence.

According to sources, the chief minister "hurt her back during the turbulence and has been advised rest by her doctors."

Sources at the Netaji Subhash Bose International Airport in Kolkata the pilot managed to land the aircraft safely at the airport.

The TMC supremo was flying back to Kolkata after winding up her visit to Uttar Pradesh to campaign for the Samajwadi Party (SP) when a sudden drop in altitude owing to turbulence threw her off her seat causing her to hurt her back.



CM Mamata Banerjee

The aircraft was hired by the state government last year for the CM's visits to different states.

According to sources in the administration, the home department has ordered a probe into the incident and an explanation from the pilot and the chartered flight company why the aircraft faced turbulence as the weather on the route from Lucknow to Kolkata was mostly clear.

APDR urges PM to ensure safe passage for citizens

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, MARCH 4

THE ASSOCIATION for Protection of Democratic Rights (APDR) has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi urging him to ensure safe passage of the Indian citizens stuck in Ukraine.

"We are at a loss to understand why the Indian government did not undertake effective measures to evacuate thousands of Indian citizens from Ukraine at the proper time! Should we understand that the government was not aware of the number of citizens & students in Ukraine? (The) Scenario appears to be similar to the plight of the migrant workers working away from their home state during the pandemic times.

"We remember the atrocities suffered by such workers when the Indian government abruptly declared (a) lockdown unaware of the huge number of workers. Workers had to cover thousands of kilometres on foot, met with untold sufferings & died in numbers. Cruelty, indifference, perhaps more so in deserting young citizens in a war zone," read the letter by the rights body.

TMC to hold meeting to decide on state office-bearers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA, MARCH 4

AMID PERCEIVED internal strife between the old guard and the gen-next leaders, Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee has convened a meeting of the state committee on March 8 to decide on the new state office-bearers.

The meeting will be held at Nazrul Mancha here and will be attended by senior party leaders, MPs and MLAs. "After Mamata Banerjee's re-election as the party chairperson, the national office-bearers were appointed last month. Now, the new state office-bearers will be decided. There are chances that new district presidents might also be announced," a senior Trinamool leader said on condition of anonymity.

VBU: Registrar leaves office after 84 hours, students continue protest

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, MARCH 4

AFTER 84 hours of being gheraoed by a section of protesting students, Visva Bharati University (VBU) registrar Asish Agarwal left his office on campus late on Thursday night in the presence of policemen.

The development came after the Calcutta High Court on Thursday directed the police to ensure that the registrar, assistant registrar and the management of the university are not in any way obstructed from performing their day-to-day functions or moving freely in the university campus and outside.

An official of the university said local policemen left the campus after the registrar left his office and moved to his official residence.

The students, meanwhile, continued their campus protest for over 96 hours demanding re-opening of hostels and holding exams online. A student leader said their protest, which began at 11 am on March 1, will continue for an indefinite period till their demands are met. The protesting students also demanded that the upcoming semester exams be held online for undergraduate and postgraduate levels since the classes were held online for the past two years.

The university official said the executive council will look into their demands on an urgent basis and take an appropriate decision. On Thursday, the high court extended police protection to the registrar, assistant registrar and the management of the

The Calcutta High Court had directed the police to ensure that varsity officials are not obstructed from day-to-day functioning or moving freely on the campus

university to ensure they carry out their day-to-day duties inside the campus without any obstruction from the agitating students.

The direction from the court came after the varsity filed an instant petition before Justice Rajasekhara Mantha alleging that the agitating students were disturbing the normal functioning of the institute. Directing the students to not obstruct the management in any way, the court, in its order, said, "In that view of the matter, the officer-in-charge, Santiniketan police station and SP, Birbhum shall ensure and take all necessary steps so that the registrar, assistant registrar and the management of the university are not in any way obstructed from performing their day-to-day functions or moving freely in the university campus and outside. This court also directs the students in the university not to obstruct the management in any way and ensure that the aforesaid order is complied with." The next hearing in the matter has been scheduled on March 17.

The protesting students had confined the registrar and the other top officials last Sunday.

Police hunt for Nadia man who killed wife, buried her inside house

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, MARCH 4

A 35-YEAR-OLD man allegedly killed his wife and buried her body inside his house in Shankarpur area of West Bengal's Nadia district, police said on Friday.

Police identified the accused as Rabinathan Roy, a daily wage labourer, who is absconding. A habitual drinker, Roy would pick up frequent fights with Mampi Roy (32), his third wife, police said. His two previous wives had left him due to his drinking habit, the officials added.

He also borrowed money from his neighbours to drink alcohol, it learnt.

Local residents said Mampi disappeared suddenly about a fortnight back and when they questioned Rabinathan about it he started avoiding them.

As a result, the neighbours started suspecting him.

A few days back, when questioned in an intoxicated condition, Rabinathan revealed that he killed his wife and buried her under the stairs and constructed a small bathroom on it. They informed the police who raided the house and recovered the body on Thursday night.

The police have sent the body for autopsy to determine the cause of death.

The accused Rabinathan Roy killed his wife in a fit of rage after a heated argument with her, the police said.

"A case was registered in to this incident and an investigation is already underway. We are waiting for the autopsy report," a police officer said.

Mob attacks cops, torches vehicles after woman dies in accident on highway

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, MARCH 5

AMOB allegedly attacked a police team, vandalised and set vehicles on fire at Daisai town in Purba Medinipur district after a woman died when a passenger pick-up van collided with a dumper truck on Friday morning. The accident took place on the Digha-Nandakumar national highway. "While one person died on the spot, five persons with injuries, including two in critical condition, were admitted to hospital," Purba Medinipur superintendent of police (SP) Kamamath said.

The deceased was identified as Padmavati Mohra, a resident of West Kamarda village that falls under the jurisdiction of the Marishda police station.

The police said the pick-up van driver fled from the spot soon after the incident took place. "There was a road blockade too. A case was registered and five persons have been arrested. Two cops, including an official and a constable, were injured," added Amamath.

Locals said nine women workers were traveling in the passenger van that was coming from Marishda Kamarda towards Kanthi around 6am.

The injured were rushed to the Kanthi Sub-Divisional Hospital.

When a team from the

Marishda police station reached to inspect the accident site, an agitated crowd attacked them blaming them for the incident, it was learnt. More police personnel were rushed to the spot and they brought the situation under control by caneharging the gathering. The locals also accused the police of not keeping a strict vigil on rash driving in the area. They set a vehicle on fire and vandalised the police car.

The residents alleged that the police were collecting money by stopping the car near the site and that it led to the accident.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING
BUREAU OF OUTREACH & COMMUNICATION
Soochna Bhawan, C.G.O. Complex,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110003

AMENDMENT TO THE RFP FOR PRODUCTION OF ANIMATED VIDEO SERIES FOR CELEBRATION OF AZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV

Consequent to the Pre-Bid meeting dated 25.01.2022, the RFP no. 22201/Prod/Animation/2122 dated 14.01.2022 for engagement of agency for production of Animated Video Series for celebration of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav has been amended. The amended RFP No. 22201/Prod/Animation/2122 dated 04.03.2022 is available on BOC's website www.davp.nic.in and can be accessed online at the link : <http://davp.nic.in/writereaddata/announce/Adv1450432022.pdf>

The last date for submission of bids is 16.03.2022.

sd/-
Assistant Director,
Campaign Wing Div 1, BOC
New Delhi

World's largest free vaccination campaign **178.29 crore** (as on 04.03.2022)

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Advt. No. 02/2022

CSIR invites applications/nominations for the position of DIRECTOR of CSIR-CSIR-Central Building Research Institute (CSIR-CBRI), Roorkee, in Level 15 of pay-matrix (Rs. 1,82,200-2,24,100) plus allowances as applicable in CSIR.

For eligibility criteria and other conditions, please see the detailed/complete advertisement No. 02/2022 on CSIR website www.csir.res.in. Applications/nominations may be sent along with complete bio-data and list of publications/patents etc. through email on email ID drc@csir.res.in or by post to Director Recruitment Cell, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), Anusandhan Bhawan, 2, Rafi Marg, New Delhi-110001 on or before **31.03.2022**.

davp 36202/12/0032/2122

Dr. NTR UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES: A.P VIJAYAWADA - 520 008

NOTIFICATION

Online Applications duly uploading the scanned original certificates are invited from Indian Citizens, NRIs and Others (PIO & OCI) who have secured cut off score and more in NEET UG-2021 for admission into **Management Quota (Category B & C (NRI))** seats in MBBS/BDS Courses for the academic year 2021-22 in Private Un-aided Non-Minority and Minority Medical /Dental Colleges and **NRI** Category Seats in Sri Padmavathi Medical College for Women (under SVMS) Tirupati in the State of Andhra Pradesh from **11.00 AM on 05.03.2022 upto 5.00 PM on 11.03.2022** in the website <https://ugmq.ntruhsadmissions.com>. For all other details read the prospectus available on the University website: <http://ntruhs.ap.nic.in>

Sd/-
(Dr. K. SANKAR)
REGISTRAR

Date: 04.03.2022.

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Registrations End	09 to 19 March	07 March

*Subject to prevailing govt. COVID guidelines

HOWRAH-NEW JALPAIGURI-HOWRAH SPECIAL TRAIN

To clear extra rush of passengers, during **Dolyatra/Holi-2022**, one special train viz. **02307/02308 Howrah-New Jalpaiguri-Howrah** will be run as per following programme :

02307		(a./d.)	(a./d.)	02308	
Day-1	-	23.55	Howrah	23.05	-
Day-2	01.20	01.22	Bardhaman	21.05	21.07
	03.40	03.42	Rampurhat	19.15	19.17
	06.15	06.25	Malda Town	17.00	17.10
	07.47	07.49	Barsoi	14.45	14.47
	08.30	08.32	Kishanganj	13.55	13.57
	10.10	-	New Jalpaiguri	-	12.50

Composition : AC First-cum-AC 2-Tier – 1, AC 2-Tier – 1, AC 3-Tier – 4, Sleeper Class-10, 2nd Class (LS) – 3, Power Car – 1 & SLRD – 1 = 21 coaches. **Date/Day of run :** From Howrah – On 16.03.2022 (Wednesday), 01 trip and From New Jalpaiguri – 17.03.2022 (Thursday), 01 trip. **Category :** Mail/Express (Superfast). Booking of the superfast special train **02307 (Howrah-New Jalpaiguri)** will be available through PRS & Internet on and from **07.03.2022 (Monday)**. **Features :** (1) Tatkal booking facility will not be available. (2) Concessional booking will not be allowed. (3) In addition to Mail/Express fare, special charge will be relaxed. (4) Available class in reserved segment are 1st AC, 2nd AC, 3rd AC & Sleeper. **Chief Commercial Manager/PM** Chief Passenger Transportation Manager

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Star

RAHUL IN VARANASI

‘PM’s ‘Hindu dharam ki raksha’ remark a lie’

MAULSHREE SETH
LUCKNOW, MARCH 4

TAKING PART in a road show in Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s constituency Varanasi on Friday, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said the PM “protects his lies” and not the “Hindu dharam” as he claims. He also mocked at the Prime Minister, saying that he (PM) couldn’t “stand in Ganga properly” even though he “claimed to have fought a crocodile as a child”.

Rahul attempted to strike a chord with the voters by invoking his family’s link with Uttar Pradesh and its people. “Hum bhi UP ke hain, hamara pariwar bhi Allahabad ka hai... Modiji keh-te hain hum videshi hain (We are also from UP, out family is also from Allahabad. PM Modi says we are foreigners),” Rahul said while campaigning for Congress candidate Ajay Rai in Pindra Assembly constituency.

He was accompanied by AICC General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. Both the leaders also paid obeisance at the Kashi Vishwanath temple.

“Priyanka ne kaha ki dharam par vote padta hai, mujhe bata do Hindu dharam kya hai... Hindu dharam sachai hai, satya hai (Priyanka said that votes are cast in the name of religion...you tell me what is Hindu dharam...truth it is),” he said.

“Modiji aate hain, jhooth bol



Rahul and Priyanka offer prayers at a temple in Varanasi. PTI

jaate hain aur phir keh-te hain maine Hindu dharam ki baat ki...mein Hindu dharam ki raksha karta hoon...aap Hindu dharam ki raksha nahi karte ho, aap jhooth ki raksha karte ho, ga-reeb, kisaan, mazdoor ke nahi karte ho apni kursi bachane ke liye (Modiji comes, tells lies and then claims what he does to protect the Hindu religion, but the fact is that he only protects his lies. He does not protect the poor, farmers or labours, but only his lies to save his chair),” Rahul said.

He also listed out the promises and announcements made by the Prime Minister that never materialised. He said the PM Modi doesn’t talk about what

happened to the “crores of jobs” that he had promised for the youth in 2014 or giving Rs 15 lakh to every citizen of the country by bringing back the black money or increasing farmers’ income, while urging the gathering to keep all these issues in mind. The former Congress chief said that he can die but won’t speak a lie to woo the voters.

He also targeted the Samajwadi Party with which the Congress was in alliance in the 2017 polls, alleging “goonda gardi in police stations” during its rule in the state. Rahul termed the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) as the “B team” of the BJP, adding that the party is “finished”.

Akhilesh holds roadshow in Varanasi after PM Modi’s event

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
VARANASI, MARCH 4

SAMAJWADI PARTY chief Akhilesh Yadav conducted a road show here late Friday evening, a little after the conclusion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s campaign, ahead of the March 7 polling. Standing atop his ‘Samajwadi Rath’, Yadav began his roadshow from the Rath Yatra roundabout in the pilgrim city and moved around in the areas covering the three Assembly seats -- Cantonment, Varanasi North and Varanasi South. He campaigned on the route different than the one taken by Modi earlier.

Yadav was accompanied by the three candidates from these constituencies -- Pooja Yadav, Ashfaq Ahmad Dabhol and Kishan Dixit -- respectively.

The roadshow, that began at 8 pm, will cover an area stretching about 2 km and will pass through Gurubagh and Laksha and end at Gadauliya, party sources said. Akhilesh will also visit the Kashi Vishwanath temple to pay his obeisance to Lord Shiva, they said.

Despite late hours, people came out in large numbers to greet Yadav. Earlier in the day, SP’s district president Vishnu Sharma had alleged that though he had sought permission from 5 pm to 10 pm for the party chief’s event, the Varanasi administration permitted them to hold the event only from 8 pm to 10 pm.

The SP had lost all eight seats in Varanasi in the previous Assembly elections. This time, it has fielded its candidates in four constituencies and allotted the remaining four seats to its allies.

MoEF notification proposes 10% tree cover at construction sites, seeks views

ESHAROY
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE CENTRE has proposed at least one tree for every 80 square metres of land on sites meant for residential and commercial construction projects, ensuring that at least 10% of the plot area is under tree cover.

The draft notification of the Building Construction Environment Management Regulations-2022 was issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change on February 28, and has now invited suggestions and objections over the next two months, before the final regulations are issued.

The notification further says that the topsoil should be stripped only up to a maximum depth of 20cm from the areas proposed for buildings, roads, paved areas, and external services. It should be stockpiled appropriately in designated areas and reapplied during the plantation of the proposed vegetation on the site.

The Environment Ministry had constituted an Expert Committee in January 2021 to



The topsoil should be stripped only up to depth of 20cm. File

examine and recommend regulations for buildings and township projects. The Expert Committee examined the existing local bylaws of states as well as existing regulatory regime for granting environment clearance and submitted a report on the proposed regulations.

The draft notification says that for the purpose of effective environment protection and management “it is considered necessary to put in place standardised, outcome-based and quantifiable environmental regulations so as to bring in transparency in approach and encourage ease of doing business”.

The ministry has also said that it is necessary to expand the

monitoring mechanism through third party audits, “encouraging green certifications and leveraging on the presence of regulatory agencies at different levels of governance”.

The ministry has pointed out that the regulations “do not substitute approvals/consent/permissions etc., required to be obtained under any other Act/rule/regulation/byelaws/notification etc”.

“The project authority shall continue to be under obligation to obtain approvals/clearances under any other Acts/regulations or statutes of the central or state governments or their designated agencies/development authority/local bodies as applicable to

EXPLAINED
E Renovation also covered under draft

THE NEW environment regulations for buildings will be applicable on new constructions with a built-up area of 5,000 sqm or more. They will also apply for renovation or repair. The draft notification of the regulations mandates at least 10% of the plot area under tree cover and makes rainwater harvesting or ground-water recharge systems, and wastewater treatment plants compulsory.

the project, including in respect of site location for parameters such as low-lying area, natural drainage, and for environment sensitivity i.e. proximity/within eco sensitive area, zonal master plan/wildlife sanctuary/national park, coastal regulation zone areas, biosphere reserves and critically polluted area, hill areas, disaster prone areas,” says the draft notification.

ASG Aman Lekhi quits, may return to private practice

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

ADDITIONAL SOLICITOR General Aman Lekhi, who represents the central government in several key cases involving law and order, re-signed from his post on Friday.

“I am tendering my resignation from the post of Additional Solicitor General of India at the Supreme Court with immediate effect,” Lekhi wrote in a short letter addressed to Union Minister for Law and Justice Kiren Rijiju.

Lekhi, a senior advocate designated by the Delhi High Court in 2005, is likely to return to his private practice. He was first appointed Additional Solicitor General in March 2018 and was reappointed in July 2020. He was expected to hold office till June next year or until further orders.

Lekhi appeared for the CBI and Delhi Police as ASG for the past few years. He was representing investigating agencies in several significant cases, including the 2020 Delhi riots case.



Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao with JMM supremo Shibhu Soren in Ranchi on Friday.

KCR govt does away with Governor’s address to House

REENIVAS JANYALA & ABHISHEK ANGAD
HYDERABAD, RANCHI, MARCH 4

AS TELANGANA Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao on Friday reached out to the JMM as part of his efforts to form an anti-BJP alliance, his government has decided to do away with the Governor’s address to the joint sitting of legislature for the Budget Session, which starts on March 7.

While it is the tradition for the Budget Session to begin with the Governor’s address, the government decided to skip it saying that the previous Monsoon Session was not pro-rogued so there was no need for Governor’s address.

“The Monsoon Session was held from September 24 to October 8 and it was not pro-rogued. The House was adjourned sine dine and the Governor did not issue the pro-rogue notification so the House will continue from there,” Legislative Affairs Minister V Prashant Reddy said.

Targeting Rao, state BJP chief Bandi Sanjay Kumar said it was insult to the Governor, and that the Chief Minister, who talked of rewriting the Constitution, has started doing so. Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan’s office is yet to comment on the matter.

The development comes even as Rao on Friday wrapped up his visit to Delhi and Jharkhand, where he continued with his efforts to forge an alliance with regional powers.

After camping for three days in Delhi, where he met Rajya Sabha MP Subramanian Swamy and farmer leader Rakesh Tikait, Rao on Friday visited Jharkhand to meet Chief Minister Hemant Soren and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha patri-

arch Shibhu Soren. Addressing a press meet in Ranchi, Rao said Shibhu Soren was the first guest invited for the launch of the protest to demand separate statehood for Telangana in 2001. He recalled that Soren had come and given courage to the people. Rao said that during their meeting on Friday he took Soren’s blessings. “...And we spoke on politics and I informed him that there is a talk going on in the entire country with different leaders.”

“I want to say that 75 years after Independence, development in the country is not up to the mark. We remained backward in many parameters as compared to the world. China has developed and other countries too. And today, too, the government is not doing its work properly. It has to be corrected, we spoke on this,” he said.

Rao said he is talking with various leaders and they will meet and decide the agenda.

Rao had earlier reached out to Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and Tamil Nadu counterpart M K Stalin. He is expected to meet West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee soon. He is also in touch with JD(S) leader H D Deve Gowda and RJD leader Lalu Prasad.

Sources in the TRS said Rao is seeking opinion of regional party leaders on formation of the alternative front. The leaders have requested him to wait till poll results of the five states are announced before holding further talks.

Rao also met families of two soldiers – Kundan Kumar and Ganesh Hansda – who were killed in the Galwan Valley clash in May 2020. He gave cheques of Rs 10 lakh to each family.

Businessman robbed by 5, including cop

New Delhi: Four persons, including a woman, have been arrested from Central district’s Paharganj for allegedly robbing a businessman. Police are conducting raids to nab their fifth associate, a constable, who was earlier involved in a gangrape and attempt to murder cases. The incident took place on February 28 when he came out from his hotel and was held hostage by two men. **ENS**

तोप एवं निर्माणी, काशीपुर
(उडवॉन्ड वेपंस एंड इक्विपमेंट इंडिया लिमिटेड की एक इकाई)
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Expression of Interest is invited from Indian manufacturer for development of the following parts of **84mm Light Weight Recoilless weapon.**

1 Barrel Assembly	A titanium Alloy tube with rifled groove in bore and external surface wound with Carbon & Glass fibre composite lamination
2 Venturi	A conical shaped part made of Titanium Alloy

Interested Manufacturing Firms may visit our website <http://gsf.gov.in> for complete details. **Last date for submission of EoI in sealed cover is 31.03.2022.**

SHRI AMARNATHJI SHRINE BOARD
NOTICE INVITING BIDDERS

For and on behalf of Chairman, Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board, sealed bids in two bid format, affixed with Rs. 4/- revenue stamps, are invited from Television Channel Companies desirous of seeking permission in regard to **Live Telecast of Aarti at Holy Cave during Shri Amarnathji Yatra - 2022** (twice a day) for three years w.e.f Yatra 2022.

No. SASS/Dt/NTN-843-A/2022/06
Dated: 04.03.2022

Last date of submission of Bids: 28.03.2022.

The CNIT, Bidding Document and other details can be obtained from the official website: www.shriamarnathshrine.com

बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा
Bank of Baroda

ZOSARB, Kolkata
21A, Sadananda Road, 2nd Floor, Kolkata - 700 026
Email: armcal@bankofbaroda.com

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

ANNEXURE-E
SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF MOVABLE PROPERTIES ; “APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6)]

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of movable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 6 (2) & (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 movable 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/-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 movable property with known encumbrances, if any	Total Dues	Date & Time of E-auction	Reserve Price, EMD amount, Bid Increase Amount.	Status of Possession (Symbolic/Physical)	Property Inspection date & Time
1	M/s Rajlakshmi Guinea Museum Jewellers Pvt. Ltd.	Gold, Silver, Platinum, Stones, Other Costume Jewellery at ZOSARB, Kolkata, 21A, Sadananda Road, Kolkata-700026. Particulars are as under: Gold Items: 1665.225 gms 22 Carat Gold, 26.405 gms 18 Carat Gold; Silver Items: 22304.85 gms, Silver Coin - 270 pcs:-1323 gms; Platinum: 585.648 gms, Precious Stones, Other costume Jewellery and other scrap items.	Rs.314035454/- with further interest and cost plus other expenses till date of payment. (minus amount realised through sale of assets earlier)	24.03.2022 from 2 p.m to 6 p.m (With unlimited extension of 10 minutes)	Rs.92,30,000/- Rs.9,23,000/- Rs. 10,000/-	Physical	15.03.2022 from 11.00 AM to 2.00 p.m

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer to the link provided in <https://www.bankofbaroda.in/e-auction.htm> and <https://ibapi.in>. Also, prospective bidders may contact the authorized officer on above noted contact nos.

Date: 05.03.2022, Place :- Kolkata

Authorised Officer , Bank of Baroda.

बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा
Bank of Baroda

Regional Office: Greater Kolkata Region
GN 38/2, Sector V, Salt Lake, Kolkata - 700 091
ROSARB GKOL, DN-14, Vishnu Tower
Sector V, Salt Lake, Kolkata - 700 091

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/-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.	Md Aslam Hossain and Smt Nureja Parveen Address : P. N Dey Apartment, Flat No -18, 4th Floor, 102 Feeder Road, Belghoria, PIN-700056; Guarantor: Sri Satya Ranjan Ray S/o Late Abinash Chandra Ray, Address : Flat no 1 & 2,P.N Dey Market (Beside Central Bank), 102, Feeder Road, Belghoria, Kolkata- 700056.	All that self-contained residential flat being no. 18 on the 4th floor of the building measuring super built up area of 841 sq. ft. consisting of 2 bedrooms, 1 living cum dining, 1 kitchen, 1 toilet, 1 balcony together with undivided proportionate share of land and all other common utilities, amenities and facilities and easement rights of the said building i.e., piece and parcel of Bastu Land measuring an area more or less 13 cottahs 10 chittacks out of 16 cottahs 10 chittacks to be the same a little more or less along with multi storied building comprised in Dag No. 1029,1030,1031 under Khatian No. 226 of Mouza – Belghoria, J.L. No. 3, R.S. No. – 17, Touzi No. – 172, Pargana- Kailikata, P.S. Belghoria, District North 24 Parganas which is lying and situated within the local limit of Kamarhati Municipality, being Holding No. 492(0), 902(N) under Ward No. 20 corresponding to Premises No. 102, Feeder Road, Belghoria, Kolkata - 700056. The Building is butted and bounded by: On the North: 25 Ft wide Feeder Road On the South: existing new multi-storied building and common space On the East: Ichchamoyee Dey / Late Dr. B.B. Paul On the West: Student welfare association Mortgaged property stands in the name of Md Aslam Hossain S/o Md Juhur Sk and Smt. Nureja Parveen W/o Md Aslam Hossain vide Registered Deed No.- I-150108365-of the year 2015 at DSR-I, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal .	Rs.18,47,317.42 (Rupees Eighteen Lakh Forty Seven Thousand Three Hundred And Seventeen Paisea Forty Two Only) as on 10-01-2022 plus interest and other charges thereon.	21.03.2022 from 2 p.m to 6 p.m	Rs.16,58,700/- Rs.1,65,870/- Rs.10,000/-	Physical	Any working day (with prior appointment) between 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://ibapi.in>. Also, prospective bidders may contact the authorized officer: on Mobile No. :**8335073866**

Date: 05.03.2022
Place :- Kolkata

Nimmana Sudhakar
Authorised Officer
Bank of Baroda, ROSARB, Saltlake, Kolkata

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY & SEWERAGE BOARD
O/o Chief General Manager (Engg), O&M Circle-II, S.R. Nagar, Hyderabad-500038, T.S.

e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

e-Tender Notice No. and Date	Name of Work	Approximate Estimate Contract Value
EP-196/CGM(E)/ O&M-C/II/ 600mm MS Pipeline/ SPR Hills/ 2021-22 dt: 04.03.2022	Manufacturing, Supply, Laying and Testing of 600mm MS pipe line with cement coating using 10mm thick MS Plate as per the drawings and alignment provided by the department, testing, commissioning of the same including interconnections etc complete under SPR Hills Section, SD-II, O and M Division No.VI.	Rs. 304.39 Lakhs
EP-197/CGM(E)/ O&M-C/II/ 2x200KW Pumps/Pump House/ SPR Hills/ 2021-22 dt: 04.03.2022	Manufacture, Supply, Delivery, Installation and Commissioning of 2x200 KW pump sets and construction of Pump House at Borabanda Reservoir for newly proposed 4.0 ML GLSR reservoir at SPR Hills under SPR Hills Section, SD-II, O and M Division No.VI.	Rs. 143.10 Lakhs

(1) The bid documents download starts online from dt: **10.03.2022**. (2) Name and address of Chief General Manager (Engg), concerned: **Chief General Manager (Engg), O&M Circle-II, HHWSSB, S.R.Nagar, Hyderabad-500038**, (3)The contractors/ firms are requested to upload the information in the ZIP format preferably. (4) Further details can be seen @ <https://www.tender.telangana.gov.in>

Sd/- Chief General Manager (Engg), O&M Circle-II, S.R.Nagar, Hyderabad-500 038. T.S.

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A Tata Power and Delhi Government Joint Venture
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Tel : 66112222 Fax : 27468042 Email : TPDDL@tatapower-dcl.com
CIN No. : U40109DL2001PLC111526, Website : www.tatapower-dcl.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS Mar 05, 2022

TATA Power-DDL invites tenders as per following details:

Tender Enquiry No. Work Description	Estimated Cost/EMD (Rs.)	Availability of Bid Document	Last Date & Time of Bid Submission/ Date and time of Opening of bids
TPDDL/ENGG/ENQ/200001388/21-22 Rate Contract for supply of HT Co- Extruded and Power Cables	35.68 Cr / 39.47 Lacs	05.03.2022	25.03.2022;1600 Hrs 25.03.2022;1630 Hrs
TPDDL/ENGG/ENQ/200001390/21-22 Rate Contract for supply of HT AB Cables	5.45 Cr / 7.73 Lacs	05.03.2022	25.03.2022;1600 Hrs 25.03.2022;1730 Hrs
TPDDL/ENGG/ENQ/ 200001387/21-22 RC for Professional Services towards Intelligence / Enforcement Assignment for a period of 2 Year.	70.80 Lacs 1.8 Lacs	07.03.2022	28.03.2022;1600 Hrs 28.03.2022;1630 Hrs
TPDDL/ENGG/ENQ/200001389/21-22 Rate Contract – Supply of 1000 KVA Distribution Transformers	8.67 Cr./ 15.02 Lacs	09.03.2022	29.03.2022;1600 Hrs 29.03.2022;1630 Hrs
TPDDL/ENGG/ENQ/200001391/21-22 Rate Contract – Supply of 11 kV RMU	13.86 Cr./ 22.80 Lacs	05.03.2022	25.03.2022;1600 Hrs 25.03.2022;1700 Hrs

Complete tender and corrigendum document is available on our website www.tatapower-dcl.com →Vendors Zone →Tender / Corrigendum Documents
Contracts - 011-66112222

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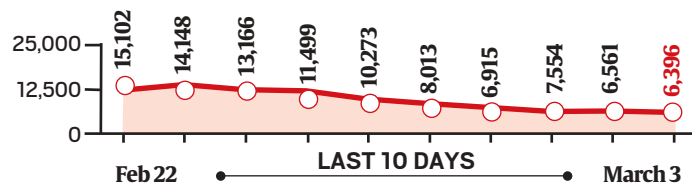
If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com

TRACKING INDIA'S COVID CURVE

DASHBOARD, AS ON MARCH 3

732 DAYS SINCE PANDEMIC BEGAN	New cases 6,396	Active cases 69,897	Deaths 201
Weekly CFR: 0.56% Overall CFR: 1.20% Total deaths: 5,14,589			

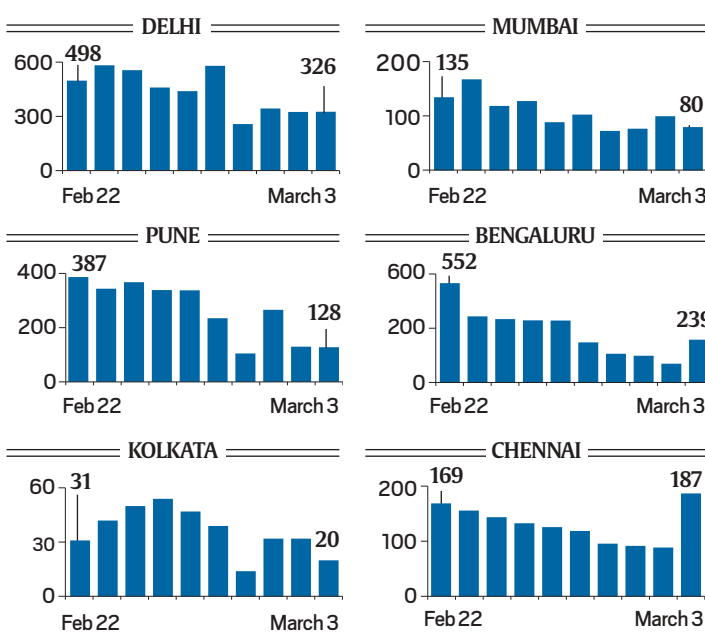
NEW CASES, DAILY



SURGE IN THE STATES

State	ON MARCH 3			Weekly positivity
	New cases	Active cases	Deaths	
Kerala	2,222	19,855	161	7.15%
Mizoram	569	5,483	2	16.80%
Maharashtra	467	4,953	13	0.97%
Karnataka	382	3,928	10	0.76%
Delhi	326	1,588	3	0.85%

CASES IN THE CITIES, LAST 10 DAYS



TOTAL TESTS

77,09,73,356

TESTS ON MARCH 3

9,23,351

WEEKLY POSITIVITY

0.90%

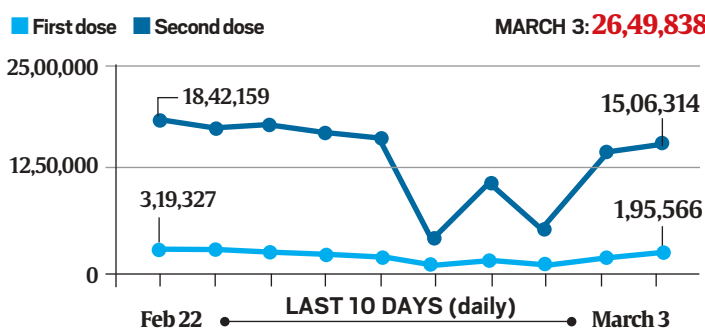
OVERALL POSITIVITY

5.57%

INDIA TOTAL DOSES

178,29,13,060

(Adults 1st dose: **90,98,41,583**; 2nd: **76,81,08,252**; 15-18 age group 1st dose: **5,51,46,865**; 2nd: **2,94,46,462**; Precautionary: **2,03,69,898**)


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SIMPLY PUT

The OBC vote in UP

OBC voters, especially non-Yadav OBCs, could be key to who rules UP after the March 10 results. A history of the castes that the BJP has cultivated since the 1990s, but some of whom could now be breaking away.

SHYAMLAL YADAV

NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

SINCE THE late 1960s, communities that are now identified as Other Backward Classes (OBCs) have been an important factor in the politics of Uttar Pradesh. For the last 30 years, the BJP has worked to build a base among non-Yadav OBCs to take on the Samajwadi Party's formidable Yadav-Muslim combine; in the weeks leading up to the Assembly elections, however, several non-Yadav OBC leaders broke from the BJP and joined the SP. On March 10, the choices made by OBC voters could determine who forms UP's next government.

Numbers, reservation

The National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) lists 76 castes (using 156 surnames) from UP in the central list for 27% reservation. The Mandal Commission report, submitted in 1980 and implemented in 1994, said OBCs were 52% of India's population. The report of the National Sample Survey Organisation's (NSSO's) 61st round, released in October 2006, however, put it at 41%.

In UP, a Social Justice Committee set up by then Chief Minister Rajnath Singh in 2001 estimated OBCs to be 43.13% (54.05% in rural areas). Among OBCs, the report estimated Yadavs to be 19.4%, Kurmis 7.46%, Kachhi-Kushwaha-Shakya-Maurya-Saini-Mali 6.69%, Lodhs 4.9%, Jats (who are OBC in UP) 3.6%, Kewat (Nishad) 4.33%, Shepherd-Pal-Baghel 4.43%, Kahar-Kashyap 3.31%, and Bhar-Rajbhar 2.44%.

There has been no caste census since 1931, so these numbers are only estimates. Political parties collect seat-wise information on castes from their workers on the ground.

A Commission for Backward Classes constituted in UP in October 1975 under the chairmanship of Chhedilal Sathi recommended 29.50% reservation for OBCs, with 17% of that going to the most backward communities.

Ram Naresh Yadav's Janata Party government implemented 15% reservation in government jobs for OBCs in UP in 1977. In 1994, the SP-BSP government headed by Mulayam Singh Yadav increased it to 27%.

At the central level, the Kaka Kalelkar Commission, constituted in 1953, submitted its report in 1955. The BP Mandal Commission was set up in 1978. Leaders such as Ram Manohar Lohia raised their voice for the welfare of OBCs.

Charan Singh to Mulayam

The UP Assembly election of 1967 saw sig-



In Lucknow in 1991, two of UP's tallest OBC leaders: outgoing CM Mulayam Singh Yadav and his successor Kalyan Singh.
Express Archive/ RK Sharma

nificant shifts in social equations. The Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), precursor to the BJP, won 98 seats, riding the support from backward farming communities. OBC leaders and future CMs Kalyan Singh (BJS) and Mulayam Singh Yadav (Samyukta Socialist Party) entered the Assembly for the first time, and Jat leader Chaudhary Charan Singh became CM after defecting from the Congress.

In eastern UP, where there are no Jats, Charan Singh received support from communities such as Yadavs and Kurmis. A significant number of BJS MLAs in the 1967 Assembly were from these communities, but in the years after that, their bases shifted loyalty to Charan Singh, who remained their most widely accepted leader until his demise in 1987.

VP Singh, who broke from the Congress in the late 1980s, received support from OBC leaders Mulayam in UP, Lalu Prasad in Bihar, and Sharad Yadav from MP. The Jats of UP, Haryana, and Rajasthan too threw their weight behind him. His announcement during his Independence Day speech of 1990, on implementation of the Mandal Commission report, strengthened OBC consolidation further.

In UP, Mulayam, who had become CM in 1989, got the support of Muslims with his hard opposition to the BJP's Hindutva, and of several non-Yadav OBC communities, and emerged as the pre-eminent leader of OBCs in the 1990s.

BJP's Kalyan and Rajnath

The BJP mounted its own OBC face against Mulayam, and after the elections of 1991, Kalyan Singh, a Lodhi Rajput, became CM. As Mulayam's support base outside his Yadav-Muslim core started to fragment, Kalyan rallied several smaller OBC communities behind

the BJP. It was around this time, as several communities started to assert their identities in the post-Mandal years, that 'non-Yadav OBC' entered the political lexicon of UP. Kalyan nurtured this constituency, and ensured their representation in party posts and in the distribution of election tickets.

Kalyan's successor Ram Prakash Gupta (Nov 1999-Oct 2000) granted Jats OBC status in UP. Working to weaken Mulayam and BSP chief Mayawati, the government of Rajnath Singh, who succeeded Gupta, came up with the idea of "reservation within reservation" to divide OBCs and Dalits.

The Social Justice Committee constituted by Rajnath's government in June 2001 submitted its report that August. Its purpose was seen to be to alienate Yadavs from other OBC castes, and Jats from other SC castes. A committee headed by Hukum Singh recommended that the 21% quota for Scheduled Castes should be split between Jats (10%) and the remaining 65 SC castes (11%). In the 27% OBC quota, the share of Yadavs should be kept to 5%, the committee recommended, with 9% going to eight other castes, and the rest to 70 other castes.

The plan was quashed by the Supreme Court, and in the elections of 2002, the BJP was reduced to 88 seats out of 403 in the Assembly.

OBC politics post 2002

The success of identity politics inspired several other leaders to seek recognition for themselves and their communities. Sonelal Patel, a Kumi leader who was earlier with the BSP, had formed the Apna Dal in 1995. In 2002, he fielded 351 candidates including 59 Kurmis, and won three seats; all three MLAs, however, defected to the SP later.

In October 2002, another former BSP

leader, Om Prakash Rajbhar, formed the Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP), with its base in the Rajbhar community. Several years later, in 2016, Sanjay Nishad formed the Nirbal Indian Shoshit Hamara Aam Dal (NISHAD), claiming support from the Nishad community.

After Sonelal Patel's death, his daughters went their separate ways. The faction led by Anupriya Patel is in alliance with the BJP, the other faction, led by Pallavi Patel, is with the SP. Rajbhar is now with the SP alliance, while Nishad is with the BJP.

Modi-Yogi years

Ahead of the Lok Sabha polls of 2014, Narendra Modi focused strongly on social engineering. In UP, with the help of Kalyan Singh who had returned to the BJP, Modi and Amit Shah devised a strategy that would bring the party 73 out of 80 seats, with two more going to its ally Apna Dal.

The strategy paid off again in 2017, when Amit Shah campaigned in UP and Keshav Prasad Maurya was made president of the BJP's state unit. The party won 312 seats, and its allies Apna Dal and SBSP (which was then with the BJP) won 9 and 4 respectively. The BJP's sweep indicated that barring a few OBC castes, most others had backed the party.

Non-Yadav OBC leaders flocked to the BJP. Keshav Maurya was joined by Swami Prasad Maurya, who was once Mayawati's trusted lieutenant; with Babu Singh Kushwaha having left already, the BSP lost a major part of its OBC base to the BJP. Nonia leader Dara Singh Chauhan came over. The BJP launched a campaign to brand the SP as a party that took care of only Yadavs and Muslims, a narrative that Mulayam's then badly divided party failed to counter.

The SP and BSP joined hands for the Lok Sabha elections of 2019, but the BJP still won 62 seats, and the Apna Dal won two. The BJP had promised sub-categorisation of OBCs in 2014 and 2017, and a Commission headed by Justice G Rohini has been looking at the issue since October 2017. A separate committee at the state level under Justice Raghavendra Kumar has submitted its report to the state government.

Swami Prasad Maurya and Chauhan are no longer with the BJP. Every OBC leader that has left the BJP ahead of the 2022 elections has accused the Yogi Adityanath government of being unfair to these communities. On the other hand, SP leader Akhilesh Yadav has reached out to non-Yadav OBCs with several election promises.

THIS WORD MEANS: GENERAL CONSENT

When states block CBI from probing cases

DEEPTIMANTI WARY

NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

MEGHALAYA HAS withdrawn consent to the CBI to investigate cases in the state, becoming the ninth state to do so. Last November, the Supreme Court had expressed concern over the CBI's submission that since 2018, around 150 requests for sanction to investigate had been pending with the eight states that had withdrawn general consent until then.

What general consent means

Under Section 6 of the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946, the CBI must obtain the consent of the state government before beginning an investigation in a state. In contrast, the National Investigation Agency, governed by The NIA Act, 2008, has jurisdiction across the country.

The state government's consent to the CBI can be either case-specific or general. General

consent is normally given to help the CBI probe corruption cases against central government employees in the state concerned. Without it, the CBI would have to apply to the state in every case, and before taking every action.

The 9 states

Since 2015, Mizoram (in 2015); West Bengal (2018); Chhattisgarh (2019); Punjab, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Kerala, Jharkhand (all 2020) and now Meghalaya have withdrawn general consent to the CBI. In 2018, Andhra Pradesh (then ruled by the TDP) too withdrawn consent, but restored it when YSRCP came to power in 2019.

Seven of these nine states — the exceptions being Meghalaya and Mizoram — are ruled by the anti-BJP opposition. Mizoram was ruled by the Congress when it withdrew general consent in 2015, but hasn't restored it after NDA ally MNF came to power. At the time of withdrawing consent, all states alleged the Centre was using the CBI to target the opposition.

What withdrawal means

It means the CBI will not be able to register any fresh case involving officials of the central government or a private person in the state without the state government's consent.

The Calcutta High Court recently ruled that the CBI cannot be stopped from probing a central government employee in another state. The order has been challenged in the Supreme Court. Last July, the Calcutta HC ruled that a central government employee could not be "distinguished" just because his office was located in a state that had withdrawn general consent. It said withdrawal of consent would apply in cases where exclusively state government employees were involved.

What is doesn't mean

Even when consent is withdrawn, the CBI retains the power to investigate cases registered before the withdrawal. Also, in cases registered anywhere else in the country, involving individuals stationed in these states, the

CBI's jurisdiction extends to these states.

There is ambiguity on whether the CBI can carry out a search in connection with an old case without the state's consent, but the agency has the option to get a search warrant from a local court. For a surprise search, it can use CrPC Section 166, which allows a police officer of one jurisdiction to ask an officer of another to carry out a search on their behalf. And should the first officer feel a search by the latter may lead to loss of evidence, he can conduct the search himself after giving notice to the latter.

Powers in fresh cases

Avenues remain available to the CBI even without consent. It could use the Calcutta HC order to register a fresh case in any state. Alternatively, it can file a case in Delhi and continue to investigate people inside these states.

In October 2018, the Delhi High Court ruled that the CBI could probe anyone in a state that has withdrawn general consent, if the case was not registered in that state.

HOW CLOSURE OF RUSSIAN AIRSPACE HAS IMPACTED FLIGHTS

The closure of Russian airspace for US-based, Canadian and European airlines has meant flights between some major destinations in these jurisdictions and India have become longer. For passengers on these carriers, longer flight times have meant inconvenience and higher fares. Air India has remained unaffected, as it continues to use Russian airspace for its flights to and from the western hemisphere. The screenshots below, from the flight tracking website Flightradar24, show routes and flight times from randomly picked dates before and after the invasion of Ukraine, which triggered the West's closure of airspaces to Russian aircraft, and Moscow's retaliation. The flight times are indicative; within the broad 'before' and 'after' categories, aircraft may reach a little sooner or later on a daily basis depending on flight conditions. PRANAV MUKUL explains.

NEWARK - DELHI

The United Airlines flight on March 1, which went around Russian airspace, was well over an hour longer — flying over Europe and the Middle East before entering the Indian subcontinent. The Air India flight on same route continues to use Russian airspace, and takes the same time as it did before the closure of airspaces.



UNITED AIRLINES

FEB 2 (BEFORE WAR):
12 HR 38 MIN

UNITED AIRLINES

MAR 1 (AFTER WAR):
13 HR 53 MIN

AIR INDIA

MAR 1 (UNCHANGED):
13 HR 19 MIN

HELSINKI - DELHI

To avoid Russian airspace, the Finnair aircraft flew south over eastern Europe, Turkey and Middle East, taking more than three hours longer than it did before the closure of Russian airspace. Normally, the flight goes east above Russia before heading south to reach Delhi.



FINNAIR

FEB 2 (BEFORE WAR):
6 HR 15 MIN

FINNAIR

MAR 2 (AFTER WAR):
8 HR 52 MIN

VANCOUVER - DELHI

With flying time having increased substantially, Air Canada has broken its flight into two legs with a technical stopover in Dublin. Including the stopover time, the flight on March 3 took more than 37 hours. Air India's flight on the same route, using Russian airspace has continued as usual.



AIR CANADA

FEB 24 (BEFORE WAR):
13 HRS 40 MIN

AIR CANADA

MAR 3 (AFTER WAR):
DUBLIN-DELHI LEG

AIR INDIA

MAR 2 (UNCHANGED):
13 HR 56 MIN

Source: Flightradar24



The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

COST OF WAR

From inflation to growth, navigating the economic environment in shadow of Russian invasion is a task cut out

THE MACROECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT has changed considerably from the time Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union budget, and the RBI released its inflation forecast for the upcoming fiscal year. On Thursday, crude oil prices hovered around \$120 a barrel for the first time in years. While prices have moderated mildly thereafter, for the Indian economy which imports around 80 per cent of its requirements, higher crude oil prices will have adverse consequences. Higher prices will impact growth, will be inflationary, and will exert upward pressure on the current account and fiscal deficit. Considering that crude oil prices are currently significantly higher than those factored in the Union budget and the RBI’s calculations, navigating this uncertain economic environment will require deft management by monetary and fiscal authorities.

Since November last year, when the price of the Indian crude oil basket stood at \$80.64, oil marketing companies have refrained from revising pump prices, even though global prices have been on the rise. But, once the assembly elections are concluded, fuel prices at the pump are likely to be hiked. However, steep hikes will be needed — as per a report by ICICI securities, a Rs 12 per litre hike will be needed just to break even. This will be inflationary. Needless to say, fuel price hikes will upend the central bank’s optimistic assessment of the inflation trajectory. As per RBI’s recent assessment, inflation was expected to trend down from 5.7 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2021-22 to just under 5 per cent in the first half of 2022-23. This will complicate the choices before the monetary policy committee. Higher prices will also reduce discretionary spending by households. Governments may respond by lowering fuel taxes to absorb part of the burden. However, this will weigh down their revenues and spending. Thus, growth will thus take a hit. Higher oil prices will also push up imports, increasing the current account deficit at a time when global financial conditions are tightening. Recent data shows that the merchandise trade deficit has already widened to \$21.2 billion in February, up from \$17.9 billion, with much of the surge driven by oil. The rupee is already coming under pressure. This will only add to the inflationary pressures.

The indirect consequences of the deterioration in the economic environment are also beginning to show. There are reports that LIC’s initial public offering may be postponed to the next financial year due to prevailing market uncertainty. While the full effects of the oil price shock will be visible with a lag, when taken together with the third wave of the pandemic, it suggests further downside risks to economic growth in the fourth quarter, which as per the National Statistical Office’s latest estimate was already expected to slow down to 4.8 per cent from 5.4 per cent in the previous quarter.

ON THE WRONG FOOT

Breach of propriety, conflict of interests have defined Sourav Ganguly’s stint as BCCI chief. He must course correct or quit

WHEN SOURAV GANGULY became the president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in 2019, an understandable breeze of optimism wafted in. It was felt that finally a player was in charge, that too a legendary one, and he would clean up the mess that had dragged Indian cricket into the high-ceiling offices of the Supreme Court. It turns out this was a naive urge as Ganguly has arguably outdone some of the old cynical non-player-administrators. Especially, as he had stepped in post the judicial intervention, and was expected to at least uphold the court’s order and recommendations. The latest overstep, as reported by this newspaper, was how he “bullied” other selectors by going against the BCCI constitution and sat in their meetings. And that’s one of his milder offences.

Ganguly has systematically undermined institutions, been brazen about conflict of interests, allegedly promised players stuff that he has no right to (the wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha claimed Ganguly promised him he will be in team), and generally acted as if he was a Maharaja accountable to none and not a paid office bearer of Indian cricket. Ganguly, by then president of the BCCI, was also director of ATK Mohun Bagan when Sanjiv Goenka’s RPSG Group, which owns that football franchise, successfully bid for the new IPL team based out of Lucknow. He was the brand ambassador of the fantasy gaming app My Circle 11 when they announced a three-year title sponsorship deal with the Lucknow franchise and all this when a rival fantasy gaming app was the official kit sponsor of the Indian team. Couple of years ago, he instagrammed his photo clad in a JSW Cement T-shirt with tagline “at work”; JSW Sports, the sports arm of the business conglomerate JSW Group, is a joint owner of the IPL franchise Delhi Capitals.

When a news agency questioned him about his latest breach of selectorial independence, he said: “I have played 424 international matches for India.” The response suggests he believes that his record as a player allows him the privilege to abuse power, disregard rules, and ignore conflict of interests. When he was named president of the BCCI, he was expected to clear the mess left behind by the IPL spot-fixing saga and cleanse Indian cricket. Instead he has been “at work” for himself. The sad fallout of l’affaire Ganguly is that the trust in players to offer administration with a difference has quickly evaporated, revealing a broken system.

#OSCARSSoOLD

By turning to a Twitter poll to stay relevant, Academy Awards show just how out of touch they are

There is a saying in Bengali that fits well the sad, desperate attempts to make the Oscars popular by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. “Shingh khule bachhur er dole” translates into a “[a bull] taking off its horns and pretending to be a calf”. The #OscarsFanFavourite gimmick asks for votes on Twitter for a film that, in all likelihood, would not make the list of nominees selected by the Academy. In doing so, it tries to present as something new a concept that is already passe: An ageing bull, when it tries to be a calf, only brings more attention to how out of touch it is.

Over the last few years, the Oscars have been criticised on multiple fronts. First, there was #OscarsSoWhite, then a furore over a comedian host’s jokes on social media from a decade ago (that year, there was no host and the show suffered for it). All the while, viewership for the awards show — at one point one of the most-watched television events in the world — has been rapidly declining. This year, in addition to going to the hunting ground for trolls to select an awardee, awards for some categories -- including Editing and Original Score — will not be telecast live. Both ideas are counterproductive.

Spiderman: No Way Home, the biggest grossing Hollywood film of the year, does not need the critical recognition the Oscars provide. The awards’ purpose — in the best interpretation — is to recognise good cinema and those that make it possible in the world’s richest film industry. The People’s Choice Awards have been around for decades: They do not pretend to judge art, only popularity. And anyone who knows films will tell you, editors are as important as cinematographers and directors. What the Oscars should do to stay relevant is focus more on films and stories that rise to the level of art, in more diverse settings. By starting popularity contests, they are reduced to just another tweet.



ASHUTOSH VARSHNEY

JUST WHAT DOES Putin’s invasion of Ukraine signify? How do we understand Putin’s objectives and motivations?

Let us begin with what the invasion is not about. It is not about the reconstitution of the Soviet Union, which disintegrated after seven decades in 1991. Putin’s hour-long speech on February 24, which laid out the rationale for war, was severely critical of the Communist handling of Ukraine, which he called “Vladimir Lenin’s Ukraine”. Indeed, his critique of Communism was larger. As is widely known, the Soviet Constitution granted the right to secede to the 15 constituent republics of the USSR. Lenin’s assumption was that nationalism flourished if nationhood was denied. By recognising the languages and cultures of 15 national groups — from the Estonians on the northwestern tip all the way down to the Uzbeks on the southeastern flank — the Soviet Union would end up extinguishing internal nationalisms. All 15 nations would make a transition to a higher state of human consciousness. They would be Communist/Soviet. If you are no longer national, why would you secede from the Soviet Union?

In his speech, Putin called this theory an “odious and Utopian fantasy inspired by the Communist revolution”. Indeed, exercising the right to secede in 1991, all 15 republics of the Soviet Union did become independent nations. Lenin and the Communists, said Putin, were wrong about nationalism, whose “virus” still persists.

What should then Moscow do, if not rebuild the Soviet Union? Using the various speeches of Putin, scholars of Russia point to his frequent citation of the concept of “Rusky Mir”, translated as “Russian World”. A non-literal, but more appropriate, translation would be a Russian imperium, consisting of Ukraine, Belarus and Russia. Belarus has already accepted Russian hegemony, but having less than 10 million people, it is small. With a population of more than 40 million and having a land-mass second only to Russia in Eurasia, Ukraine is infinitely more significant. In the words of Lilia Shevtsova, a scholar of the region, Ukraine is “a star in the Russian galaxy”, accounting for what she calls “Russia’s Ukraine obsession”.

In the February 24 speech and his widely noted 5000-word essay ‘On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians’, published by the Kremlin on July 12, 2021, Putin offered three ar-

In pursuing imperial ambition, Russian president underestimated Ukrainian national consciousness

guments about Ukraine.

First, Ukraine is an “inalienable part of our history, culture and spiritual space”. Only during 1918-21 and, then, for a mere three decades after 1991 has Ukraine been independent. In contrast, he said, Ukrainians have called themselves Russians for centuries and have also been Orthodox Christians, thus sharing their religion with Russia. Their statehood was “never stable”. They were historically an integral part of Russia.

Second, Ukraine’s new leaders are “building their statehood on the negation of everything that historically united us”, in the process “distorting the mentality and historical memory of millions of people”. In the creation of pro-Western, anti-Russian attitudes, the political leaders have been systematically helped by Ukraine’s oligarchs, who have “stolen billions of dollars from the people and kept them in Western banks”. Ukraine’s move towards Europe and the West is thus a conspiracy hatched by the political elites and oligarchs, going against the historical truths and violating the honest sentiments of Ukrainian masses.

Third, Ukraine’s gravitation towards the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), argues Putin, poses a grave security threat to Russia. It is a two-headed threat. If NATO admits Ukraine as a member, an anti-Russian, US-led security umbrella will reach the doorsteps of Russia. Moreover, Ukraine used to host Soviet-era nuclear weapons before giving them up in 1994. The know-how, says Putin, has not disappeared and Ukraine can easily develop its own tactical nuclear weapons capable of hitting Russia, an argument the scholars of nuclear weapons find wholly false. Nuclear weapons require much more than technical knowhow.

Essentially, these three arguments boil down to one foundational claim — Ukraine cannot have an independent state because it was historically part of Russia. Any attempt at expression of independence, or Ukraine’s Western desire, must be militarily crushed.

Longstanding nationalism theory tells us why this argument is deeply flawed, apart from being profoundly dangerous if accompanied with military action. Over the last four decades, Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* has become the most authoritative text on nations and nationalism. Anderson has persuaded the scholarly world that nations were

born only after the 18th century. They are modern political constructs. Indeed, most nations were born in the 19th and 20th century. Earlier polities took two forms, both non-national: empires or city-states. There was no Russian nation before the modern times, only a Russian empire.

Leaving this conceptual reasoning aside, the absurdity of Putin’s argument can be more concretely illustrated if we draw a South Asian comparison. We know that there was no Pakistan before 1947, and no Bangladesh before 1971. Both were, historically, parts of India, and they even speak languages also spoken in India. Such conditions, however, neither mean that India can legitimately claim them as its own today, nor that they must be brought back into an Akhand Bharat (undivided India) with military means. As history progressed, both Pakistan and Bangladesh emerged from the development of national consciousness, became nations in their own right, evolved statehood reflecting that consciousness, and received international recognition for their sovereignty.

With over 92 per cent vote in favour of independence, Ukraine opted overwhelmingly for a break-up from the Soviet Union in 1991, and other than in some small parts, especially on its eastern borders, there is no evidence of a popular desire to re-unite with Russia. It is also now providing one of the ultimate tests of national resolve and consciousness. Ready to sacrifice their lives, citizens are turning into street soldiers, mounting an impressive resistance against the Russian armed forces. The emergence of citizen soldiers, aiding professional soldiers, reflects a highly developed form of national consciousness.

Putin might have expected that Ukrainians would welcome the Russian armed forces with open arms, or view them as liberators from an illegitimate elite wrongly taking them down the disloyal Western path. But what we are witnessing today is a full-blown national rebellion against a mighty neighbour bent upon bullying and subjugating.

History tells us that these conditions lead to lasting conflict. Ukraine will be no exception. Devastation and resistance are likely to continue.

The writer is Sol Goldman Professor of International Studies and the Social Sciences at Brown University



JANAKI SRINIVASAN

THIS CANNOT BE the word. My head kept refusing what seemed the only possibility even as it tried all other combinations out of the yellow and unused letters on the keypad. I am talking about Wordle. Eventually, frustrated at the non-words I was making at 6 am, since it has become the first thing I do every morning, I punched in RUPEE. Voila! The tiles turned green! (Note to self: three vowels, voila is a good start word). I begin to see the headlines and social media posts that will follow: “This has been made possible because of India’s rising superpower status on the world stage”; “Wordle recognises India as vishwaguru”; “Was this possible under Nehru?”; “The rupee was never taken seriously before 2014?” Never mind that the rupee is the name of the currency of at least six other countries now and was of many more till the mid-20th century. Also, never mind that the rupee has been on a downward slide vis-à-vis key foreign currencies for some years. But, to be on Wordle, soon after it had been bought over by *The New York Times* must mean something.

I yanked myself out of this train of thought. In case I doze off, I do not want early morning dreams of political leaders giving speeches on anything. Till now, the few minutes of reflection that followed getting the Wordle word of the day had been pleasant: They dealt with the curious ways of the brain, which is sometimes unable to see the word staring right at you and

DREAMS OF WORDLE

The reveries and reflections after a five-letter victory

sometimes hops over unlikely loops to arrive at the destination. It can also be a humbling experience, for there will always be words that those who aren’t Shashi Tharoor don’t know. “Caulk”, for instance. Now that it has become part of our textual sociality, it allows us to trace the trajectory of others. It is a refreshing alternative to “all is well” conversations. It also yields good jealousies, like what I felt till I hit that first 2/6 score that everyone I knew had achieved.

How long will the Wordle craze last? Why did it become a craze? What are the likely futures of the game in a world that is the most literate ever, and where the ascendancy of English has been steady despite the return of revanchist nationalism? We already have interesting predictions and assessments of this phenomenon. Marketing scholar Gaurav Sabnis links its popularity to the “sweet spot” the game has hit in being moderately difficult — thus posing a challenge — but mostly yielding gratification. It provided default contrarians a chance to rack up their social media presence by claiming to be untouched by the obsession. My teacher cousin made it part of her pedagogy by creating her own wordle, wherein she puts a word every day from the ongoing lesson for her students to solve.

It is the spin-offs in other languages that are to watch out for. While linguists have been discussing the suitability of other languages to the wordle format (some have those trauma-caus-

ing features like that word ending in -ight brought on for many), I do hope this spurs innovation of word games in other languages. As Indians rapidly lose their multi-linguality, and urban kids grow up with barely passable competence in their parental tongue(s), the smartphone could become our route to retain languages and find our way to regional literature outside of translation.

For long, I have been bothered by the lack of a Duolingo type app for South Asian languages, apart from Hindi. Our land of tech experts and several university centres for languages have not yet come up with ways to make language learning fun and accessible. Yet, as more languages enter endangered and extinct lists, taking with them the unique culture, worldview and knowledge that every language holds, we need creative ways to not just preserve but keep languages alive. Language is what makes us human, as research into cognition and linguistics show. But could language also be the key to saving us from both planetary and self-destruction? Etymology shows the interlinked migrant history of our species and is a counter to linguistic chauvinism. In times of war, it is words, not nukes that can bring peace. For who will mourn us once we are all gone? Yes, that is the train of thought set off by my second 2/6 word: Mourn.

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MARCH 5, 1982, FORTY YEARS AGO

BENGAL ELECTIONS
THE SUPREME COURT has removed the legal hurdles in holding elections in West Bengal elections on time by vacating the stay of the Calcutta High Court on publication of the final electoral lists. The election commission can now go ahead with preparations for the assembly elections due in June. The High Court stay had rendered the electoral work impossible to be completed before June and President’s rule would have become imperative on the expiry of the Left Front government’s term. The constitutional bench headed by Y V Chandrachud sat late to hand down a crucial verdict in a crowded court. The Supreme Court will hear a writ petition

filed by the Congress (I) on the elections separately on March 15.

MINISTER’S SILENCE
THE PETROLEUM MINISTER P Shiv Shankar was reluctant to answer questions raised by Rajya Sabha members of aviation fuel. The house was seized of a call-in-attention motion and it was Aviation Minister A P Sharma who spoke all through, sometimes even speaking for his colleague. Shiv Shankar got up thrice but was unable to answer the barrage of questions directed at him. He had remained silent when a similar call-in-attention motion was tabled in the Lok Sabha.

INDO-GREEK TALKS

PRESIDENT OF GREECE Constantine Karamanlis said Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, in their talks on March 4, had expressed concern at the dangers posed by increasing tensions in different parts of the world and the growing domination of the arms industry in world affairs. Mrs Gandhi, also said that an important change had taken place as the people of India and Pakistan were getting friendlier towards each other.

FIRAQ CREMATED

THE WELL-KNOWN Urdu poet Raghupati Sahai Firaq Gorakhpuri was cremated with full state honours on the banks the Ganga.

THE IDEAS PAGE

Climate of denial

The IPCC report has a dire warning for India’s environmental future. But is our political class listening?



OPENING ARGUMENT

By MENAKA GURUSWAMY

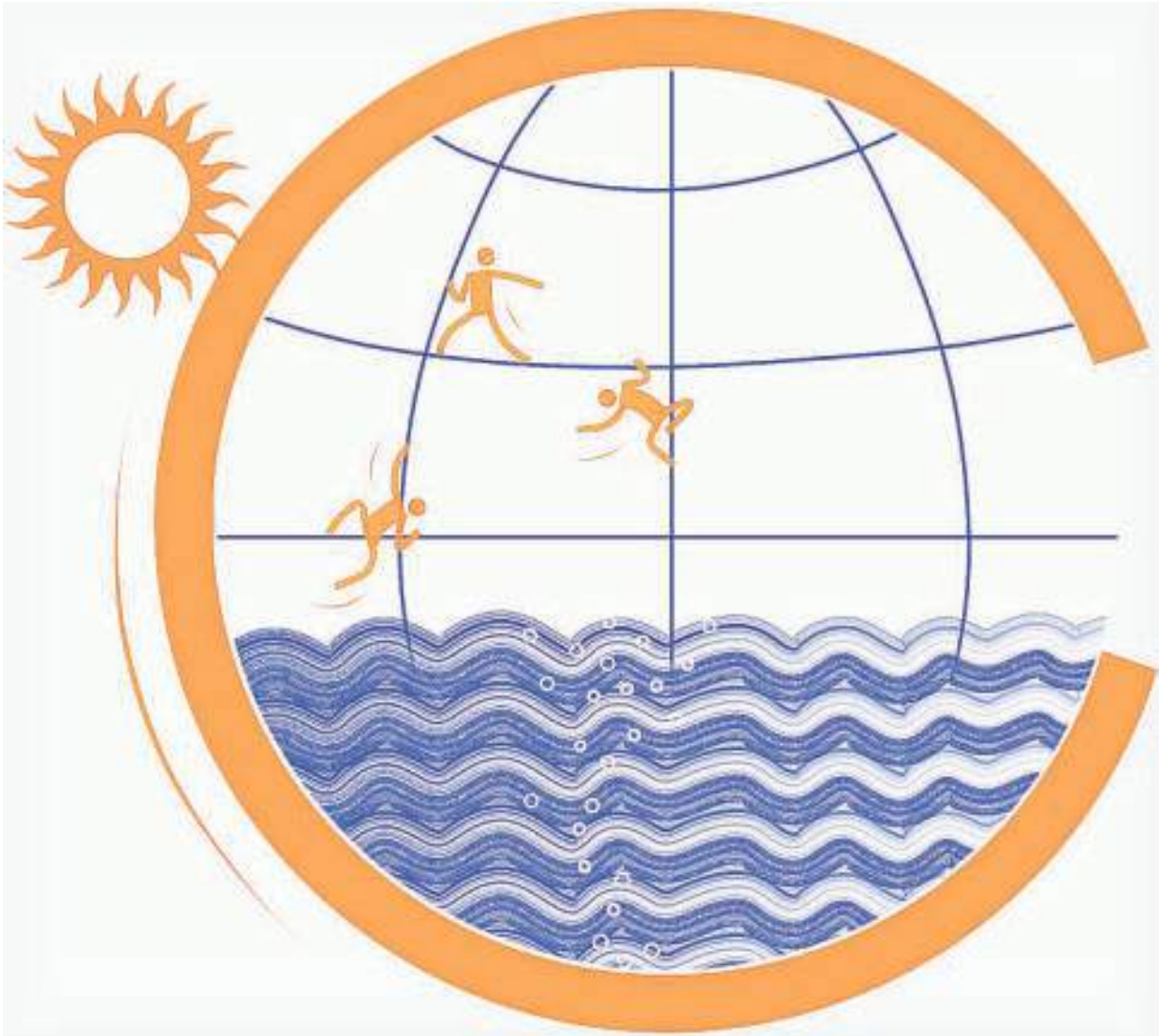
IT IS SPRING in Delhi — the three weeks spanning mid-February and early-March when all Delhi dwellers experience exhilarating optimism about their lives and their futures. The air is simply “moderate” to “poor” (and not “severe”), as per the various air quality index (AQI) applications on our phones. The Mughal gardens are in full bloom and thrown open to the public. Our public gardens are packed to the gills with picnickers amid the tombs, roses and preening peacocks.

Life is good. The Supreme Court is mostly functioning in physical mode, and the temperature is pleasant enough for us lawyers to stand around drinking tea while gossiping under the high domed ceilings and in the open-air corridors, wearing our multi-layered, mostly black advocate uniform, without sweat furiously dripping down our brows. It is amid this time of relative joy that I read parts of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report released on Monday. Perhaps, I shouldn’t have.

The IPCC, a body of almost 270 experts from 67 countries, brought together by the United Nations, gave a bleak assessment of the future of our planet and species. In its sixth assessment report, titled ‘Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability’, the IPCC discusses the increasing extreme heat, rising oceans, melting glaciers, falling agricultural productivity, resultant food shortages and increase in diseases like dengue and Zika. Antonio Guterres, the United Nations Secretary General, quoted in *The New York Times*, describes the IPCC report as being “an atlas of human suffering and a damning indictment of failed climate leadership.” He added, “With fact upon fact, this report reveals how people, and the planet are getting clobbered by climate change”.

Now those of us who live in India don’t need the UN Secretary General to tell us that climate change is clobbering us. We are living in the future that the IPCC predicts. Our cities are experiencing more frequent extreme heat waves. In Delhi, the AQI for winter months averages between 300-500, akin to smoking one to two packs of cigarettes every day. Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata are in the list of the top 15 most polluted cities of the world, as per the Switzerland-based climate change group IQ Air.

The IPCC warns that should our planet get warmer than 1.5 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial times (we are at 1.1 degrees at present), then there will be irreversible impact on “ecosystems with low resilience” such as polar, mountain and coastal ecosystems “impacted by glacier melt, and higher sea level rise”. This will cause devastation to “infrastructure in low-lying coastal settlements, associated livelihoods and even erosion of cultural and spiritual values.” The increased heat will lead to an increase in diseases like diabetes, circulatory and respiratory conditions, as well as mental health challenges. Clearly, adverse climate change



C R Sasikumar

is an all-encompassing condition damaging our minds, our lungs and our livelihoods.

The IPCC also highlights that climate “maladaptation” will especially affect “marginalised and vulnerable groups adversely, indigenous people, ethnic minorities, low-income households and informal settlements” and those in rural areas. Therefore, India, with a majority of its people falling in these categories, will be especially devastated.

Esha Roy and Amitabh Sinha in their reports in *The Indian Express* note that the IPCC highlights India as a vulnerable hotspot, with several regions and cities facing climate change phenomena like flooding, sea-level rise and heatwaves. For instance, Mumbai is at high risk of sea-level rise and flooding, and Ahmedabad faces the danger of heat waves — these phenomena are already underway in both cities. Vector-borne and water-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue will be on the rise in sub-tropical regions, like parts of Punjab, Assam and Rajasthan.

When the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere increases, the grains we consume, including wheat and rice, will have diminished nutritional quality. But this presumes we will not face a crisis in food. Tucked away in annexure I of the IPCC report, I found a chilling factoid — that over the past 30 years, major crop yields have decreased by 4-10 per cent globally due to climate change. Consequently, India, which

The problem is that fighting climate change requires fiscal expenditure and policy changes fuelled by political will, which will reap results in a decade or so. That is two election cycles too many for our politicians. Therefore, the primary electoral issues will continue to revolve around temples and mosques, dress codes and prohibited foods. Issues that presume we will continue to live as we do, ignoring the obvious question: Will we survive?

continues to be predominantly agrarian, is likely to be especially hurt.

Yet, it is not just our agrarian segments that will be impacted. Anjal Prakash, one of the lead authors of the chapter on cities and settlements, wrote that “urban India is at greater risk than other areas with a projected population of 877 million by 2050 nearly double of 480 million in 2020. The concentration of population in these cities will make them extremely vulnerable to climate change.”

We Indians know that we are experiencing the adverse consequences of the impacts of climate daily — the extreme heat, dirty air, poor quality of food grains. Our elders are mostly diabetic, and our streets are clogged with gas-guzzling vehicles. Yet, our political class has no cohesive and urgent policy roadmap to combat rising emissions and our diminishing life spans.

The problem is that fighting climate change requires fiscal expenditure and policy changes fuelled by political will, which will reap results in a decade or so. That is two election cycles too many for our politicians. Therefore, the primary electoral issues will continue to revolve around temples and mosques, dress codes and prohibited foods. Issues that presume we will continue to live as we do, ignoring the obvious question: Will we survive?

The writer is a senior advocate at the Supreme Court

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

“One can only hope that one day the Russian president will be sitting in a dock at The Hague where his ramblings can be exposed for what they are: no defence for the senseless killing of innocents.”

— THE GUARDIAN

Our data, not for sale

Proposed policy allowing government to enrich and sell data to private sector risks prioritising commercial interests over privacy, ought to be recalled



APAR GUPTA

THE GOVERNMENT MAY very soon start selling your data based on a proposed policy released by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY), titled “Draft India Data Accessibility & Use Policy 2022”. The policy aims to “radically transform India’s ability to harness public sector data”. If passed, it would govern, “all data and information created/generated/collected/archived by the Government of India” as much as, “State Governments [who] will also be free to adopt the provisions of the policy”. The twin purpose to which this data will be put to will be government-to-government sharing and high value datasets for valuation and licensing. There are three clear reasons why this policy deserves a recall by the Union government.

The immediate risk arises from perverse incentives when a government starts licensing citizen data. Over the past three years, there has been a rapid expansion in the nature and scope of our most intimate details. While the middle classes faced the mendacity of voluntarily linking their Aadhaar to their bank accounts and mobile connections, today, the digital sweep is all pervasive. For agriculture, there is an Agristack; for unorganised labourers, we have the e-SHRAM portal; in health we have Aarogya Setu and ABHA (Ayushman Bharat Digital Health Mission); and for school children and teachers there is NDEAR (National Digital Education Architecture). This list goes on. For every area of our lives, the government now has a database filled with our personal data. The stated purpose for collection has been improving service delivery, planning and checking leakages. Such methods have been criticised by privacy and welfare activists but have been justified as serving public purposes.

This changes with the draft data accessibility policy. To adopt a phrase from start-up culture, the basis of such massive data collection over citizens is undergoing a 180-degree pivot. Public data is now being viewed as a prized asset of the Union government that should be freely shared, enriched, valued and licensed to the private sector. Given that more data means more money, commercial interests will prompt the government to collect granular personal details through greater capture and increased retention periods. Tying government policy determinations with a fiscal potential may also lead to distortion of the aims of data collection — the welfare of farmers, healthcare, unorganised labourers or even school children. There is no indication that consent will be sought in a meaningful form.

Over time, the original objectives for which databases are built will get diluted in favour of commercial interests. Even past experience signals caution, given that social risks such as arson and communal violence prompted the Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways to recall a bulk sharing policy for licensing vehicular and driver licence data.

The second issue emerges from the disingenuous phrasing of “making data open by default”. The World Bank notes that one of the first benefits of open data is that it supports “public oversight of governments and helps reduce corruption by enabling greater transparency”. These principles were recognised in past policy pronouncements of the government. Specifically, the National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy, 2012 and the implementation guidelines formulated in 2017 refer to the Right to Information Act, 2005. However, within the present draft data accessibility policy, while the phrase “open data” has been used, its values and objectives are absent. Of the 13 objectives listed, only one is relevant to transparency and is limited to a single sentence. The primary, overpowering objectives in the draft data accessibility policy and the background note are commercial.

The final area for reconsideration is a larger trend of policy-based administration detached from our constitutional framework. This is a malady afflicting large areas of data governance, with confusion on the enactment of a data protection law. Compounding this problem, the present policy, as many others, is untethered to any legislative basis and contains no proposals for the creation of a legal framework. Parliamentary scrutiny is not an inconvenient democratic artefact that can be jettisoned for a forecasted economic windfall. As per the Supreme Court’s *Puttaswamy* judgment on the fundamental right to privacy, the first ingredient to satisfy constitutionality is the existence of a legal, more often a legislative, basis. Without a law, there is absence of defined limits to data sharing that are enforceable and contain remedies.

In this case, the promise of privacy preservation through anonymisation tools holds little promise when it cannot be independently assessed by a body for data protection. For instance, Luc Rocher and co-authors at the Oxford Internet Institute note, “results suggest that even heavily sampled anonymised datasets are unlikely to satisfy the modern standards for anonymisation set forth by GDPR and seriously challenge the technical and legal adequacy of the de-identification release-and-forget model.” This becomes vital as it is the principal measure suggested in the draft data accessibility policy.

Such risks will become a reality without an independent regulatory body or penalties. Parliamentary enactments also help bring accountability through deliberation that furthers foresight and contains financial memorandums — given that public money would be spent to enrich datasets of public data. Since the policy contemplates sharing data between databases of the central and state governments as well as through central funded schemes, it may also be prudent to deliberate further in the Rajya Sabha. Federalism becomes a relevant issue given that such data, when it is generated, processed and enriched by state governments to comply with interoperability standards, will lead to revenue generation for itself. These are the glaring issues in this short, 10-page draft data accessibility policy, which appears to transform the Union government into a data broker.

The writer is the executive director of Internet Freedom Foundation



SHOKO NODA

Wheels of Swachh Bharat

Safai Saathis are outside safety net, need collective bargaining, policy support

I STILL REMEMBER meeting 52-year-old Ratnamala in Mumbai, a waste picker who scrapes a living out of the garbage we throw away. Ratnamala told me she had been doing this work for 40 years, but could barely make ends meet and support her four children. Her meagre savings and feeble access to the government social safety net have left her highly vulnerable to emergencies and disasters. Marginalised, and at the very bottom of the socio-economic chain, Ratnamala faces the same questions every day: How to break out of this trap and move up? How to extricate her children from the same? How to create a life of dignity for herself and her children?

It is estimated that India generates 65 million tonnes of waste each year and is home to more than 4 million waste pickers like Ratnamala. Predominantly women, this army of waste pickers or Safai Saathis is the backbone of traditional waste management in most Indian cities.

Despite this, Safai Saathis have not found their legitimate space in India’s development discourse. When the government announced measures during the pandemic to support frontline workers, the waste picker community remained conspicuous by its absence. This is particularly disheartening as they continue to collect and sort through rising mounds of potentially dangerous waste including masks, hazmat suits, and plastic face-shields.

Their multiple vulnerabilities, including low and uncertain incomes, limited access

to government schemes, high health risks, and severe social exclusion, have all been exacerbated by Covid-19.

In line with our mandate to ensure that no one is left behind, UNDP India works with Safai Saathis through our Plastic Waste Management programme. However, when we began in 2018, we were struck by the paucity of data on this community. How was anyone going to devise programmes and policies to support Safai Saathis if official data say so little? This led us to design and publish India’s first large-scale analysis of the socio-economic conditions of Safai Saathis, based on a survey of over 9,000 workers across 14 Indian cities. Our findings underline an urgent need to extend multifaceted support to these workers. Our survey shows that Safai Saathis are employed mainly on the margins of the urban informal sector. Their low incomes and job insecurity is compounded by the fact that nearly 70 per cent come from socially backward groups and over 60 per cent have no formal education.

More than 90 per cent of the workers reported owning an Aadhaar card — in line with broad national trends — but only a tiny subset owned an income, caste, or occupation certificate. This thwarts any attempts at formalising their work and limits their access to government social security schemes. Less than 5 per cent of those surveyed had any health insurance, indicating very high degrees of health-shock vulnerabilities.

Of those Safai Saathis who had a bank ac-

count, only 20 per cent were linked to the Jan Dhan Yojana — the government’s flagship financial inclusion programme. Half of the sample reported owning and using a ration card and this proportion was even smaller in cities where migrants formed a larger share among surveyed workers. With its focus on portability, the government’s One Nation One Ration Card scheme has the potential to play a transformative role in ensuring access to subsidised food grains for these workers.

As India progresses towards meeting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, our study makes a compelling case to intensify efforts to address the challenges faced by Safai Saathis. Its evidence-backed insights have the potential to inform government policy and action — including the government’s ambition to bring informal workers under the Swachh Bharat Mission, and the e-SHRAM initiative that links workers to the state-funded health insurance.

An important starting point is the registration of Safai Saathis by urban local bodies, and providing ID cards that recognise them as municipal workers with a clear role. Ensuring minimum pay and enabling their authorised access to waste are essential next steps.

The overall policy agenda for Safai Saathis must include a firm focus on building resilience against shocks, expanding access to social protection, and creating opportunities to graduate towards safe, sustainable, and dignified livelihoods.

First, diversified solid waste management-linked livelihoods like dry waste centre managers and machine operators can broaden employment horizons for these workers. Waste pickers’ cooperatives can strengthen Safai Saathis’ collective bargaining power enabling higher prices for what they collect.

Second, a welfare framework to design social protection schemes explicitly for Safai Saathis should be a policy priority. Proactively reaching out to the workers for enrolment in government schemes, minimising paperwork, and a greater awareness among Safai Saathis about their entitlements are essential for linking them to government programmes.

In the medium term, there is a clear need to create better, safer, decent jobs in the economy that informal workers like Safai Saathis can eventually move to, supported by efforts to enhance their skills.

Finally, as India makes determined strides towards realising the Sustainable Development Goals, it must look at exploring alternate, technology-led circular economy models that eliminate the need for any person to do this hazardous work manually. Ratnamala and her children deserve to break away from this cycle and have a chance at a life with better opportunities and a life of dignity.

The writer is Resident Representative UNDP, India

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NUCLEAR FEAR

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, ‘The N-Word’ (IE, March 4). Even uttering the N-word, and that too by a senior minister of a country that possesses among the largest nuclear stockpiles is disturbing and has severe consequences. Ukraine was seen until recently as the embodiment of non-proliferation as it gave up its nuclear stockpile yet remained a “safe” place. If Ukraine had not given its nuclear weapons in 1994 under the Budapest Memorandum, this invasion by Russia might not have come to pass. However, ifs and buts have no place in international relations. The point is the N-word is terrifying. The horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki point to only one thing: A nuclear war cannot be won and must not be fought.

Devang Ganesh Thosar, Raigad

BETTER GRID

THIS REFERS TO the article, ‘The only fuel’ (IE, March 4). Electricity could emerge as the biggest substitute to non-renewable sources of energy if problems such as the erratic supply of electricity could be addressed. One of the ways to optimise performance is to move towards the digitisation of assets. Tools such as predictive analytics can be used to monitor performance and collect data regarding probable asset failure in the distribution and transmission sector. This will enable the discoms to discover the reason behind the high failure rate of the transformers. The electricity regulatory au-

IDEAS ONLINE

ONLY IN THE EXPRESS

● WHY WE SHOULD CARE ABOUT INEQUALITY: SRISHTY ANAND

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thorities can step in and mandate the collection of assets failure data and thereafter formulate/streamline the process to reduce such incidents. It is essential to first improve the reliability of the present system and reduce the burden of O&M expenses. As such, it is suggested that operational expenditure should be prioritised over capital expenditure.

Aerika Singh, Chandigarh

ONUS ON STUDENTS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, ‘After the arrival’ (IE, March 4). While it is important that the government make arrangements for continuing the education of students returning from Ukraine, the onus falls on the students as well. The time spent over there has provided them with international exposure, which is essential in the long run. They can also explore short-term medical internships to gain experience.

Gaurav Gupta, Gurugram



Kolkata






5 of family among 14 killed in blast at illegal firecracker unit

Journo held for writing satires against state

The complaint against Nileshe
Sharma, editor of



	DELHI JAL BOARD : GOVT. OF N.C.T. OF DELHI OFFICE OF THE CE (W) PR-I / EE (PR) W-VIII A-BUILDING, VARUNALAYA, JHADEWALAN, NEW DELHI-110005 Phone No:- 011-23533083, Email:- eeprojectw8@gmail.com				
NIT No: 10 (2021-22)					
Name of work	Amount put to Tender (Rs.)	Earnest Money	Tender Processing Fee (Rs.)	Completion Period	Last date of Tender Download
P/L 600 mm dia water line for disposal of waste water from Bhagarti WTP to Gazipur drain.	Rs. 1,33,75,141/-	Rs. 2,67,502/- (to be transmitted through RTGS)	Rs. 1000/- (Non-Refundable)	04 Months	22.03.2022 upto 3:00 PM
Tender ID:- 2022_DJB_218030_1					
Note: Any further amendment/ corrigendum made in this NIT will be uploaded and can only be seen on website http://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in . Issued by P.R.O. (WATER) Advt. No. J.S.V. 1212 (2021-22)					
SD/- (P.K. Sharma) E.E.(Project)W-VIII					
<u>STOP CORONA : WASH YOUR HANDS WEAR MASK MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCE</u>					



Office of the Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sambalpur.

Tel- 0663-2548268, E-mail Id serwcirclesbp@yahoo.com

No: 438 Dated: 02.03.2022

Bid Identification No. Bridge Tender Online - RWCSBP-48/2021-22

The Chief Construction Engineer Rural Works Circle, Sambalpur on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites online percentage rate Bid from experienced & eligible bidders for 1 (one) no. of Bridge works under BSY for the year 2021-22 in the District of Bargarh.

- 1 **Name of work** : Bridge works under BSY for the year 2021-22 in the District of Bargarh.
- 2 **No of works** : 01 (One) nos as per Annexure.
- 3 **Estimated cost** : Approximately Rs. 790.21 lakhs.
- 4 **Class of Contractor.** : 'Special' and 'Super'
- 5 **Cost of tender paper and mode of deposit.** : Rs. 10,000/- per set. (to be deposited On-line) in favour of concerned Executive Engineer.
- 6 **Mode of submission of tender** : Tender should be submitted only On-line in website www.tendersorissa.gov.in (tendersodisha.gov.in)
- 7 **EMD and mode of deposit** : No. EMD is required but Bid Security declaration should be furnished by the bidders as mentioned in DTCN.
- 8 **Summary of key dates are provided below** :

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding		Last date & time for seeking clarification	Date & Time of opening of tender	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural, Works Circle, Sambalpur	Bridge Tender Online- RWCSBP-48 /2021-22	08.03.2022 at 11.00 AM	22.03.2022 upto 5.00 PM	17.03.2022 upto 1.00 PM	23.03.2022 at 11.00 AM	Will be intimated later

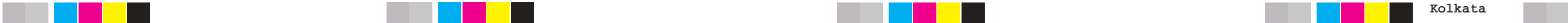
*Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal www.tendersorissa.gov.in (tendersodisha.gov.in)

* Subsequent modification/ corrigendum/ Addendum if required shall appear in website only.

* The amount put to bid is exclusive of GST.

* Bidder should inspect the Bridge site before bidding and quote his rate accordingly.

**Sd/- Chief Construction Engineer
Rural, Works Circle, Sambalpur**
 OIPR-25091/11/0064/2122



An IAF aircraft during a full dress rehearsal of the 'Vayu Shakti 2022' exercise, at the Air Force firing range in Pokhran, Rajasthan, on Friday. The event has, however, been postponed by government, although no reasons were given. *PTI*

Can't curb discussion in academia: High Court to Savarkar biographer

THE DELHI High Court on Friday told historian Vikram Sampath that academics are well within their rights to debate about plagiarism allegations against him and asked him to desist from filing applications every week seeking injunction against them.

"You cannot curtail discussion on the subject in the academic world. Your cause of action is only against the defendants, who are allegedly defaming you, so for that the court has passed an order. But if academicians of the world are

of the view that you had plagiarised or something, you cannot get an injunction against (a) thousand people who are talking about this," Justice Amit Bansal said during the hearing of an application filed by Sampath seeking removal of certain tweets posted by historian Audrey Truschke.

On February 18, the court had restrained Truschke, Ananya Chakrabarti and Rohit Chopra from further publication of their letter accusing historian Sampath of plagiarism with respect to his two-volume biography of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. On February 24, the court directed Twitter to take down Truschke's five tweets.


On Friday, Sampath, through his counsel, told the court that Truschke has now posted an open letter of support by "75+ concerned scholars for Drs. Ananya Chakrabarti, Rohit Chopra, and Audrey Truschke regarding their service to the profession and academic freedom in calling attention to Dr. Vikram Sampath's plagiarism". He sought removal of five more of Truschke's tweets and also blocking of her account in India. However, Justice Bansal observed that there is nothing defamatory in the letter and that there is also nothing wrong in her posting it.

Kerala CPI(M) state bodies infused with new blood

KERALA UNIT of CPI(M) on Friday infused its state committee and state secretariat with some new blood, effecting a decision of the party's central committee to fix 75 as the age limit for the leaders in party bodies. Politburo member Kodyiyeri Balakrishnan was, however, elected as the state secretary for the third consecutive

The restructuring of the state-level bodies comes on the heels of the party's decision in the last year's Assembly elections not to field a leader who had been a legislator for two consecutive terms.

In the new 17-member state secretariat, the only leader aged above 75 is Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. Among the rest of new members, the most conspicuous is the presence of Public Works Department Minister and Vijayan's son-in-




OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER (WATER WORKS)

DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF N.C.T. DELHI

CHANDRAWAL: WATER WORKS NO. II CIVIL LINES: DELHI-54

Office Telephone No.-: 23815504

E-mail: eecplantww.djb@gmail.com



PRESS NIT NO. 47 (Item No. 1, 2 & 3)/(2021-22)

S. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money (Fresh)	Tender Processing Fee (Fresh)	Publication date of tender in e-procurement Solution	Last date & time for receipt of tender from e-procurement solution
1.	Special repair/renewal of Administrative Block at Bawana Water Treatment Plant. (Re-invited) (Tender Id:- 2022_DJB_217905_1)	3791691/-	75900/-	500/-	03.03.2022	16.03.2022
2.	Annual / Special repair of Raw Water Pump House at Haiderpur W.W. Phase-I (Tender Id:- 2022_DJB_217910_1)	2618105/-	52400/-	500/-	03.03.2022	16.03.2022
3.	Annual / Special repair of Filter Houses at Haiderpur Water Works-I. (Tender Id:- 2022_DJB_217911_1)	4809667/-	96200/-	500/-	03.03.2022	16.03.2022

The more details required above can be seen on website www.delhi.govtprocurement.com

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)

Advt. No. J.S.V. 1201(2021-22)

Sd/- (ER. B.L. KURU)

EX. ENGINEER (C) PLANT, WW

C/o CHIEF ENGINEER (WW)

"STOP CORONA: WEAR MASK, FOLLOW PHYSICAL DISTANCING, MAINTAIN HAND HYGIENE"

DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF N.C.T. OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE ADDL. CHIEF ENGINEER (M)-5
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (M)-5

ROOM No. 312, VARUNALAYA PHASE-I JHANEWALAN, DELHI-110005.

PRESS NIT No. 58(2021-22)M-5

S. No	Name of Work	Amount put to tender	E/Money (EMD)	Tender Fee (Non-Refundable)	Date of release of Tender/Tender ID No.	Last Date/ time of receipt of tender
1.	Shifting/replacement of old 12" dia. (300 mm dia.) water line from 150 Double Storey to Anndh Vidhyalaya, New Rajender Nagar under EE(West)-II AC-39 Rajender Nagar (Re-invite)	₹ 37,30,743/-	₹ 74,700/-	₹ 500/-	Dt. 02.03.2022 2022_DJB_217821_1	14.03.2022 Upto 3.00 PM
2.	Improvement of sewerage system by replacing of old sewer line from A Block to H. No. RD-1 in Inder Puri and crossing the nallah by trenchless method to connect into main peripheral sewer line under EE(West)-II Rajender Nagar AC-39 (Re-invite).	₹ 41,10,865/-	₹ 82,300/-	₹ 500/-	Dt. 02.03.2022 2022_DJB_217821_2	14.03.2022 Upto 3.00 PM
3.	New boring of 5 nos. tube wells in Nehru Nagar, Prem Nagar and Putlibji Basti, Anand Parbat AC-24 under AEE Patel Nagar Constituency (Re-invite).	₹ 26,04,192/-	₹ 52,100/-	₹ 500/-	Dt. 02.03.2022 2022_DJB_217821_3	14.03.2022 Upto 3.00 PM
4.	Re-boring of 8 nos. tube wells in Baljeet Nagar, Prem Nagar and Nehru Nagar AC-24 under AEE Patel Nagar Constituency (Re-invite).	₹ 41,43,099/-	₹ 82,900/-	₹ 500/-	Dt. 02.03.2022 2022_DJB_217821_4	14.03.2022 Upto 3.00 PM

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

ISSUED BY P.R.O., (WATER)
Advt. No. J.S.V. 1205(2021-22)

Sd/-
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (T)M-5

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

SC: Protection to former Punjab DGP in future cases 'shocking'

Says will ask CJ to hear Saini's plea himself or assign it to different judge

The Punjab government appealed against the order in SC.

The SC bench, also comprising Justices A S Bopanna and Hima Kohli, said it will request the Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court to himself hear Saini's plea or assign it to a

appearance of a junior engineer, Balwant Singh Multani, in 1991. While the police said Multani had escaped from custody, his family alleged he was abducted from his home by officials operating under the instructions of Saini and tortured while in custody.

law PA Mohammed Riyas, who is now emerging as the Muslim face of the CPI(M) in Kerala, suspended from the party on charges of sexual misconduct, returned to the state committee.

Former MP PK Bijl, former legislator M Swaraj and Vijayan's political secretary Puthalath Dinesan are among the young faces in the state secretariat. Central committee members Thomas Isaac, AK Balan, PK Sreemathi and EP Jayarajan have also made it to the state secretariat, another central committee member Elamaram Kareem was dropped. Riyas and Kareem hail from Kozhikode district.

In the 88-member state committee, the 16 new faces include DYFI leader AA Rahim and SFI leader V P Sanu. Prominent leader P Sasi, who had once been

After getting elected as the state secretary for the third term, Balakrishnan told the media that his name for the post was suggested by Vijayan.

Development Support Agency of Gujarat (D-SAG)
An autonomous Society promoted by Tribal Development
Department, Govt. of Gujarat

Expression of Interest

Development Support Agency of Gujarat (D-SAG) invites Eoi from intending bidders for Impanelment "GPSC Class 1-2 & SPIPA Entrance Exam for Tribal Students." The tender (Eoi) document can be downloaded from the website www.dsag.gujarat.gov.in and www.nprocure.com from 04/03/2022, 15:00 hours onwards.

Important Dates:


Last Date & Time for Submission of Bids	25/03/2022
Technical Bid Opening Date & time	28/03/2022

Interested bidders are requested to download the tender (Eoi) document from the above mentioned websites.

Further details can be obtained from the office of Development Support Agency of Gujarat (D-SAG), Third Floor, Birsu Munda Bhavan, Gandhinagar, Gujarat-382010. Phone: (079) 232-58617.

Sd/-
Chief Executive Officer
Development Support Agency of Gujarat
Gandhinagar

INF/3318/21-22



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER

RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BALASORE

“e” Procurement Notice for Bridge Work

Identification No.- Online Tender- Bridge N.C.B. No. 321

Letter No. 598/WE Date. 03.03.2022

1.	Name of the Work	:- Bridge Works
2.	Total No. of work	:- 1 No. (One)
3.	Estimated Cost	:- Rs. 1067.25 lakhs (Approximately)
4.	Eligible Class of Contractor	:- “Special” Class & “Super” Class (of Odisha P.W.D.) or relevant Class of other licensing authorities (as per annexure).
5.	Period of Completion	:- 18 (Eighteen) Calendar months for the work
6.	Other details	:-

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender On-line for bidding		Last Date & Time of seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O/C C.E.R.W. Circle, Balasore	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Balasore	N.C.B. No.- 321	07.03.2022 at 11:00 A.M	22.03.2022 Up to 5:00 P.M	21.03.2022 Up to 5:00 P.M	23.03.2022 at 11:00 A.M.	Will be intimated later.

● Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in

Sd/- E. S.K. Mishra
**Chief Construction Engineer,
R.W. Circle, Balasore**
OIPR-25105/11/0037/2122



UP IN THE AIR

SP supporters hold up a cycle, the party symbol, during a rally addressed by Akhilesh Yadav in Varanasi on Friday. *Reuters*

Funds at centre of Cong's bribery charge against BJP

JIMMY LEIVON
IMPHAL, MARCH 4

SENIOR CONGRESS leader and AICC observer for Manipur Jairam Ramesh has accused the BJP government in the state of influencing voters by releasing funds to Kuki militant groups under the Suspension of Operation (SoO) agreement.

Ramesh said Rs 15.70 crore was released on February 1 and another Rs 92.65 lakh on March 1. "This is a complete violation of the model code of conduct and nothing more than bribery and corruption," he said, adding that this meant elections in Churachandpur and Kangpokpi districts in the first phase held on February 28 were not "free and fair", as the Kuki groups had announced support for the BJP, and that payments to SoO groups would influence elections in Tengnoupal and Chandel districts in the second phase on March 5.

The Chief Electoral Officer, Manipur, said it had found no violation. It said the Home Department and Finance Department had clarified that Rs 15.70 crore was released as stipend for SoO groups, as part of a programme since 2008, and that Rs 92.6 lakh was paid as financial benefit to surrendered militants.

The pact

There are nearly 30 Kuki insurgent groups in Manipur and 25 groups are under an SoO pact

with the Centre and state government. Seventeen of them are part of the umbrella Kuki National Organisation (KNO), and eight of the United People's Front (UPF).

The SoO pact was signed on August 22, 2008, with the aim of initiating political dialogue. Talks are ongoing, with A B Mathur, former special secretary of R&AW, the interlocutor. The Kuki outfits which were initially demanding a separate Kuki state have settled for a 'territorial council'.

Terms of SoO

While the period of SoO agreement is one year, it is extendable. Under the pact, security forces and underground groups will not launch any operations.

The signatories of the UPF and KNO are required to abide by the Constitution and the territorial integrity of Manipur. They are prohibited from committing "atrocities, extortion", and confined to camps identified by the government. Their arms are deposited in safe keeping, with weapons given to them only to guard camps and protect leaders.

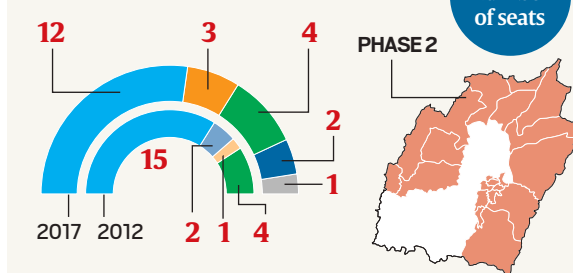
As part of the rehabilitation package, the cadres living in the designated camps are given a monthly stipend of Rs 5,000.

Political stand

The KNO and UPF have both announced support for BJP candidates, citing the announcement by Union Home Minister Amit Shah to end the Kuki insurgency problem if voted to power.

MANIPUR 2nd PHASE

Congress BJP NPF NPP
MSCP TMC Independent



PROMINENT BATTLES

Thoubal
(Cong's Okram Ibobi Singh vs BJP's Leitanthem Basanta)

Heirok
(BJP's Th Radheshyam vs Cong's M Okrendro)

92 CANDIDATES | 8.47 lakh VOTERS

PROMINENT CANDIDATES

Okram Ibobi Singh
(Cong) Thoubal
Y Antash Khan (BJP) Lilong
SS Olish (BJP) Chandel
Th Radheshyam (BJP) Heirok
Alfred Kangam Arthur (INC) Ukhrul

Hills vs valley: In Manipur, new bridges across old divides

TORA AGARWALA
& JIMMY LEIVON
UKHRUL, MARCH 4

IN MAY 2017, just two months after he became chief minister, N Biren Singh inaugurated the five-day-long 'Shirui Lily Festival' in Manipur's Ukhrul district. On the face of it, the festival was dedicated to conserving a rare, endangered flower. But in the Tangkhul Naga hills of Ukhrul, it meant much more.

"For the first time, there were so many Meiteis from the valley here in Ukhrul," says R Kasar, a student leader.

Relationship between the Imphal valley, the seat of government in the state, and Manipur's tribal hill areas has always been strained. The hills lag on various development parameters, and blame it on years of neglect by the state.

During the Okram Ibobi Singh-led Congress government of 15 years, this gap seemed to widen. Besides the Inner Line Permit demand raised by Meiteis and the government's bid to bring three contentious "anti-tribal" Bills in 2015, the creation of seven new districts in the hill areas had caused tension, including in the Kuki-Paitei-dominated Churachandpur hills.

Ibobi's firm stance on the territorial integrity of Manipur came into conflict with the Naga demand of a homeland. So antagonistic was this relationship that, ahead of the 2017 elections, Ibobi was not allowed to enter Ukhrul.

One of the first announcements by the Biren government was upgradation of the village-level Shirui Festival to an extravagant one, sponsored by the Department of Tourism. On May 12, days before the festival, the CM tweeted: "I am going, are you?"



Change can only come gradually: Biren Singh

The significance was not lost on anyone, as Biren, a Meitei, donned Tangkhul Naga headgear for the festival inauguration, and spoke of the importance of communitarian bonds and equal development.

Over the next year, Biren made it a point to hold Cabinet meetings in hill districts. In May 2018, his hill-valley reconcilia-

tion project was dubbed 'Go To Hills', with the agenda being to "reach out to citizens at their doorstep".

"It gave us hope," says Kasar. Ahead of the second phase of the Manipur election – which covers a majority of the hill districts, including Ukhrul, Senapati, Chandel – it is this hope that Biren and the BJP are banking on.

But the campaign's impact on the ground remains ambiguous. At Ukhrul's Pettigrew College, the only government college in the district, a teacher derides 'Go To Hills' as an "eye-wash". "Ours is the second-oldest government college in Manipur (set up around 50 years ago). But it is in a shambles... There is shortage of everything, classrooms, water," she says.

Even Kasar feels that the government campaign turned out to be "nothing more than offi-

cials handing out forms for old age pension, Aadhaar etc".

The Congress's sitting MLA and candidate from Ukhrul constituency, Alfred K Arthur, says the BJP government had not done anything "specifically" for the hills. "Whatever they did for the valley, they gave something out of that to the hills," he says. "There is no real development, nor power with the hills."

For long, the hills have complained about the lack of executive powers with the Autonomous District Councils (ADCs). In August 2021, the hill areas committee – represented by 18 legislators from the hill districts, across party lines – sought repeal of the Manipur (Hill Areas) District Council Act, 1971, and introduction of the ADC Bill to "provide more autonomy". The Biren government never tabled the Bill.

In remote Kamjong district's

Phungyar constituency, bordering Myanmar, a social worker describes the BJP initiative as "a start, but not enough". "Yes, there has been improvement in roads, but that's more because our local MLA, Leishiyoi Keishing, (from the Naga People's Front) has been active," he says.

However, he feels, the BJP has a good chance.

The other factor in the BJP's favour, he says, is its alliance with the NPF. "The last five years have been peaceful, no bandhs and blockades, because the NPF, which is popular with the Nagas, did the troubleshooting in the hills," he says.

Biren concedes there is a long way to go "development-wise" in the hills. But, he told *The Indian Express*, the BJP government tried, "step by step". Change can only come gradually, he said, adding: "Look how bandhs and blockades have stopped..."

VOICES FROM AN AZAMGARH COLLEGE

Need women in politics, progress without bias, say first-time voters

ASAD REHMAN
AZAMGARH, MARCH 4

MINUTES BEFORE their 3 pm class, a group of girls walk up to a small room on the first floor of the Mirza Study Centre near the Shibli intersection in Azamgarh. All of them are second-year BSc students of the 19th Century Shibli National College – and first-time voters in the Azamgarh Assembly constituency, which votes in the last phase of the Uttar Pradesh elections on March 7.

The conversation veers round to the elections before settling on 'education' and 'development' – the two issues on which most of the students have an opinion.

"If the youth are educated, they can ensure a bright future for the country. Development will happen only if education is affordable for all," says Arisha Jamali, 19, who wants to become a teacher.

Her friend Sanubi Imtiaz, who hopes to become a doctor, adds the government should focus on healthcare. "All of us saw what happened during Covid. Our healthcare sector was completely exposed; it failed to save the lives of common people," she says.

Sanubi says it's important for the country to have women in politics. "The SP has done a lot for students but I disagree with Akhilesh Yadav's caste politics. In the future, if a better alternative emerges with a party led by a woman, I will change my preference. Between the AIMIM and BJP, Akhilesh seems to be a good middle ground for the state. He is neither staunchly Muslim, nor is



At Mirza Study Centre near Shibli College. *Asad Rehman*

he Hindutva wadi like the BJP. If he comes to power, he will ensure development for all. Just because I am Muslim, I can't just think of development only for Muslims. Development should reach everyone irrespective of caste and religion," she says.

It's on this count, they say, that the BJP government has fallen short. "The party is actively working to end secularism in the country. They only talk about Muslims. The CM says 'March 10 ke baad dekh lenge'. Then he talks about 80 vs 20. He is saying all this because he can't win an election without targeting the Muslim community," says Sadaf Siddiqui.

In the 2017 polls, the SP had won five out of 10 seats in Azamgarh, the BSP four and the BJP one seat. In 2012, SP won nine seats and the BSP won one.

This time the SP has fielded Durga Prasad Yadav, the eight-time MLA from Azamgarh Sadar, the constituency of which Shibli College is a part. The BSP's Sushil Kumar Singh and the Congress's

Praveen Kumar Singh are both first-timers. The BJP has fielded Akhilesh Mishra, the runner-up in 2017 who lost to Durga Prasad Yadav by 26,262 votes.

Asked about the Congress's decision to reserve 40 per cent tickets for women, Aliza Raees, who wants to join politics, says, "I really like Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. But the Congress was late to arrive on the scene. How many times has Priyanka visited Azamgarh before the elections?"

As the conversation shifts to the hijab row, Arisha says, "The hijab is our personal choice and an essential part of our religion. How can we take it off because someone else has a problem? Will Yogiji stop wearing saffron clothes or will Modiji stop wearing his tika if we object to it? We won't and he shouldn't. That is his choice and this is ours."

Aliza says the BJP will not stop at the hijab. "They will keep finding new subjects to keep people busy and to shift the attention from development, inflation and unemployment."

JOBS SEARCH

Near Ram temple, even part of manifesto: coaching centres for naukri

SHYAMLAL YADAV
LUCKNOW, RAE BARELI,
AYODHYA, MARCH 4

DEVOTEES LINING up for *darshan* of Ram lalla, and monkeys looking for a share of the offerings, are not the only ubiquitous sight around the Ram Janmaboomi at Ayodhya. So are students. Along the road leading to the site of the under-construction Ram temple are nearly a dozen coaching centres – the earthly portals to a more-accessible salvation, a government job.

Even the BJP realises this. In February 2021, the Yogi Adityanath government started the much-publicised Abhyuday Coaching programme for gov-

ernment job aspirants. The party has promised in its Sankalp Patra (manifesto) this time that under the Abhyuday Yojna, its government would provide free coaching for UPSC, UPPSC, NDA, CDS, JEE, NCERT, TET, CLAT and other competitive examinations. Across UP, coaching centres also prepare students for B.Ed as well as government jobs of Group-C and Group-D like revenue lekhpal, police constables, lower rank recruitment for the Army.

On February 25, 2022, the UP government's Directorate of Social Welfare held a review meeting of the scheme, where it was noted that "Abhyuday Yojna was supposed to start in every district, but so far it has started in all districts of Moradabad divi-

sion and all divisional headquarters". Officials were directed at this meeting to start the scheme in every district, sources told *The Indian Express*.

At 'Ayodhya Academy', Pushpendra Shukla is holding coaching for around a dozen aspirants on "one-day examinations" (recruitment involving a single test unlike Civil Services, for example). "The fact is there is so much competition that without proper coaching, it is almost impossible to clear an examination," Shukla says.

Ramesh Yadav, the owner of another coaching centre on the same road, Reewansh Classes, says: "Most of the students come to us from nearby districts and from very low strata of society,



At a coaching centre in Ayodhya. *Shyamlal Yadav*

They have only their dreams with them. They even bring *ata*, *dal*, *chawal* from home and just spend a few thousand on room rent and coaching fees."

The big coaching centres based largely in cities and focusing on Civil Services charge nearly Rs 1 lakh to Rs 1.80 lakh a student per year. The small ones are happy with Rs 1,000 a month, for coaching in "one day examinations". For TET, B.Ed entrance and other exams, they offer packages of a few months. Most of the teachers are either those who are unsuccessful after several tries in such examinations or are regular teachers, hired from nearby institutions.

Vijay Singh of Dhyeya IAS Academy, which has its centres

in cities such as Lucknow, Prayagraj and Gorakhpur, says: "We are doing a job which our universities and colleges should do. If they did their job properly, no coaching would be needed. Universities are giving just degrees, we are giving what students need to get a job."

Chand Ahmad, who runs Shree Gurudev Institute in Rae Bareilly, says: "Most of our students are aspirants for TET (Teacher Eligibility Test) and Super-TET." They include Vartika Singh, who says that for women like her, "Teaching is the safest job."

Institutes also offer coaching in 'Personality Test' for Civil Services examination, like Vijay Pandey's at Prayagraj. He says following the Covid lockdown and job losses,

there is a leap in demand for government employment.

Ankush Singh, 19, enrolled at an Ayodhya centre for coaching for Staff Selection Commission exams, says he dropped out of graduation to prepare for the entrance. One among four siblings, Ankush belongs to Dhanauli in Gonda district, 42 km away. His stay in Ayodhya costs Rs 4,000 a month, a steep price for his farmer father, with no one in the family in a job.

"It is easy to say start a venture," Ankush says, in a reference to the government's push for self-employment. "You need time and money to get or start anything. I don't have money... A *naukri* is the only hope for me. I have come here after I gave up hope for Army recruitment."



Indians who returned from Ukraine at the Hindon IAF Airbase in Ghaziabad on Friday. Prem Nath Pandey

‘Was nearly impossible to leave...we were scared we would die’

ABHINAYA HARIGOVIND
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

SPENDING DAYS in crowded bunkers with little or no food, walking for kilometres in sub-zero temperatures as they struggled to catch trains out of Kharkiv, waiting for hours at the borders — for Indian students who returned to Delhi from the war-ravaged city of Kharkiv in eastern Ukraine on Friday, travelling across the country to western Ukraine, and crossing the borders into Poland and Hungary, was a journey they found to be near impossible.

Priyanka Goyal, a fourth-year student at the Kharkiv National Medical University, said she left

the city, with a few others, on March 1, a day before the Indian Embassy advised all Indian nationals in Kharkiv to leave immediately. “We left on our own, and knew that we had to take care of ourselves. After a 24-hour train journey, we reached Lviv,” she said. Lviv is in the western part of the country.

“The temperature was -5 degrees Celsius, and we had to wait at Lviv for a bus for about 5-6 hours. It was crowded and buses were difficult to find,” said Priyanka, who finally made it to the border with Hungary.

“The embassy issued an advisory. I understand it must have been difficult for them too, but expecting us to travel from the

east to the west... It was nearly impossible to leave,” said Priyanka, who is from Kaithal, Haryana, and arrived on an evacuation flight from Budapest.

Shubh Madan, a third-year student in Kharkiv, who is from Moga, Punjab, arrived from Rzeszow in Poland on Friday morning. Shubh said she stayed at a metro station for two days, before the city was attacked. “When the city was attacked, the metro station was closed and we had to move to a bunker. The bunkers are crowded and suffocating. We left on Tuesday morning, walking around 7 km to reach the railway station, since cabs were either difficult to find or expensive. When we were at the railway station, we

heard the bombardment outside. We were scared that we would die at the station,” she said.

She said the group of 40 -50 students she travelled with took a train to Lviv from Kharkiv. “We somehow arranged a bus on our own from Lviv to the border with Poland. We reached the border at 1 pm, but our turn to cross over came only at around 7 pm. They were letting only 30 to 40 people pass at a time, and they gave priority to people with Ukrainian passports. When our turn came, we waited another four hours for the immigration process,” she said.

Both Priyanka and Shubh said their problems eased after crossing the border. “We were taken to a hotel about 125 km

from the border. Mattresses and food were made available, and registrations were done for evacuation flights,” Shubh said.

Anirudh, a second-year student at the Kharkiv National Medical University, also arrived from Poland. “We spent a few days in a bunker, and went two days without food. Our friends are still in Kharkiv... The train journey from Kharkiv to Lviv, which would normally take 11 hours, took 24 hours. Trains were all running slowly, with their lights off. There was no help in the war zone. However, once we crossed the Poland border, we were received very well,” said Anirudh, who is from Saharanpur.

For Govind, a fifth-year stu-

dent in Odessa, in the southern part of the country, crossing the border into Hungary was a grueling process that took days. “I took the train from Odessa on February 26, and reached the border, but was not able to cross. I spent three to four days at the border, on the street with my luggage,” he said. Though a curfew had been imposed in Odessa, the situation was not as bad as it is in Kharkiv, he said.

According to a PTI report, the Civil Aviation Ministry said in a statement that 14 civilian and three IAF flights brought back 3,772 Indians on Friday. “One more civilian flight is expected to arrive later in the day (Friday),” it said.

Indian trying to flee Kyiv in cab injured in shooting



Harjot Singh's father, Kesar Singh (centre), at his home in New Delhi on Friday. Abhinav Saha

ANAND MOHAN J
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

A 30-YEAR-OLD Indian pursuing a language course at an university in Kyiv suffered bullet injuries while trying to flee the war-torn Ukrainian capital in a cab, his family members said on Friday.

Harjot Singh sustained bullet injuries in his leg and chest and is recuperating at Kyiv City Hospital, they said, and pleaded with the Indian authorities to help him evacuate from Ukraine.

“He is really scared and the constant shelling in the city has made things worse. He fears a strike at the hospital will kill him. I plead with Russia and Ukraine to please stop this war. Help the students leave the country,” Harjot’s father Kesar Singh, 66, told *The Indian Express*.

He said the family, which lives in south Delhi’s Chattarpur area, has been in touch with Harjot daily through video calls.

According to the family, Harjot, a first-year student at International European University, was fired upon on February 27. He had booked a cab to Lviv for US \$1,000 along with three other foreign students after local authorities allegedly did not allow him to board a train out of Kyiv, his family members said.

They shared a text message Harjot sent from hospital: “I was going to Lviv city by car in Ukraine. But in the middle of the way, I was attacked and I was shot at. The ambulance brought me to the hospital. Now I am in Kyiv city. About 20 minutes away from the Indian embassy, I want you (to) help.”

In a video interview to news agency ANI, Harjot said the cab crossed two checkpoints on the way but at the third checkpoint they were stopped and asked to return the next day. “We returned from there as the local authorities cited security reasons. As I reached

Kyiv city, a bullet whizzed past the car window. We all ducked inside the car. Three-four people were firing at us continuously from the front and other people from the roof of a building. They had AK-47s,” Harjot said.

He said after the firing stopped, he opened the car door and lay on the ground before falling unconscious. “Two bullets hit me in my left knee. Another bullet ripped through my right leg. Another bullet entered my chest from the shoulder area,” he said. When he regained consciousness in hospital, he said, “The doctors told me that I was lying on the street for 3 or 4 hours. I had lost a lot of blood.”

Harjot pleaded with the Indian embassy to help evacuate him. “This is a new life. I want to go back

to India and spend this new life with my family. I tried to contact the embassy but they have already moved on from there to Lviv. I have not got any support till now. The authorities keep telling me they

will do something. Trying and doing are two separate things...”

His family told *The Indian Express* there was no word on Harjot for four days after he was shot at. “For four days, we looked into Harjot’s social media accounts and found out all his friends. We made contact with each of them. Then we stayed glued to the news for days waiting for a word on him. We were told that no Indian student has been left behind in Kyiv, but my brother and several other students are stuck in the city,” said his elder brother Prabhjot Singh.

Harjot finally managed to contact his family after his doctor helped with the phone call.

“My son should not have been caught in this situation. We feel so helpless,” said Parkash Kaur, 58, of her youngest of three children. “The government is asking the students to find their way to the border areas. How will they leave a war zone?”



Maharashtra plans to reach out to Ukraine universities directly

PALLAVISMART
MUMBAI, MARCH 4

MAINTAINING THAT the Maharashtra government is exploring options to help medical students returning to the state from Ukraine, state Medical Education Minister Amit Deshmukh said on Friday that directly dealing with Ukrainian universities to explore such options is within the powers of state universities but they would need the help of the National Medical Council (NMC) and the Union government to expedite the process.

The statement comes days after a circular of the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS) sought details of students who were pursuing medical courses in Ukraine and are now returning home to the state.

“The plan is to see if something like stopgap support can be extended, provided Ukrainian universities are okay with it. I have advised the vice-chancellor of MUHS to reach out to Ukrainian universities to understand what they are thinking about these students who are returning. Whether they are going to take a break and

restart again or they are going to go for online medium of teaching... what happens to their examinations, if any, how will they finish the curriculum or semester and other nitty-gritty.”

“Unless we engage with them, we won’t know what help we can extend. I think we can understand what kind of support they need, said Deshmukh.

Currently, the process is to reach out to the students and their parents to not only provide them moral support but also to understand what kind of support they need, said Deshmukh.

Asked if the state government will require approval from the NMC or the Union government in this case, considering this is an international matter, Deshmukh said: “As far as university-level issues are concerned, I think we can directly deal with the Ukrainian universities. We are also going to update the NMC and the Union health ministry to seek their advice. We would require help from the NMC and the Union government to expedite this or may be recommend what we are doing so that it carries more weight.”

Medical students home, but their future still clouded by uncertainty

KAUNAIN SHERIFF M
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

WITH THOUSANDS of medical students returning to India from war-torn Ukraine, there is a certain level of uncertainty over the completion of their course. Currently, the Centre has no plan to make special relaxations so that the students can complete their MBBS degree without prolonging the course’s duration, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

Well-placed government sources said going by the statutory regulations applicable on medical students graduating from foreign varsities, there is a buffer of around two years to complete the course. “Hence, the students returning from Ukraine have little to worry about as of now,” sources cited above said.

India is currently carrying out Operation Ganga to bring back its citizens, mainly medical students, stranded in Ukraine. The Ministry of External Affairs on Thursday said that the number of people who have left Ukraine since advisories for evacuation were issued stood at nearly 18,000.

The National Medical Commission (NMC) does not recognise or approve medical



Students evacuated from Ukraine with their relatives at Gandhinagar, Friday. Nirmal Harindran

courses completed through on-line mode. According to its statutory regulations, a medical course from a foreign university has to be completed within 10 years from the date of enrolment.

Also, the regulations don’t allow such students’ migration to a medical college in India for internships or examination. The regulations clearly state that the “MBBS course, training, and internship throughout the course should be done from the same foreign medical institution”.

For the medical graduates,

the regulations mandate completion of a supervised 12-month internship in India.

Sources said at this juncture, there is no proposal to make changes to any of the rules for medical students returning from Ukraine because they have sufficient time to complete the course.

“The MBBS course in Ukraine takes five-and-half years. A student has to complete a 12-month internship in Ukraine and a similar one in India. So, a student normally completes the degree in 7.5 years. Hence, the final

year students still have buffer of two years,” sources said.

Significantly, a large number of international students, including those from India, couldn’t return to China to continue their MBBS degree due to the Covid-19 restrictions imposed there. Chinese authorities had conveyed earlier that the course will be completed online. However, on February 8, the NMC objected to this, reiterating that the regulator does not recognise or approve online mode for medical education.

Stuck in Sumy, hope fading fast: ‘We had to boil ice to get water — even for drinking’

JAYPRAKASH SNAIDU
MUMBAI, MARCH 4

“WE HAVE given up on all hope of being rescued. At times, I feel the Indian government is giving us false hopes — the Indian Embassy tells us they will rescue us but has not given us a time-frame. I feel hopeless... After yesterday’s blast, water supply got discontinued in different parts of Sumy, including our college hostel. We boiled ice to get water — even for drinking,” Mayuri Aher, a student stranded in Sumy, in northeast Ukraine, said Friday night.

Aher told *The Indian Express* that the embassy has stopped taking their calls: “The health of some students with underlying conditions is getting affected.” More than 800 medical stu-



A grab from a video by students stranded in Sumy.

dents of Sumy university, meanwhile, made a desperate appeal to the government and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, pleading to be rescued from the war-hit region — or, they said, they will be “killed”.

In the video, one student, Mehtab, said: “There are about 800 students in different hostels

in the college. There was a huge blast yesterday night after which water supply got discontinued. We have been hungry and thirsty since last night. No food...no water is left to drink. We cannot self-evacuate and need the intervention of the Indian government. There are people roaming outside with firearms; there could be an

air attack or firing if we try to leave on our own.”

In sub-zero temperature, Mehtab said in the video, “we cannot leave from the western border, as we will have to pass through Kyiv or Kharkiv, which are under attack. We have heard news of people being attacked while trying to escape from Kyiv and Kharkiv; we have heard buses are arranged for us at the Russian border, which is nearby, but we cannot reach there. We need the government to escort us.”

Another video showed students accumulating ice in bags and collecting drops of icy water falling off trees for drinking.

Back in Mumbai, a group of students who escaped from Kyiv and Kharkiv on March 1 and took a flight from Hungary, said they saw rockets flying over their

heads and explosions from their apartment windows. They appealed to the government to rescue thousands of hundreds still stuck in eastern Ukraine.

Raminder Pal Singh, 23, from Chandigarh, a fifth-year medical student in Kyiv, said the Indian government did not help in their evacuation in Kyiv. “Help came only after we reached the border,” Singh said. “Many are still stuck in Kyiv; I request the government to rescue them. I was lucky that I am able to speak Russian, which helped me communicate with Ukrainians.”

After waiting 12 hours at Kyiv railway station, Singh said, an official there helped his group get on to a train out of Kyiv on March 1. Initially, he said, they were not allowed to board the train, as local residents got preference.

SC pat for govt evacuation efforts, but ‘concerned about those stuck’

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

APPRECIATING THE government’s efforts in evacuating Indians from Ukraine, the Supreme Court on Friday said it is at the same time “concerned about the anxiety” of students there and asked the Centre to consider setting up an “online helpline” to help parents and families of those stranded.

Hearing petitions seeking evacuation of students from the war zone, Chief Justice of India NV Ramana referred to the ongoing rescue efforts and said, “We are not saying anything about the efforts which you are taking. We appreciate that... But at the same time, we are also concerned about the anxiety of the children...”

Conveying his disillusionment over the developments in Ukraine, the CJI said, “It’s unfortunate we haven’t learnt from

past situations of wars, etc. We don’t have much say in this. But the anxiety is about students.”

The bench, also comprising Justices A S Bopanna and Hima Kohli, told Attorney General K K Venugopal, who represented the government, that “you can keep an online helpline or something so the parents and families must know where they are, and what is the position and all”. The court pointed out that “some state governments are doing at state bhawans. They are trying to contact children and trying to get...back (those stranded)”.

Leaving it to the government to take a call, the bench said, “You work out something...we won’t pass any orders. We will keep the matter”.

Assuring the court that the suggestion will be looked into, Venugopal said that “the government of India is as concerned as your Lordships” about the students.

On Thursday, the court had referred a plea by a medical student — Fathima Ahana from Bengaluru, who said she and several others were stuck on the Ukraine side of the border with Romania, as they were not being allowed to cross over into Romania — to the A-G and asked him to see whether he can use his good offices to render any help.

On Friday, Venugopal told the bench: “The concern was communicated to Shri P K Mishra (Prime Minister’s Principal Secretary). He communicated that to Shri Scindia (Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia), the person in charge in Romania, and the telephone number of Fatima Ahana was also given...She is now in Romania. I expect that she and the persons accompanying her — the other college students — will come back by tonight.” The bench thanked him for taking personal interest in the matter.



GOLD

₹51,863



RUPEE

₹76.17



OIL

\$117.39



SILVER

₹67,996

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of March 3

MONETARY POLICY ART OF MANAGING EXPECTATIONS, SAYS RBI GOVERNOR

Central banks in a bind, geopolitical situations aggravate dilemmas: Das

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
MUMBAI, MARCH 4

RESERVE BANK of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das on Friday said central banks are in a bind as the recent geopolitical developments — the Russian invasion of Ukraine — have further aggravated the challenges and dilemmas for them.

“Central banks are in a bind — if they act aggressively to contain inflation which may perhaps subside as normalcy returns, they run the risk of setting in recession,” Das said. On the other hand, if they act too little and too late, they may be blamed for “falling behind the curve” and may have to do a lot of catching up later which will be detrimental to growth, Das said while delivering his speech at the National Defence College.

He said the current global conditions, after about two years of living through the pandemic, are now posing complex challenges for central bank communication.

The RBI kept the repo rate un-

SHAKTIKANTA DAS
Governor, Reserve Bank of India File

changed for the tenth time in a row at 4 per cent and retained the accommodative policy stance in the February policy review. With inflation now crossing the 6 per cent level and threatening to rise further, several analysts are now arguing that the RBI faces the risk of “falling behind the curve” if the accommodative policy is not changed.

Meanwhile, financial markets have turned extremely volatile as they have been left grappling with heightened uncertainty over the pace of future monetary policy normalisation. Amidst these un-



certainties, central banks have to find the optimal grounds with attendant communication challenges, he said. “A number of economies, including the major ones, are facing multi-decadal high inflation due to supply disruptions, tighter labour markets, fragility of the just in time inventory management and geo-political disturbances,” he said.

Das said monetary policy is an art of managing expectations and central banks have to make continual efforts to shape and anchor market expectations.

As monetary policy is an art of

managing expectations, central banks have to make continual efforts to shape and anchor market expectations, not just through pronouncements and actions but also through a constant refinement of their communication strategies to ensure the desired societal outcomes he said.

According to him, there is no last word yet on what constitutes the best practice of monetary policy. The conduct of monetary policy has undergone notable changes both in India and across the world as economies and markets evolved and policymakers gained greater insights into how economic agents interact in a complex economic system, he said.

Globally, the evolution of monetary policy has swung from being more directive and discretionary to a strict rule-based regime, before settling to the current consensus for a pragmatic mix of rules and discretion. “In this process, communication has gained importance although it works both ways — while too much of communication can con-

fuse the market, too little may keep it guessing about the central bank’s policy intent,” he said.

“Recalibrating the pandemic time policy path, as and when the situation warrants, would present its own share of communication challenges,” he said. For RBI’s crisis measures announced with pre-specified terminal dates, market expectations remained anchored and communication challenges were minimal when these measures got automatically withdrawn.

On the other hand, measures or unwinding of open-ended policies, as and when they happen, would require careful, nuanced and measured communication as in such instances, the expectations of certain segments of the market may not be in sync with that of the central bank’s assessment, Das said. He said the RBI has been different from other central banks in our pandemic response. “We have undertaken unconventional measures even before exhausting the conventional policy space — i.e., even before reaching the zero lower bound of interest rates.”

INTERVIEW WITH MEMBER, RBI’S MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE

‘Policymakers should not pretend to have a crystal ball; be ready to adapt’



Jayanth Varma via IIM-A website

JAYANTH VARMA, Member of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), who has been opposing the central bank’s accommodative policy stance, said the “stance carries with it the risk of falling behind the curve in future because the stance limits the MPC’s freedom of action in ensuring meetings”. In a conversation with GEORGE MATHEW, Varma, professor of finance and accounting, IIM Ahmedabad, said, “We should have our hands on the trigger, ready to act if the need arises ... and policymakers must recognise that reality may not unfold according to their expectations.” Edited excerpts:

The situation has changed after the last monetary policy review in February. How serious is the inflation threat, considering the fact that crude oil prices have shot up, commodity prices are expected to remain high and many nations have imposed sanctions on Russia?

My view is that the Ukraine situation is a threat to both growth and inflation. While you have emphasised the inflation shock, the growth shock should not be ignored. Some countries in Western Europe might actually tip into recession, and India too could face headwinds particularly (but not only) in terms of exports. We do not know how long lasting and how severe these two shocks would be.

What will be the impact of Russian invasion of Ukraine on the Indian economy? If the conflict gets prolonged, what will be the impact?

I do not have a crystal ball, and I strongly believe that policymakers should not pretend that they have a crystal ball. Monetary policy makers must (a) proceed with

humility, (b) recognise that reality may not unfold according to their expectations, and (c) stand ready to adapt rapidly to changing conditions. Above all, they should avoid making commitments that restrict their freedom of future action.

Do you think the RBI’s policy of focussing on growth and low interest rates will boomerang at a later stage in the wake of the latest global developments? Do you think the central bank is not doing enough to check inflation?

I reiterate that regard the current level of the policy rate as appropriate, given the twin challenges of sub-par economic growth and above-target inflation. I think the MPC should do more to communicate its resolve to defend the inflation target, and its willingness to raise rates as and when required.

Do you think the RBI has fallen behind the curve in its policy actions, especially on the inflation front?

No. My concern is that the accommodative stance carries with it the risk of falling behind the curve in future

because the stance limits the MPC’s freedom of action in ensuring meetings.

Do you see the possibility of retail inflation breaching the 7-per cent level?

This possibility is nothing new; it is recognised in the minutes of the February MPC meeting. The fan chart (Chart 1 in the policy statement) shows the 70 per cent confidence interval is within shouting distance of 7 per cent. The width of the fan chart was the focus of my dissent in that meet.

Do you think it’s time for the RBI to change the accommodative stance and hike policy rates like repo and reverse repo to tackle inflation? What should the RBI do now?

I have argued in my successive dissents for many months now that a change in the accommodative stance is long overdue. At the same time, I do not think the time has come to raise the repo rate. My position is not that we should pull the trigger now, but that we should have our hands on the trigger, ready to act if the need arises.

Do you think there’s a case for the RBI’s MPC to act before the next policy review in April?

It’s premature for the MPC to act now. The situation is still fluid. We have to wait and watch the developments in Ukraine.

Full interview on www.indianexpress.com

War impact: Rupee breaches 76, Sensex down 5% since Feb 24

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
MUMBAI, MARCH 4

DOMESTIC STOCK markets on Friday fell by another 1.4 per cent as the Russian offensive on Ukraine intensified, with an attack on a nuclear plant reinforcing fears of an environmental catastrophe compounding the humanitarian crisis that is already happening. The Sensex, which plunged over 1,200 points intra-day recovered partially to close down by another 769 points at 54,333.81 and the Nifty50 plummeted 253 points to 16,245.35 on sustained selling.

The rupee slumped 23 paise to breach the 76 level before closing at 76.17 against the US dollar on Friday as investors assessed the global economic impact of the Ukraine conflict. Sustained foreign fund outflows too weighed on the local unit, forex traders said.

The Sensex has now fallen 2,899 points, or 5 per cent, since February 24 when the Russian invasion started.

Meanwhile, as per a Reuters report, the London Stock Exchange suspended trading in its last Russian securities and some insurers withdrew cover from exporters over Moscow’s in-

EXPLAINED
FPI outflows
ALL SECTORS, barring IT, ended lower with auto, metals and realty becoming the top losers. Sustained foreign fund outflows weighed on sentiment.

vasion of Ukraine.

Global markets tank

The war in Ukraine overshadowed a strong US jobs report that the economy added 678,000 last month as the euro plunged on expectations of slower European growth. The STOXX index of 600 European firms sank 2.5 per cent. On Wall Street, at 1:43 pm ET, the Dow was down 283.77 points, or 0.84 per cent, at 33,510.89.

Crude oil rallies 4%

Brent rose \$4.7, or 4.2 per cent, to \$115.17 a barrel by 1:35 pm ET. Member states of the International Energy Agency have finalised their contributions to a 60 million barrel oil release announced this week to buoy prices, the IEA said.

‘Russia-Ukraine conflict to further worsen chip shortage’

The Ukraine war can hit supply chains and the worst impact will be on the chip shortage, said a Moody’s Analytics report

RUSSIA CONTROLS as much as 44 per cent of global palladium supplies, Ukraine produces a significant 70 per cent of the global supply of neon — the key raw materials that go into making chips

THOUGH CHIP making firms have stockpiled resources since the 2015 shortage, if a deal is not brokered soon, the chip shortage will get worse Source: Moody’s/PTI



Shelling in Kyiv. Reuters

Industries, like automakers, phonemakers, and others are increasingly reliant on chips for their products to work

LIC IPO timing to hinge on how mkt behaves: Pandey

New Delhi: The government would closely observe the market before taking call on the timing of the initial public offer of Life Insurance Corporation, Department of Investment and Public Asset Management Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey said on Friday.

The statement came amid heightened uncertainty over whether the mega issue would hit the market in the current fiscal as was planned before the unforeseen event of Russia-Ukraine

war. Speaking at an event organised by the Competition Commission of India, Pandey vowed to “keep the best interest of the investors and stakeholders in mind”, but hinted that the current dynamic situation might require a change in the timing of the issue.

“That (to come out with the IPO by March-end) has always been our desire, but now with this crisis (Russia-Ukraine) ... we have to be watchful and make our strategy accordingly,” FE

BRIEFLY

PV retail sales

New Delhi: Domestic passenger vehicle retail sales declined eight per cent in February as the companies continued to suffer production loss due to chip shortage, automobile dealers’ body FADA said on Friday.

Jet CEO

Mumbai: Jet Airways on Friday announced the appointment of Sanjiv Kapoor as the CEO. PTI

Sony, Honda EV

Tokyo: Sony Corp and Honda Motor Co Ltd said on Friday they would pair up to develop and sell battery-powered electric vehicles, adding they were open to bringing in other partners. REUTERS

CCI probe

New Delhi: The Competition Commission has directed its investigation arm to initiate a probe into alleged abuse of dominant position by Star India Pvt Ltd. Meanwhile, it disposed of a complaint alleging unfair business practices by Amazon Seller Services Pvt Ltd and certain other related entities, saying that the allegations are devoid of requisite evidence. PTI

NSE calls applications for MD & CEO post

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
MUMBAI, MARCH 4

THE NATIONAL Stock Exchange (NSE) has invited applications for the role of managing director (MD) & chief executive officer (CEO), according to a public notice issued on Friday.

The five year term of current MD & CEO Vikram Limaye will come to an end in July. Limaye is eligible for another term, however, as per the norms of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), he will have to compete with other candidates for the top job at NSE.

The notice has come at a time when the NSE is at the centre of controversy once again with Sebi penalising it’s two former CEO,



The 5-year term of current MD & CEO Vikram Limaye will come to an end in July. File

Ravi Narain and Chitra Ramkrishna, last month, for alleged lapses in corporate governance during the appointment of its group operating officer Anand Subramanian. According to Friday’s public notice, NSE said the candidate must have 25 years of experience.

PM TO INDIA INC

‘Invest in green hydrogen output’

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday called on industry to invest in green hydrogen production, saying India could become a hub for green hydrogen, given the ample availability of green energy in the country. Green hydrogen is produced through electrolysis of water using renewable energy.

“India has an inherent advantage in the form of abundant renewable energy power available.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi. PTI

With this, India can become a global hub for green hydrogen,”

Promoters to pump funds into Vi

New Delhi: Promoter Vodafone plans to infuse up to Rs 3,375 crore into debt-ridden Vodafone Idea Ltd as part of the company’s proposed raising of funds worth Rs 14,200 crore.

Besides Vodafone, Aditya Birla Group plans to pump in up to Rs 1,125 crore, according to a regulatory filing on Friday.

The telecom operator will seek shareholders’ approval for raising up to Rs 14,500 crore as well as increase its authorised share capital to Rs 75,000 crore at its Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) to be held on March 26.

The board of Vodafone Idea Ltd (VIL) has already approved the fund raising plan. PTI

Modi said at a post-Budget webinar on renewable energy. He added the hydrogen ecosystem is connected with the fertiliser, refineries and transportation sectors.

“This is an area in which the private sector should promote innovation, so that India’s full potential can be utilised,” Modi said.

The PM also highlighted the need to produce energy efficient products to reduce power consumption. ENS

GUJARAT URJA VIKAS NIGAM LIMITED
Sardar Patel Vidyut Bhavan, Racecourse, Vadodara-390007
Phone : (0265) 2334751, Website : www.guvnl.com
CIN U40109GJ2004SGC045195

E-TENDER NOTICE
GUVNL, a Govt. of Gujarat undertaking hereby invites e-tender for purchase of **500 MW power** during 06:00 Hrs. to 09:00 Hrs. & 17:00 Hrs. to 21:00 Hrs. for the period from **20-03-2022 to 28-02-2023** at GETCO periphery (interconnection point of Gujarat STU with CTU) as per Ministry of Power (MoP), Govt. of India Guidelines dated 30-03-2016 read with amendment to the guideline notified on 21-02-2022. RFP is available at www.msceccommerce.com from 04-03-2022. Bid has to be submitted online through DEEP portal of MoP. All terms and conditions shall be as per RFP.
Date: 05-03-2022 General Manager (Commerce)

Deputy Gemral Manager, Rajasthan State Guest House
13, Veer, Tikenderjeet Marg, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi-110021
F-14/RSGH/2022/421 Date : 23.02.2022

NOTICE INVITING BID
Bid for Providing the Services of Cleaning & Housekeeping of Guest Rooms, Bathrooms, Toilets, Internal and External Public area etc. (Housekeeping Services) inclusive of Man Power on Job Basis and Cleaning Agents & Material on yearly rate Basis at Rajasthan State Guest House situated at 13, Veer Tikenderjeet Marg, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi are invited from 24.02.2022 at 10:00 A.M. till 07.03.2022 at 12:00 P.M. The bid will open on 07.03.2022 at 05:00 P.M. The tender value is Rs. 75,00,000.00 and other Particulars of the bids may be visited on the procurement portal (<https://sppp.rajjasthan.gov.in> and <http://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in>) of the State.
NIB: GAD2122A0037
UBN: GAD2122SLOB00052
Sd/-
Deputy General Manager,
Rajasthan State Guest House,
Chanakyapuri, New Delhi.

DIPR/C/2933/2022

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RWS & S DIVISION, BARGARH
Email:- eerwss_bgh@nic.in, Ph (O):- 06646 233220, FAX:- 06646 234626
No.701 / Dt. 02.03.2022

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA “e” PROCUREMENT NOTICE
Bid Identification No 17 of 2021-22
The Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Bargarh on behalf of the Governor of Odisha invites tenders from the valid licensed holder contractors of class ‘B’ or ‘A’ and ‘A’ or ‘Special’ registered with any department of State Government or equivalent class of Central Govt. etc. to be eventually drawn up to G2 Contract Form for the work as per terms and conditions noted below.

- Name of the work:** Execution of Improvement with retrofitting of Rural piped water supply to different villages on clubbed up mode under Padampur Block in the District Bargarh - 05 Nos.
- Approx. Estimated cost:-** Rs Varies from Rs 262.28 to 306.85 lakhs
- Date and time of availability of document in the portal:-** Dt. 21.03.2022 to Dt. 21.04.2022 up to 5.00 PM
- Last date/ time for receipt of bids in the portal:-** Dt. 21.04.22 up to 5.00 P.M
- Date & time of Opening of Tender:-** 22.04.22 at 11.00 A.M.
- Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid:-** Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Bargarh, District:- Bargarh

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>.
The authority reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
RWS&S Division, Bargarh
OIRP - 25157/11/0023/2122

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER, PHED, REGION AJMER
PHONE NO. 0145-2624748 FAX NO. 0145-2627671
No. F. ()/Ar. MP/2021-2022/4383-435 Dated: 22.2.22

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS FOR WORKS
Bids for the work of construction of GLSR, P, L, J, T and Commissioning of pipe lines with allied works including one year defect liability period 5 years O & M thereafter for Ajaynagar-Jagriti Nagar area, Ajmer, are invited from interested bidders upto 16.03.2022. Other particulars of the Bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in>, <http://sppp.raj.nic.in>) of the state.
UBN No.: PHE2122WSOB14542
NIB No.: PHE2122A6606
Sd/-
(Mukul Bhargava)
Additional Chief Engineer,
PHED, Region, Ajmer

DIPR/C/2797/2022

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL & CONTROLLER, DR. S.N. MEDICAL COLLEGE & ASSOCIATED GROUP OF HOSPITALS, JODHPUR
Shastrji Nagar, Residency Road, Jodhpur (Raj). 342001 ☎2931-2434374
E-mail: principal.dsmc.jod@rajasthan.gov.in, prmedcjl-jod-rj@nic.in
No. F: 6(i) Store/SNMC/JU/2021-22/6541-45 Dated: 25.2.22

NOTICE INVITING BID No. 36/2021-22 (Short Term E-tender)
Bids for various equipments, for use in Dr. S.N. Medical College and Attached Hospitals, Jodhpur are invited from interested bidders up to 1.00 P.M. Dated 07.03.2022 Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal <http://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in> and also be seen at <http://sppp.rajjasthan.gov.in> of the state procurement portal and <https://education.rajjasthan.gov.in/dsmcjodhpur> departmental website.
UBN Number:- SMC2122GLOB00502,
Sd/-
(Dr. S.S.Rathore)
Principal & Controller

DIPR/C/2904/2022

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BARIPADA
“e” Procurement Notice for PMGSY Works
Identification No.- Online Tender- PMGSY N.C.B. No. 213 for 2021-22.
Letter No. 670/ Date: 02.03.2022

- Name of the work** :- Construction & Maintenance of PMGSY-III (Batch-I). 2021-22 for the Road work in the District Mayurbhanj.
- Total No. of works** :- 01 No. (One)
- Estimated Cost** :- Rs. 1176.14 lakhs (Approximately)
- Eligible Class Contractor** of :- ‘Special’, & ‘Super’ Class Contractor.
- Period of Completion** :- 12 Calendar Months
- Other details** :-

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender On-line for bidding	Last Date & Time of seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O.C.S.E.R.W. Circle, Baripada	
		From	To	Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Baripada	PMGSY Online N.C.B. No. 213	07.03.2022 at 11.00 A.M.	22.03.2022 up to 5.00 P.M.	07.03.2022 at 11.00 A.M.	07.03.2022 at 11.00 A.M.

● Further details can be seen from the website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in
● Any Corrigendum/ Addendum will be displayed in the above e-tender website only.
Sd/-
Chief Construction Engineer,
Rural Works Circle, Baripada
OIRP- 25130/11/0047/2122

UKRAINIANS CAN STAY IN U.S.,
EU, Canada to take similar steps

JAPAN SENDS DEFENCE AID;
vests, helmets to reach Kyiv

UN SETS UP PANEL FOR UKRAINE,
will monitor human rights violations

Panic grips cities as Russia tightens cordon



Man leaves his wife on a train to Lviv at the Kyiv station on Thursday, he stays back to fight. *AP*

Fighting rages in other parts of Ukraine, southeastern port city of Mariupol encircled and shelled

AGENCIES

KYIV, MARCH 4

AS RUSSIA'S invasion of Ukraine passed its first week, panicked residents of Kyiv swarmed the capital's main train station on Friday to flee the city before the window closes to escape and Russian forces increasingly bore down on cities along the strategically important Black Sea Coast in the south. Fighting raged elsewhere in

Ukraine as Russian forces besieged and bombarded several cities in the second week of an invasion launched by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The capital Kyiv, in the path of a Russian armoured column that has been stalled on a road for days, came under renewed attack, with explosions audible from the city centre.

The southeastern port city of Mariupol - a key prize for the Russian troops - has been encir-

led and shelled. Its mayor said on Friday it had no water, heat or electricity and is running out of food after five days under attack.

"We are simply being destroyed," Mayor Vadym Boychenko said.

Ukrainian presidential adviser Oleksiy Arestovic said, "The humanitarian situation is tense," adding that Ukrainian authorities are in talks with Russian representatives and international organisations to set up a human-

itarian corridor to evacuate residents and supply food.

Battles in the area have knocked out the city's electricity, heat and water systems, as well as most phone service, officials said. Food deliveries to the city were also cut.

Meanwhile, a top Russian diplomat insisted Friday that his country will not occupy Ukraine. "The goal is very clear: Denazification and demilitarization," Gennady Gatilov, Russia's

ambassador in Geneva, said of the invasion - which he called a "special military operation."

"We are not going to stay in Ukraine militarily. We are not going to occupy this country," he told the UN Geneva press association ACANU. "I don't now all the details of the military plan, but the political goal is as I described it." He said the definition of "demilitarization" was being discussed in diplomatic talks between Ukrainian and Russian envoys.

IN BRIEF



Alexander Lukashenko

Belarusian forces will not take part in war: Lukashenko

Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko said on Friday that the Belarusian armed forces were not taking part and would not take part in Russia's military operation in Ukraine. A close Russian ally, Lukashenko said he spoke to President Vladimir Putin at length by telephone on Friday. Russia has used Belarusian territory to carry out a multi-pronged invasion of Ukraine. **REUTERS**

Turkey renews effort to mediate

Turkey's foreign minister says Ankara wants to bring Russia and Ukraine's top diplomats together for talks during an international diplomacy forum in the country next week. Speaking Friday to reporters in Brussels where he attended a NATO meeting, Mevlut Cavusoglu said Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has confirmed his attendance at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum to be held in the Mediterranean coastal city between March 11-13. **AP**

G7 to impose further sanctions

Foreign ministers of the Group of Seven (G7) advanced economies agreed on Friday they would impose further sanctions on Russia if Moscow does not stop attacking Ukraine, Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi said. "We called on Russia to immediately stop its attack on Ukraine, which has even harmed ordinary citizens, and withdraw its forces," Hayashi told reporters. "We've agreed, as G7, to impose further, severe sanctions if Russia does not stop its assault." **REUTERS**

'We are not part of this:' NATO rejects no-fly zone

Brussels: NATO foreign ministers rejected any possibility of intervening against Russian forces in Ukraine, whether on the ground or in the air, the alliance's secretary general said Friday.

"Allies agree we should not have NATO planes operating over Ukrainian air space or NATO troops operating in Ukrainian territory," Jens Stoltenberg, the secretary general, said.

NATO is resisting for fear that it could draw member states into a war with Russia. "We understand the desperation, but if we did that, we would end up with something that could lead to a full-fledged war in Europe involving much more countries and much more suffering," he said.

The Ukrainian foreign minister, Dmytro Kuleba, pleaded for help from the foreign ministers of the 30 nations of the alliance. "Our country is ready to fight. But we need immediate help in repelling Russian attacks in the air," he said. "If you do not do this, you will have to share the responsibility for the lives and suffering of the civilians who are being killed by rocket attacks from Russian planes." **NYT**

Zelenskyy urges Russians to protest over attack on Zaporizhzhia plant

REUTERS

LVIV, MARCH 4

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy appealed to Russians on Friday to stage protests over Russian forces' seizure of the largest nuclear power plant in Europe.

A building at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant was set ablaze during intense fighting, Ukrainian authorities said on Friday, triggering fears of a potential nuclear disaster. The blaze was later extinguished.

"Russian people, I want to appeal to you: how is this possible? After all we fought together in 1986 against the Chernobyl catastrophe," he said in a televised address, evoking memories of the world's worst nuclear disaster.

"You have to ... take to the streets and say that you want to live, you want to live on earth without radioactive contamination. Radiation does not know where Russia is, radiation does not know where the borders of your country are."

Russia's defence ministry blamed the attack at the site of the



Volodymyr Zelenskyy. *NYT*

Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant on Ukrainian saboteurs, calling it a monstrous provocation.

Russian forces that invaded Ukraine last week have already captured the defunct Chernobyl plant north of Kyiv, which spewed radioactive

EXPLAINED How dangerous was nuclear plant strike?

THE REACTOR that was hit was offline, but still contains highly radioactive nuclear fuel. Four of the other six reactors have now been taken offline, leaving only one in operation. The reactors at the plant have thick concrete containment domes, which would have protected them from external fire from tanks and artillery, said Jon Wolfsthal, who served during the Obama administration as the senior director for arms control and nonproliferation at the National Security Council. At the same time, a fire at a nuclear power plant is never a good thing, he said. Another danger at nuclear facilities are the pools where spent fuel rods are kept to be cooled, which are more vulnerable to shelling and which could cause the release of radioactive material. Perhaps the biggest issue, however, is the plant's power supply, said Najmedin Meshkati, an engineering professor, who has studied both the Chernobyl and Fukushima disasters, raising a concern also voiced by Wolfsthal and others. **AP**

waste over much of Europe after an accident there in April 1986. Analysts have said the Zaporizhzhia plant is a different and safer type, but Zelenskyy said that now was not the time to be silent. "You have to remember the burning

MORE U.S. SANCTIONS

Don't escalate tensions, Putin tells neighbours

AGENCIES

MOSCOW, MARCH 4

PRESIDENT VLADIMIR Putin urged Russia's neighbours on Friday not to escalate tensions, eight days after Moscow sent its forces into Ukraine. "There are no bad intentions towards our neighbours. And I would also advise them not to escalate the situation, not to introduce any restrictions. We fulfil all our obligations and will continue to fulfil them," Putin said in televised remarks.

"We do not see any need here to aggravate or worsen our relations. And all our actions, if they arise, they always arise exclusively in response to some unfriendly actions, actions against the Russian Federation," Putin was shown on TV taking part online, from his residence outside Moscow, in a flag-raising ceremony for a ferry in northern Russia.

The Biden administration, meanwhile, ordered new sanctions blocking Russian business oligarchs and others in Putin's inner circle on Thursday in response to Russian forces' fierce pummeling of Ukraine.

Those targeted by the new US sanctions include Putin's press secretary, Dmitry Peskov, and Alisher Burhanovich Usmanov, one of Russia's wealthiest individuals and a close ally of Putin. The US State Department also announced it was imposing visa bans on 19 Russian oligarchs and dozens of their family members and close associates.



MEANWHILE

RUSSIA BLOCKS ACCESS TO FACEBOOK

The Russian government has blocked access to Facebook inside the country, claiming the network has engaged in "discrimination against Russian news media." It's the latest instance of the Kremlin's far-reaching campaign to clamp down on dissent in the wake of the invasion of Ukraine. **NYT**



Volunteers examine the site of explosion inside a Shia mosque in Peshawar, which left 194 injured on Friday. *AP*

Suicide bombing kills 56 at Shia mosque in Pak

BY KATHY GANNON & RIAZ KHAN

PESHAWAR, MARCH 4

A SUICIDE bomber struck inside a Shia Muslim mosque in Pakistan's northwestern city of Peshawar during Friday prayers, killing at least 56 worshippers and wounding 194 people, hospital officials said.

No militant group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. Both the Islamic State group and the Pakistani Taliban - a militant group separate from the Taliban in Afghanistan - have carried out similar attacks in the past in the area, located near the border with neighboring Afghanistan.

According to the spokesman at Peshawar's Lady Reading Hospital, Asim Khan, many of the wounded were in critical condition. Scores of victims were peppered with shrapnel, several had limbs amputated and others were injured by flying debris.

Peshawar Police Chief Muhammed Ejaz Khan said the violence started when an armed attacker opened fire on police outside the mosque in Peshawar's old city. One policeman was killed in the gunfight, and another police officer was wounded. The attacker then ran inside the mosque and detonated his suicide vest.

The suicide bomber had strapped a powerful explosive device to his body, packed

with 5 kilograms (12 pounds) of explosives, said Moazzam Jah Ansari, the top police official for Khyber Pukhtunkhwa Province where Peshawar is the capital.

The device was hidden beneath a large black shawl that covered much of his body, according to CCTV footage seen by *The AP*. The footage showed the bomber moving quickly up a narrow street toward the mosque entrance. He fired at the police protecting the mosque before entering inside.

Within seconds a powerful explosion occurred and the camera lens was obscured with dust and debris. Ansari said the crudely made device was packed with ball bearings, a deadly method of constructing a bomb to inflict the most carnage spraying a larger area with deadly projectiles. The ball bearings caused the high death toll, Ansari said.

Local police official Waheed Khan said the explosion occurred as worshippers had gathered in the Kucha Risaldar Mosque for Friday prayers. There are fears the death toll could still rise further, he added. Ambulances rushed through congested narrow streets carrying the wounded to Lady Reading Hospital, where doctors worked feverishly.

Shayan Haider, a witness, had been preparing to enter the mosque when a powerful explosion threw him to the ground. "I opened my eyes and there was dust and bodies everywhere," he said. **AP**

Don't target us for development: China official tells US

Beijing: The US should not regard China as a strategic rival and stoke confrontation because of its economic progress and development, a senior Chinese official said on Friday.

To use China's development as an excuse and take China as a strategic rival will only erode the mutual trust and cooperation between the two countries, and will eventually hurt own interests of the United States, Zhang Yesui, spokesperson of China's Parliament, the National People's Congress, told a media briefing.

The Biden administration, which treats China as a strategic competitor, has made it clear that the most effective way for America to out-compete a more assertive and authoritarian China over the long-term is to invest in its people, its economy and its democracy.

Beijing is faced with a major political and trade onslaught from the US, European Union and their allies over a host of issues including human rights violations in Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong. **PTI**

Benazir's daughter hit by drone on face during PPP rally

M ZULQERNAIN

LAHORE, MARCH 4

PAKISTAN'S SLAIN Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's daughter Aseefa Bhutto on Friday suffered a face injury after a drone camera hit her during her party - Pakistan People's Party (PPP) - rally in Punjab province.

The incident took place when Aseefa, also the daughter of Pakistan's former president Asif Ali Zardari, was standing atop a container alongside her brother and PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto who was addressing the participants of the rally in Khanewal, some 300 kms from Lahore, against Prime Minister Imran Khan.

As the drone hit Aseefa, Bilawal rushed to rescue her. "She was taken to a private hospital where she had 'five stitches' on her forehead," PPP leader



Aseefa Bhutto. *File*

Hasan Murtaza told PTI.

He said the PPP workers have taken the drone operator of the TV channel into custody and handed over to police. "It will be determined whether the drone operator deliberately aimed at Aseefa at the best of someone," he said.

Since the drone belongs to the TV channel, which is owned by the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf stalwart Aaleem Khan, the PPP is suspecting that this might be a deliberate act. **PTI**

India flourish on grass to take control over Danes

GAURAV BHATT
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

WELL BEGUN, nearly done. India finished the first day of their World Group I Play-off tie against Denmark with a 2-0 lead. Ramkumar Ramanathan beat Christian Sigsgaard 6-3, 6-2 before Yuki Bhambri defeated Mikael Torpegaard 6-4, 6-4 on Friday.

Much of the build-up was focused on the grass courts at the Delhi Gymkhana Club, and how various grass experts and local gardeners had pored over each blade. The hosts had chosen the surface to exploit Denmark's general unfamiliarity with grass and banking on the playing styles of Indians. While the Danes had sported game faces and talked about being underdogs ready to cause upsets, the writing was always on the grass.

The Indians were simply better tennis players on the day. There was an obvious gulf in talent, magnified by the surface.

As expected, Ramkumar was the main man for India. With a game tailormade for grass, he likes to serve and volley. The opening game of the tie set the tone. Ramkumar followed each serve — first or second — to the net. Meanwhile, Sigsgaard, glued to the baseline, struggled to time his returns. The Dane ventured forward once, to catch a Ramkumar drop shot. He scampered, reached the ball, couldn't stop sliding and stumbled into the net to concede the point. He somewhat found his footing, but lost serve at 1-2 with desperate forays to the net. And when the volleys weren't letting him down, his service did. Sigsgaard sent down eight double faults to Ramkumar's three.

It wasn't that Ramkumar was impervious at the net. He shanked a few volleys and was occasionally passed by a groundstroke. But he was simply more comfortable on the surface and anticipated better than the 824-ranked Dane. Throughout the week, Ramkumar had maintained that the conditions were "perfect" and the grass was "great." "Stays low, it's quick, it goes through, the slice works," he had assessed during practice sessions.

The slice worked alright. For Denmark's hopes of advancing, it was a death by thousand slices. When not killing off points, Ramkumar took the pace off with backhand slices. "I love to slice and I love to come in. I served pretty well. And I made a few good first volleys during the start of the match. That just kept me going," Ramkumar said.

Surface matters

Non-playing captain Rohit Rajpal discussed how the surface was matched with a suitable tactic.

"We clearly had a strategy where we worked on the courts to ensure that it plays low, and the slices move well and kick off. If you see their grips, they are way over the top, clay-court, hard-court grips. The idea was to keep it low and trouble them as much as we



Yuki Bhambri on Friday. Praveen Khanna

could."

Unlike Ramkumar, grass-court tennis doesn't come naturally to Yuki. It was, thus, intriguing to watch two baseliners try and adapt in real time. While Ramkumar dealt with Sigsgaard in less than an hour, the two sets between Yuki and Torpegaard nearly went 90 minutes. The surface again played a pivotal role. After the two traded early breaks in the opening set, Torpegaard conceded his serve at 4-4 in a game that saw the 6'4 Dane repeatedly beaten by the pace and low bounce. With his opponent's timing off, Bhambri constructed and finished points with approach shots.

The biggest server of the four on the day, Torpegaard had his moments. Bhambri's lead in the second set was cut from 4-1 to 5-4 as the Dane went for broke. Four of Torpegaard's six aces came in the second set, but also five of his seven double faults. Eventually, Torpegaard, who led the majority of games but couldn't close them out, was defeated by the more consistent Bhambri, who also embraced the slice.

"I think for Ram, that style comes naturally. For me, it was bit of a strategy," said Bhambri. "I realised that the court was playing very low. I am more of a traditional baseliner who likes to hit the ball. But I realised the slices are difficult to put away." Torpegaard conceded his opponent has "got a good backhand slice" and "stepped up his game when it mattered".

"That's what separates the good players from the great players. Countless examples out there of me being ahead in the games but he stepped up," said Torpegaard. "It's a very different game on here than it would have been on hard courts. I think I ran out of time towards the end. I would have liked for it to go into a third set, like the good old days." The reverse singles fixtures on Saturday will remain on grass and continue to be three-set matches. But they will only come into play if the Danish pair pulls off the unthinkable in doubles. As for India, Rajpal confessed that Ramkumar's showing in singles could have put him into the running to partner Rohan Bopanna.

"We have that option looking at the way we played today," he said.

Kohli cameo on special day

Former captain played some authoritative strokes for his 45 before making an error in his 100th Test

ABHISHEK PUROHIT
MOHALI, MARCH 4

"I TOLD RAHUL *bhai* I am feeling like I am making my debut all over again. There were butterflies in my stomach. I didn't realise the magnitude of the occasion until today, when the presentation happened and there were people in the stadium. I felt very nervous," said Virat Kohli after the end of the first day's play in the Mohali Test against Sri Lanka.

In the morning, the stage had been set for Virat Kohli's 100th Test match. Long having ignored Test cricket, Mohali had begun to turn up quite early for the man who adores the format. His wife, brother, BCCI biggies, they were all there. The entire India squad stood behind in a line as head coach Rahul Dravid presented Kohli with a special cap for the landmark before the start of play.

The crowd erupted in celebration at the fall of Mayank Agarwal and cheered Kohli all the way to the pitch in the 19th over. It can't be said that he didn't give them their money's worth. He stayed in the middle for 104 minutes, and played some authoritative strokes. But just when it appeared that this was the start that would be converted into that elusive century — he's given that feeling before too — he made a basic error to be bowled for 45.

The crowd would never approach the allowed 50 percent capacity during the day, but even a couple of hours before the scheduled 9.30am start, there were queues building up at various entrances to the Punjab Cricket Association Stadium. Shouts of 'Kohli, Kohli' rang out from one gate or the other. There was a group of young men holding up a poster proclaiming, 'You will always be our captain'. All this was to have been lost, but for the last-minute decision to not play the match to an empty stadium.

Only a few hundred had made their way in while the teams were warming up. Even those many made plenty of noise whenever Kohli took a catch at first slip. Hardly anyone seemed to initially notice Rohit Sharma walking out for his first Test toss in his captain's blazer. For Kohli was making the walk back at the same time towards the dressing room to change into his whites.

It was only half an instant, but as Rohit neared the pitch, Kohli, who'd reached the boundary by then, turned around to look at the spot that had been his all these years. He then put his head down and disappeared out of sight into the dressing room.

Soon, Dravid was all smiles as he got mic'd up for the cap presentation, followed by 16 Indian players forming a line. Skipper Rohit was nowhere to be seen for a bit before he jogged out having put his pads on. As



Virat Kohli stayed in the middle for 104 minutes.

PTI

Anushka Sharma walked up to be by her husband's side, Dravid went on to say a few typically solemn words about the occasion.

"It's a testament to everything. It's well deserved, well earned, and hopefully it is just the start of many things to come," Dravid said. "As we say in the dressing room, double it up."

"Thanks Rahul bhai, it's a special moment for me," Kohli said. "My wife is here with me, my brother is there in the stands. Everyone is very proud. It's a team game and the journey wouldn't have been possible without you guys. Thanks to the BCCI too. I couldn't have received it from a better person, my childhood hero. I still have that picture with you from my Under-15 days. In present-day cricket, with the amount we play with three formats and an IPL, the one takeaway the next generation can take from me is that I played 100 games in the purest format."

Formal presentations are often banalities that have to be gone through but it was hard not to feel the emotion from Kohli in this one

It was only half an instant, but as Rohit neared the pitch for the toss, Kohli, who'd reached the boundary by then, turned around to look at the spot that had been his all these years.

as he hugged Anushka multiple times, before Dravid signed off with a couple of very formal looking handshakes with husband and wife. As the teams proceeded to line up for the national anthems, Rohit walked up to Kohli, thrust his right palm into his former captain's, and had a quick half-hug. After the anthems, Sri Lanka skipper Dimuth Karunaratne came over to Kohli to shake hands. 'Kohli, Kohli,' the chants kept coming.

When it was his turn to bat, they turned into a roar which seemed to inject more energy into his sprint out of the dressing room. His first four, a bullet of a straight drive, sent

the crescendo higher. The swat-flick through midwicket made an appearance, so did the cover drive. He left and defended the pacers well. But the left-arm spinner Lasith Embuldeniya troubled him every few deliveries. Inside edge onto pad, leading edge, one popped almost into the bowler's hands. Embuldeniya kept hitting a good length around off, but Kohli kept stretching forward to smother them. In South Africa, he would go through long periods of self-denial before suddenly playing a wayward shot and getting out. In Mohali, after safely keeping out Embuldeniya, he suddenly chose to go back to a ball that had pitched on the same length. This one turned a bit more than he expected, and it was all over. These mistakes have often come out of nowhere, when he's looked alright otherwise.

Hanuma Vihari soon followed Kohli back to the pavilion on 58 and Shreyas Iyer's fall made it 228 for 5, after which it was up to Rishabh Pant (96 off 97) and Ravindra Jadeja (batting 45) to revive the score to 357 for 6 at stumps. However, Kohli doesn't think he needs to change anything in his preparation process.

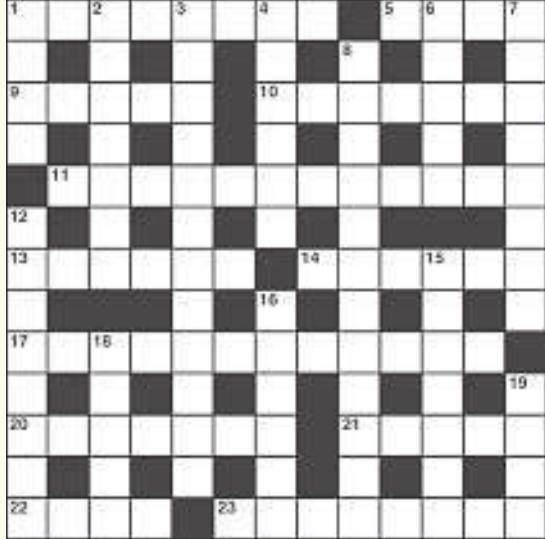
"I'm preparing the way I always have," Kohli said. "As long as I am batting well, I am not bothered at all. I have been involved in very important partnerships for the team. Even today, the partnership of 90 (with Vihari) was important for us. I have never been bothered about milestones. These conversations happen on the outside and will continue to happen because we are somewhat obsessed about milestones and materialistic achievements." Obsessed enough to have made him feel that he was playing his first Test and not his 100th.

SCOREBOARD ON DAY 1

India:

M Agarwal lbw b Embuldeniya	33
R Sharma c Lakmal b L Kumara	29
H Vihari b Vishwa Fernando	58
Virat Kohli b Embuldeniya	45
Rishabh Pant b Lakmal	96
S Iyer lbw b Dhananjaya de Silva	27
Ravindra Jadeja batting	45
Ravichandran Ashwin batting	10
Extras: (LB-5, NB-9)	14
Total: (For six wickets in 85 Overs)	357
Fall of Wickets: 1-52, 2-80, 3-170, 4-175, 5-228, 6-332.	
Bowling: S Lakmal 16-1-63-1, V Fernando 16-1-69-1, L Kumara 10.5-1-52-1, L Embuldeniya 28-2-107-2, D de Silva 11-1-47-1, C Asalanka 3.1-0-14-0.	

CROSSWORD 4680



- ACROSS**
1 What backers of horses must expect? (8)
5 Reduce the size of an enclosure? (4)
9 Troubled by taking a girl back (5)
10 Still out of tune? (7)
11 He's not himself (12)
13 Fool holding company capital (6)
14 They lead one into conspiracies (6)
17 Not much gain we hear for Malachi maybe (5,7)
20 He waits for a job (7)
21 Run away to join up perhaps (5)
22 Drawn and knotted (4)
23 Being late last month was a relief (8)
- DOWN**
1 In a way Dora's wrong (4)
2 Masses of books (7)
3 Hardly descriptive of the time a final demand arrives (3-6,3)
4 Pass away in a sleep perhaps (6)
6 It is evident Trevor hasn't finished getting up (5)
7 Stride about on the ship when there's trouble (8)
8 Battle area is part of the book's first illustration (12)
12 Monkey causing some flurry in the market (8)
15 Having our nose put out of joint is hard to bear (7)
16 Squirm like a man under summons? (6)
18 Patient caretaker (5)
19 Not the gardener's favourite little number (4)

Solutions Crossword 4679: Across: 1 Iron Cross, 8 Henna, 9 Consult, 10 In fact, 11 Stolen, 12 Throttle, 15 Explodes, 18 Oberon, 20 Lloyds, 21 Avenues, 22 Tango, 23 Neediness. Down: 2 Roost, 3 Nestle, 4 Relented, 5 Shinto, 6 Infants, 7 Cattle pen, 11 Satellite, 13 Resolved, 14 ApPOINT, 16 Odds on, 17 Penion, 19 Omens.

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.

We are born crying, live complaining, and die ____ - Thomas Fuller (12)

RTAEO	AEMDNT
ENIIS	NAPPED

SOLUTION: ORATE, NISEL, TANGEM, APPEND
Answer: We are born crying, live complaining, and die disappointed - Thomas Fuller

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



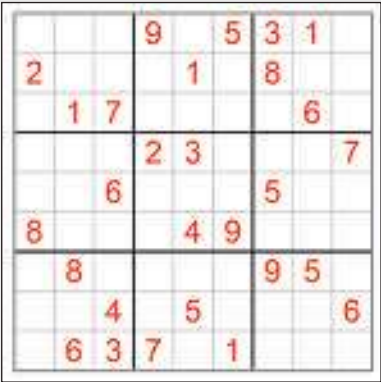
MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



SUDOKU 4764

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 4763



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

There may now be no way you can maintain the peace. It must be said that there are times when arguments or harsh words are necessary if you are to clear the air and settle someone else's hash. But you do have to make sure that you have the right person in your sights.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

Your obstinate adherence to your ambitions could be the cause of much friction. Are you really sure that now is the moment to force various issues, or do you think it would be better to bide your time? You may well do best to err on the side of caution.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

It's time to get tough, yet I doubt if anyone can do so as charmingly as you. It's very much a question of the iron fist in the velvet glove, your firm resolve delivered in the nicest possible way. Your strength is, you see, that you are about to be proved right.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

Passion is in the air. Certain personal encounters may be tremendously exciting. One or two experiences might be rather too blunt for your liking, though. Monetary affairs and expenses could be the only significant cause of discord but, even then, deeper emotional motives are most important.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

Involvements which once seemed so desirable, no longer hold out the promise they offered at first. It looks very much, though, as if someone has seen through your little game. Perhaps you should have been more straightforward about your real, personal needs.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

There is a lot to be said for keeping your distance yet, right now, I would advise you to move closer to other people, especially emotionally. It may not be easy to express your real feelings, but do have a go. If anything can be done to change a partner's mind, do it.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

A long-standing relationship or involvement has been going through a stressful phase, but you now have the opportunity to set matters straight. Domestic repairs should be a priority if good feeling is to be restored. Fix practical problems and other questions will be resolved.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)

You have certainly done a great deal to safeguard your long-term health and security. If other people have also benefited from your efforts, you may expect a word of thanks. However, you may have to accept that gratitude is not an emotion that partners are likely to feel.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)

You're happiest when everything is out in the open. This is why you may not have an easy time when the causes of current problems lie deep in the past, perhaps in a partner's background rather than yours. This is more reason why you should try to be sympathetic and understanding.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

Adverse aspects to planets in strategic sectors of your solar chart are pushing you into getting your act together properly for a change. This relates to your willingness to share information and discuss plans with the people who matter most.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

Stand your ground, but don't expect partners to back down. The best solution might be an honourable compromise in which you both agree to pursue your separate goals. An amicable reconciliation will then be the next step. That will leave you free to get back together when you wish.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

Pisces, the peacemaker, should be making his, or her, appearance today. People will be snapping at each other for no other reason than that it seems easier than being nice. Stand above such petty squabbles, and try to make friends and family members see that there is no reason why they shouldn't get on.



“Shocked, stunned & miserable... Will miss you Warnie. There was never a dull moment with you around, on or off the field. Will always treasure our on field duels & off field banter. You always had a special place for India & Indians had a special place for you. Gone too young.”

SACHIN TENDULKAR

SHANE WARNE
1969-2022

WIZARD OF 5.5 OZ

The Ball of the Century perfectly captured what Shane Warne was all about - his art, skill, persona and the hallucinatory effect on the batsman, writes **Sriram Veera**.

SHANE WARNE dispensed with reality, made it whatever he wished it to be, and had bewitched batsmen sway to his machinations inside his world. He made them do what he wanted them to do. Hypnotised, they followed the pied piper. It was Warne's world of illusions and no batsman, barring Sachin Tendulkar, has really glimpsed its true nature - for how does one play an illusion? You get played. They had no choice. That was his genius.

Good spinners try to open their trickery under the gaze of the batsman rather than reveal its perfection from the moment of release. Their deliveries are constructed for what a batsman might do, tailored to probe the anticipated response, and create a dent in their reality. Not Warne. He created the response he sought from the batsman. He lived rent-free in their head, long before he began that intoxicating walk towards them with ball in hand.

The Ball of the Century was no different, and it perfectly captured him, his art, and the hallucinatory effect on the batsman. The only difference was that he hadn't yet begun his tenancy in batsmen's heads and cricket-lovers' hearts; this would kickstart that addiction.

A 1993 tour game against Warwickshire, Graeme Hick with the bat, Warne with the ball and Allan Border, the captain, sidled across. "Just bowl regular leg-breaks. He is bound to play the Tests. Let's not give away anything." Hick creams a hundred and Warne is left a touch frustrated, but appreciates the mind games of his skipper. In years to come, he would outdo Border in the mental calisthenics.

The moment arrives, finally. Warne with the ball, Border in his ear setting the field, and the rotund ageing Mike Gatting, still pretty good against spin, shadow-practising a straight drive.

Warne begins to walk in. If Abdul Qadir's run-in was magical with whirring arms, Warne's walk was sparsely beautiful. No trickery, no stealth, no concealment, as if he was saying, 'here is what I am going to do, you can have a good look at me. I don't care'. Over the years, it began to seem like a walk in the anticipation of a triumph. Not that day, though, as Gatting tapped his bat and peered across, little knowing that he was going to be part of history. Warne's.

One for the ages

"I was a bit nervous," Warne once said

Catcher-in-the-fly, straight-talking mentor, Rod Marsh no more

RODNEY MARSH is clad in a white bathing towel, beaming an angelic smile, staring directly into the eye. A text runs above his head: What does Marsh do with his vaseline? The mind boggled. It's as disconcertingly amusing to watch it now, as it was when one first heard it in mid 80's. Off we would run then, in far-away Madras, to cricket parks, yelling out the line, laughing our silly heads off, as kids tend to do. Had never seen the advert till now, but prompted by news of Marsh's death, a google search was done and it threw up the advert. It was real, just as it was described to us by some Mr Know-it-all, and a laughter escaped the lips. What would Marsh do?!

This is what he did: he drank (45 cans of beer enroute to the 1983 world cup), he jumped in front of second slip to pluck catches, he hit vital runs (once caned Lance Cairns for 22 runs in an over), he bet, he was apparently hurt that he was never made the Australian captain, he mentored generations of cricketers in Australia and England and his walrus-moustache, girth, mirth, sledging are all part of cricketing folklore. The first time one read about the term The Aussie Larrikin, the mind automatically went to him. Not that it was en-

tirely true -- Merv Hughes probably fit it better -- but that was the kind of popular hold he had on us.

"You are a f*****g idiot!" The recipient of the cuss, the legendary Ian Chappell looked up at Rod Marsh and wondered if it was anything to do with the previous evening at the bar. They were in middle of a Test match, Chappell was still a new captain having recently taken over from Bill Lawry when the verbal spray drenched him. "It's a seamer's paradise and you've got two spinners on. Get them off and get a seamer on, it doesn't matter which one," the walrus-moustached Marsh barked. It made Chappell realise his error; that he was still captaining as if he were at his home ground Adelaide Oval. "I got a few lessons like that. You want people around you that tell you the truth, and I was lucky to have a gang of them," Chappell would say later.

Chief among the gang members that had the fierce-willed Dennis Lillee, his own brother Greg Chappell, the popular Doug Walters, was Rodney Marsh. It was Ian Chappell who unfortunately called him 'Iron Gloves' on one of his early encounters and that label stuck for a long while. Ray Jennings is known as the RCB coach

The crack of doom could be heard everywhere around the cricketing world.

Mobbed by his teammates, the blonde gaped at the big screen, which would make one of its early appearances on a cricket field. Warne gazes and is astonished at his own reflection of his deed. "Now, I felt really good!"

No secrets

Unlike some athletes, Warne had no issues with fame. He enjoyed its privileges, revelled in its dark interiors, and only disliked that it left a tiny window open for the media to squeeze through and gape at him. Sometimes, it was him who left that window open. Once, in England, he was a handshake away, sharing a smoke, and talking about an incident earlier in the afternoon. After a long night out, he had come to the ground way before the game, in which he was commenting, and chose to sleep away the night's stains. Unfortunately, among all the empty rooms that opened out to that corridor, he had chosen the press box. There he was, the greatest leg-spinner the world has ever seen, sprawled on the floor, mouth agape, and oblivious to the camera flashes. So, he asked, the smoke swirling away from his lips, "the pictures are all over, you know. You were there? Why would they take those pics?!" And as the silliness of the rhetorical query revealed itself to him, he laughed.

That evening after bowling what has come to be known as the Gatting ball, Warne shared a beer with his victim and queried, "What happened?" I missed the ball, came the most factual reply of our times. "It didn't spin all that much mate, next time do better," Warne would tell him. When another Australian leg-spinner Arthur Mailey bowled the great, almost mythical, Australian batsman Victor Trumper in a domestic game once with a googly, he had said that he felt like a boy who killed a dove. No one can accuse Warne of that sentiment; he devoured the batsmen, and not just danced around their bodies after the act but announced it prior.

From that Gatting day on, the minimalist walk-in with the ball seemingly slowed down time and dramatically increased the anticipation of magic. To watch Warne simultaneously explore and explode the art of leg-spin was one of the greatest pleasures of this sport.

who first predicted Virat Kohli would become captain of not just that franchise, but of India. But he was also an incredibly agile wicket-keeper. A decade back, he had shown a CD of some of his catches in South Africa's domestic matches. The jaw dropped. There he was diving past bewildered slip fielders twisted in weird angles, watching him fly past them.

A "wow" slipped out on its own and Jennings looked up and said, "you should have seen Marsh keep, then!" Just a photographic evidence would do, though innumerable videos do exist on the ether. The catch of Tony Greig from the 1979 World Cup. The first slipper Ian Chappell is twisted at an angle, Greig's head is yanked back for some masochism, and Marsh is captured, flying past Chappell with the ball pouched in his extended arm. As Marsh got up to celebrate with his mates, Chappell shot out, he recalled now to Channel 9, "Listen, you fat b*****d, I don't mind you pinching them on my left hand, but the ones on my right are mine!" That's how we used to talk to each other, and it's probably one of the reasons we got on so well, we knew exactly where we stood with each other."

Sriram Veera

Illustration: Suvajit Dey

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