


eye
THE SUNDAY EXPRESS MAGAZINE

Vishal Bhardwaj
on his just-released film *Khuffiya*, casting Tabu, adapting Shakespeare and his love for comedy

FOUR-PAGE PULLOUT



INDIAN AIR FORCE DAY

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THE WORLD

BODIES ON STREETS OF ISRAEL; PEOPLE FROM BOTH SIDES HUNKER DOWN, FLEE

WILL ENSURE ISRAEL HAS 'WHAT IT NEEDS TO DEFEND ITSELF', SAYS BIDEN

PAGE 12

ISRAEL SAYS AT LEAST 100 DEAD, launches strikes; Gaza toll 198

LAND, AIR, SEA: ASSAULT SCALE unprecedented; many injured

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH: HAMAS leader Deif in message

At war, says Israel, after worst Hamas attack in years, 300 killed & counting

JOSEF FEDERMAN & ISSAM ADWAN
JERUSALEM, OCTOBER 7

HAMAS MILITANTS fired thousands of rockets and sent dozens of fighters into Israeli towns near the Gaza Strip in an unprecedented surprise early morning attack during a major Jewish holiday Saturday, killing dozens and stunning the country.

Israel said it is now at war with Hamas and launched airstrikes in Gaza, vowing to inflict an "unprecedented price."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Rockets were fired by Palestinian militants into Israel on Saturday. Reuters

PM affirms solidarity with Israel, surprise assault chills recent thaw in region

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

AS HAMAS, the militant group ruling the Gaza Strip, mounted one of the most audacious attacks on Israel — many calling it the worst inside the Jewish state's territory since 1948 when it was

founded — and the death count on both sides crosses 260, India finds itself in a spot. For, the current hostility tests the Abraham Accords and the efforts towards rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Israel that held the promise of reshaping age-old fault-lines in the Middle East.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

AS CURTAINS FALL, INDIA GET THEIR BEST ASIAD TALLY: 28 GOLD, 38 SILVER, 41 BRONZE

With men's doubles badminton gold, India script Asiad history

EXPRESS AT ASIAN GAMES

MIHIR VASAVDA
HANGZHOU, OCTOBER 7



Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty celebrate their win on Saturday. Reuters

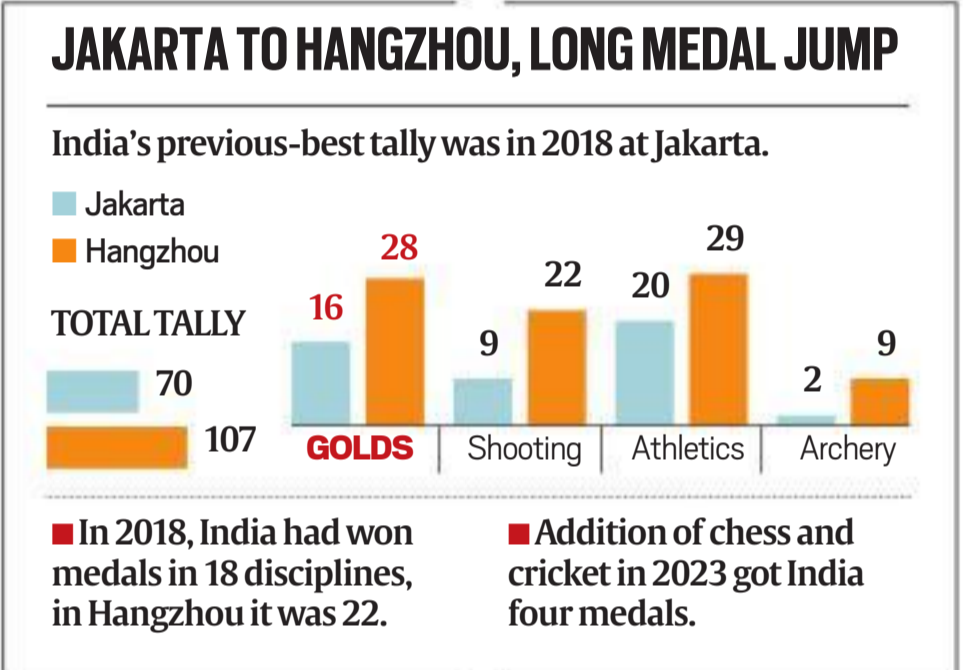
From 70 medals to a record 107: How and why the needle moved

VINAYAK MOHANARANGAN & MIHIR VASAVDA
NEW DELHI, HANGZHOU, OCTOBER 7

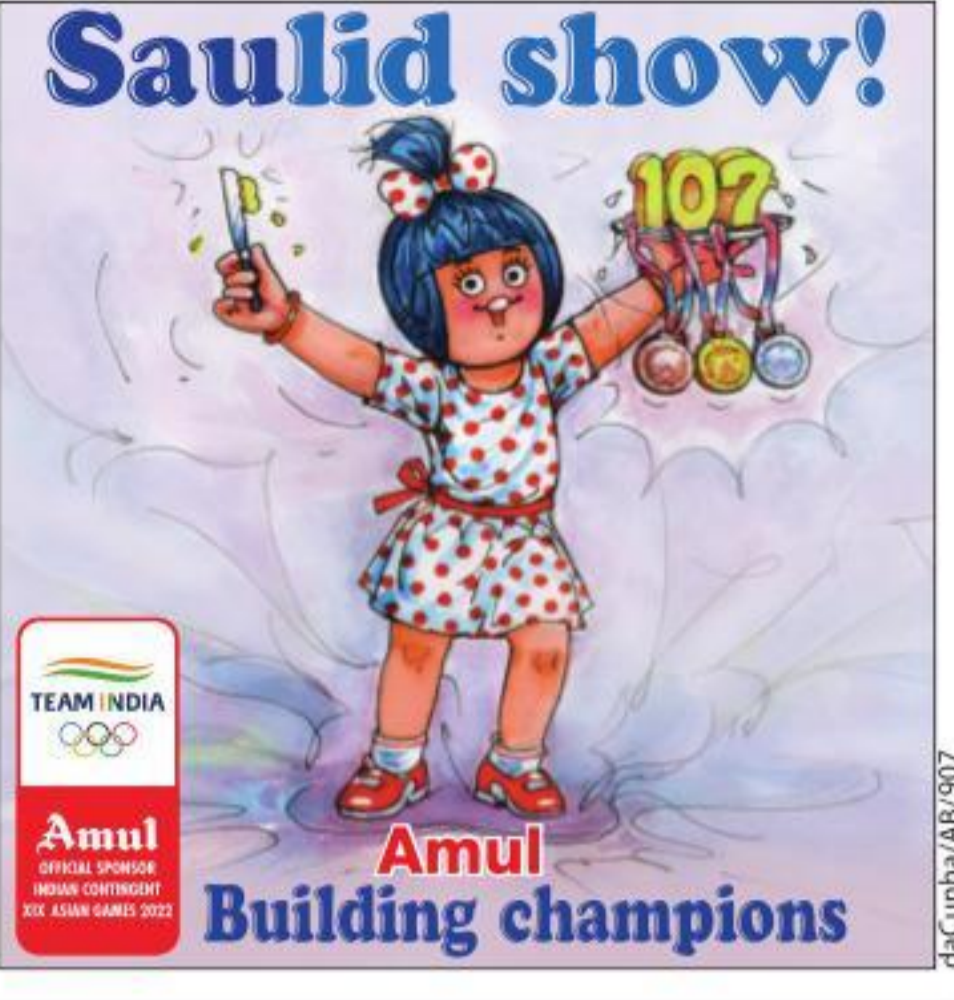
EXPLAINED IT WAS the shooters and archers who aimed their sights at the 100-plus medal target

Team India had set themselves for the Hangzhou Asian Games. This, coupled with the dramatic improvement in both track and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Saulid show!



Amul Building champions

TEAM INDIA OFFICIAL SPONSOR

States flag GST on gaming firms, Centre says not retrospective

Council not to levy tax on key alcohol ingredient, gives states right to do so

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

THE ISSUE of tax demand notices being served on gaming companies and others under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime was raised at the GST Council meeting on Saturday, with some states terming it as "retrospective taxation" even as the Centre defended the 28 per cent levy.

The Council, in its 52nd meeting, also recommended that Extra Neutral Alcohol (ENA), used for manufacture of alcoholic liquor for consumption, be kept outside the GST ambit,

along with a cut in the GST rate on molasses from 28 per cent to 5 per cent. The Council clarified that the GST rate for corporate guarantees provided by a parent company to its subsidiaries will be levied at 18 per cent.

Millet flour in powder form, containing at least 70 per cent millet by weight, will not attract any GST if sold loose, but will face 5 per cent levy if sold in pre-packaged, labelled form, said an official statement. Also, an amnesty scheme has been provided to businesses by extending the time period for filing appeals before the first appellate

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



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ENTERTAINMENT



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Amazing action meets breathtaking visuals in new Korean film



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EXPRESS AUDIO

World Cup: India's campaign begins with health scare and travel challenges

With India's campaign set to begin on Sunday against Australia, Shubman Gill is down with dengue. Also, is India prepared for playing in nine different venues?

FROM PAGE ONE

FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

At war, says Israel, after Hamas attack

Hours after the incursion began, Israeli troops were still fighting Hamas gunmen in 22 locations near the Gaza Strip, including towns and other communities, army spokesman Daniel Hagari said — a startling sign of the breadth of the assault.

der fence enclosing the long-blockaded Mediterranean territory, then crossed with motorcycles, pickup trucks, paragliders and speed boats on the coast.

Israel's national rescue service said at least 100 people were killed and hundreds wounded, making it the deadliest attack in Israel in years. An unknown number of Israeli soldiers and civilians were also seized and taken into Gaza, an enormously sensitive issue for Israel. Hagari said militants were holding hostages in stand-offs in two towns, Beeri and Ofakim, which is 15 miles (24 kilometers) from the Gaza border. At least 198 people in the Gaza Strip have been killed and at least 1,610 wounded in Israel's retaliation, the Palestinian Health Ministry said.

Bodies of dead Israeli civilians and Hamas militants were seen on streets of Israeli towns. Associated Press photos showed an abducted elderly Israeli woman surrounded by gunmen being brought back into Gaza on a golf cart and another woman squeezed between two fighters on a motorcycle. Images on social media appeared to show fighters parading what seemed to be captured Israeli military vehicles through Gaza streets and a dead Israeli soldier being dragged and trampled by a crowd of Palestinians.

The conflict threatened to spiral dramatically further. Previous conflicts between Israel and Gaza's Hamas ruler brought widespread death and destruction in Gaza and days of rocket fire on Israeli towns. The mix is potentially more volatile now, with Israel's far-right government stung by the security breach and with Palestinians in despair over a never-ending occupation. According to an NYT report, the violence also poses a threat to an

effort by the Biden administration to help broker a formal diplomatic relationship between Saudi Arabia and Israel after a series of cooperative steps by officials from both countries in recent weeks.

"We are at war," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a televised address, declaring a mass army mobilization. "Not an operation," not a 'round,' but at war."

"The enemy will pay an unprecedented price," he added, promising that Israel would "return fire of a magnitude that the enemy has not known."

The shadowy leader of Hamas' military wing, Mohammed Deif, said the assault was in response to the 16-year blockade of Gaza, Israeli raids inside West Bank cities over the past year, violence at Al Aqsa — the disputed Jerusalem holy site sacred to Jews as the Temple Mount — increasing attacks by settlers on Palestinians and growth of settlements.

"Enough is enough," Deif, who does not appear in public, said in the recorded message. He said the morning attack will only be the start of what he called "Operation Al-Aqsa Storm" and called on Palestinians from east Jerusalem

to northern Israel to join the fight. "Today the people are regaining their revolution."

At a meeting of top security officials Saturday, Netanyahu said the first priority was to "cleanse" southern Israel of infiltrators, followed by a greater retaliation in Gaza.

The Hamas incursion on Simchat Torah, a normally joyous day when Jews complete the annual cycle of reading the Torah scroll, revived painful memories of the 1973 Mideast war practically 50 years to the day, in which Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar, aiming to take back Israeli-occupied territories. Comparisons to one of the most traumatic moments in Israeli history sharpened criticism of Netanyahu and his far-right allies, who had campaigned on more aggressive action against threats from Gaza. Political commentators lambasted the government over its failure to anticipate what appeared to be a Hamas attack unseen in its level of planning and coordination.

Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group congratulated Hamas, praising the attack as a response to "Israeli crimes". AP

PM affirms solidarity with Israel, surprise assault chills thaw in region

The past, however, has struck back. While New Delhi has not yet made a statement officially through the Ministry of External Affairs, PM Narendra Modi made two points in his short post on X: he expressed shock at what he called "terrorist attacks" and conveyed "solidarity with Israel".

gagements. Israel has been one of India's most reliable and key defence and security partners in the world. But India navigates a complicated neighbourhood in west Asia, where it has friends on both, or rather many sides of the aisle — Saudi Arabia, Iran, Israel and the UAE to name the four major powers in the region.

The PM's statement does not name and blame the Hamas militant group but empathises and focuses on the "innocent victims" and "Israel at this difficult hour." Its tone, however, marks an unmistakable shift away from the carefully choreographed balancing act that has marked New Delhi's reaction to earlier stand-offs between Israel and Palestinian militants.

Now, the US-brokered Abraham Accords between Israel, UAE and Bahrain will be put to test, and the I2U2 (India, Israel, US and UAE) grouping, which is largely economic, will face headwinds. The recently-announced India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor will confront its first challenge as peace in the region will be shattered with these attacks — visuals of women, children and men being killed are sending shockwaves.

Some are even tagging this as the "third Intifada" — Intifada is an Arabic word that means to "shake off" and, essentially, means uprising. The first lasted from 1987 to 1993, and the second from 2000-2005.

The advisory also provided emergency phone numbers and URLs for Israeli Home Front Command and preparedness brochures.

The advisory was issued in English, Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada. According to the details on the website of the Indian Embassy, there are about 18,000 Indians in Israel: including caregivers employed by Israeli elders, diamond traders, IT professionals and students.

Officials say that about 900 Indian students are studying in Israel, mainly at the doctoral and post-doctoral levels. There are approximately 85,000 Jews of Indian origin in Israel. Israel's Ambassador to India

Naor Gilon thanked the PMO for extending "moral support to Israel". "Israel will prevail," he tweeted.

Said Naor Gilon: "Israel is currently fighting to repel coordinated, large and multi-pronged Palestinian terror attacks. These attacks, which were launched early this morning by Hamas on our civilians, sleeping peacefully in their beds, in cities and villages of the south and central Israel, are war crimes."

The cowardly actions of Hamas, targeting and killing women, children and elderly, injuring hundreds of civilians and firing indiscriminately over 2,000 missiles and rockets at our cities, came during the sacred Jewish holiday of Simchat Torah. Israel will repel this combined assault of rocket fire and ground infiltration of Hamas terrorists and will take any and all actions to protect our citizens. We appreciate the support of the people of India as we stand firm in the face of terrorism," the Israeli envoy said.

While India will invariably support actions against terrorist attacks, Delhi will also gauge the response of the strategic partners from west Asia — especially Saudi Arabia, UAE and Iran — and think through their statements diplomatically.

States flag GST on gaming firms, Centre says not retrospective

authorities till January 31, 2024, for demand orders passed by tax officers till March 2023, with an enhanced pre-deposit of 12.5 per cent of the tax demand against 10 per cent at present.

Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra underlined that it is not retrospective taxation, as liabilities from these companies already existed. "There was some discussion on it (GST notices issued), certain members did raise this issue and they were informed that this is not retrospective in any way because this is how the law was earlier. The law has not been amended retrospectively, so these liabilities were already existing... they were already attracting (GST of 28%) by virtue of entry in betting and gambling. So, because the Council has not decided anything for the past, it's a prospective legislation. Whatever was the law as it existed earlier, it was clarified to them that it is because of this that those notices have gone," he said.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the GST Council has "ceded" the right to impose tax on ENA to the states. "If the states want to tax it, they are welcome to do it. If the states want to leave it, they are welcome to take a call on it. The GST Council is not taking a call to tax it although the right to tax lies here. So, in the interest of states, we have, if I may use the word, ceded, the right to states," she said.

Delhi's Finance Minister Atishi said tax notices are being sent for a much higher amount than the estimated valuation of the gaming industry. "From October 1, this 28 per cent GST (on online gaming) was to be implemented. But tax notices for the last six years calculated at a much higher rate have been sent to online gaming companies," she said. "An industry whose valuation is Rs 23,000 crore, you are slapping a tax notice of Rs 1.5 lakh crore. This is to kill the industry. This shows an unsafe, erratic investment environment in Indian startups," she said, adding that the Centre has not given any assurances on the taxation liability of gaming platforms

were discussions on charges (tax demand notice) on these companies retrospectively. Because DGGI is an independent body, there cannot be any interference. The (GST Council) chairperson said she would make clarifications available to DGGI, if required." Deo said after the Council meeting.

Delhi's Finance Minister Atishi said tax notices are being sent for a much higher amount than the estimated valuation of the gaming industry. "From October 1, this 28 per cent GST (on online gaming) was to be implemented. But tax notices for the last six years calculated at a much higher rate have been sent to online gaming companies," she said. "An industry whose valuation is Rs 23,000 crore, you are slapping a tax notice of Rs 1.5 lakh crore. This is to kill the industry. This shows an unsafe, erratic investment environment in Indian startups," she said, adding that the Centre has not given any assurances on the taxation liability of gaming platforms

and hoped it would be considered going forward.

"A company with a net worth of Rs 4,000 crore cannot pay Rs 16,000 crore as tax. Nowhere does it happen that (when) any new tax is imposed or the rate of taxation is increased, it is done with retrospective effect. Most of the states said this is an anomaly that has to be corrected," said Goa Industries and Panchayat Minister, Mauvin Godinho, who attended the GST Council meeting. "Once they realise it is bad in law, they will automatically withdraw the notices... after it has been brought to the notice of the Council. This issue was raised and discussed... decisions which can lead to closure of the industry will never be taken," he said.

The Council also gave its nod to cap the maximum age of the GST Appellate Tribunal president and members at 70 years and 67 years respectively, as against the earlier age limit of 67 and 65 years. With ENS inputs

India script Asiad history

would rip their shirts and fling their racquets into the stands. The fans, mostly Chinese, reciprocated by humming the song, dancing with them and giving the warmest reception any Indian has received at these Games.

Hangzhou, for that brief moment, seemed like Haryana, until a tiny section of the crowd chanted, "Jaiyou, Yindu!" Come on, India.

For the entire fortnight, India's athletes have endured hostile surroundings with the locals supporting anybody but them. In a dramatic turn of events, on the final night the mood changed.

Chirag and Satwik, with their power-packed entertaining brand game, regaled a hard-to-please nation that is so used to watching top quality badminton. So when the Indian pair showed the spectators some love, they got back a lot more.

The soon-to-be-crowned World No. 1 doubles pair swept the Binjiang Gymnasium off their feet to become the first Indian badminton players to win an Asian Games gold medal, beating South Korea's Choi Solgyu and Kim Won Ho 21-18, 21-16.

A badminton gold in China was a cherry on the cake for India, who finished the Asian Games with their best-ever haul of 107 medals that included 28 gold, 38 silver and 41 bronze. India won six gold medals Saturday, its most in a single day at these games.

The country comfortably surpassed its previous best of 70 medals, achieved in Jakarta five years ago, as the shuttlers, archers, cricketers, wrestlers, kabaddi and chess players all added to the tally on Saturday.

In these Games, whose bizarre shook hands with the inexplicable on a daily basis, the final day of competition had all the drama — from protests to ad-hoc decisions to surreal exhibition of athletic abilities.

The Asiad finale for India began in a district on the outskirts of Hangzhou, in the serene sur-

roundings of the mist-covered Fushu mountains.

Archer Jyothi Vennam began the gold rush by winning her third title of the Games, claiming the individual compound title in addition to the mixed and the women's team gold she had already won. Like her, Ojas Deotale, too, completed his golden hat-trick after defeating compatriot Abhishek Verma in the individual final while 17-year-old Aditi Swami clinched the silver in her Games debut.

The smooth start to the morning descended into almost chaos by noon. The men's kabaddi final between arch-rivals India and Iran saw both sides staging court-side sit-ins, protesting a referee decision. The match was suspended for almost an hour — longer than the 40-minute duration of a normal kabaddi game — and when it finally resumed, India reclaimed the title it had surrendered to Iran five years ago.

Kabaddi wasn't the only venue where breaths were held and tempers frayed in an Asiad where contentious decisions were par for many a course.

India's cricket team, led by Ruturaj Gaikwad, won the gold medal not by defeating Afghanistan in the final, but because they were the higher-seeded side among the two.

Put into bat, Afghanistan were teetering at 112 for 5 after 18.2 overs when it started to rain at the Pingfeng cricket field. The rain never relented and the match didn't resume. So, the organisers decided that the gold medal should be handed to India since they were the higher ranked team.

"We worked hard for these Asian Games and deserved to win the final. Unfortunately for us, India are the top-ranked team in the world, so that's why they are now the gold medalists," Afghanistan's Gulbadan Naib said after the match.

Yet, for India's cricketers, who were competing in the Asian Games for the first time, the feel-

ing of standing on top of the podium was unlike any they had experienced before. "It is something we are not used to, winning a medal," Gaikwad was quoted as saying by the Games news service. "The feeling is slightly different, more emotional for everyone and everyone is really enjoying it."

Amid the off-field drama, the badminton gold shone the brightest. For the sheer depth in competition, the medal, along with the table tennis doubles bronze won by Sutirtha Mukherjee and Ayhika Mukherjee, will rank among India's biggest wins at these Games.

India's badminton coach Pullela Gopichand put Satwik-Chirag's title on par with winning an Olympic medal. Taking shelter in the stadium car park, it seemed Gopichand has the goosebumps as he explained the significance.

"It's a huge win. The Asian Games, in some sense, is tougher than the Olympics... not from the medal scale perspective, where the Olympics would definitely be bigger," Gopichand said. "But if you look at it (the competition) here, Malaysia, Japan, South Korea, Indonesia and China, all have two teams. Almost nine countries have two entries. So that's a tough draw to have. Whereas at the Olympics, you only have the top 13 nations playing so you might not have these many rounds of tough matches."

The enormity of the occasion and the achievement will take some time to sink in for Chirag and Satwik who looked drained after two weeks of intense competition.

The duo came to Hangzhou short on confidence. They leave with a team silver medal and doubles gold. A great gift for their nation and for their hosts, they turned a stadium full of partisan fans into some of their biggest cheerleaders.

For Team India, there couldn't have been a setting more fitting for the Asiad curtains.

From 70 medals to a record 107: How the needle moved

field, powered India's sprint to a record tally of 107 medals that included 35 golds.

The previous best at 2018 Jakarta — 70 medals, 16 gold — had been well and truly relegated to a distant second.

At Sunday's closing ceremony, India's march will flag many positives: Team medals in shooting indicate a new depth of talent; gains in compound archery is good news since the event is likely to be included in the Olympics; the track-and-field domination, the mother sport, added to India's image as a growing sporting nation. And, significantly, the badminton gold and table tennis bronze made China sit up and acknowledge India's presence in a discipline they have made their own — and for long taken their domination for granted.

Of course, an Asiad bounty doesn't translate into a medal rush at the Paris Olympics next year — a bunch of medals in Hangzhou have come in events that aren't in the Olympics and in many, the level of competition will increase several fold.

That, however, doesn't detract from India's sporting consistency that the world woke up to after Neeraj Chopra's gold at Tokyo Olympics two years ago.

The one big reason for the across-the-board performance spike is the steady rise of in government funding of the Olympic disciplines, primarily under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme. With no scarcity of financial resources, the quality of coaches, sports science experts and exposure trips abroad, all have added up to one word: improvement.

An illustrative case is archery: For the sport that has a big medal kitty, the government

spent Rs 24 crore in 2022-23. The federation tied up with NTPC in a deal worth Rs 115 crore over a period of five years, with an additional Rs 15 crore for one-time support to build infrastructure.

Approximately Rs 2 crore was spent on hiring coaches from South Korea and Italy, getting sports performance and neuro-science experts from the US as well as getting 50 Indian coaches "exposed" to international seminars.

Another Rs 3 crore was spent on national camps, where psychologists, nutritionists, strength and conditioning experts, were employed along with using video analysis software.

This investment paid dividends.

From just two archery medals in 2018, the count went up to nine in 2023. The compound archers completed a clean sweep of all the five gold medals on offer. Archers Jyothi Surekha Vennam and Ojas Pravin Deotale, with three gold medals each, were the most successful athletes of this Games.

There are similar stories in other sports too — and the results are telling. In 2018, India won medals in 18 different sporting disciplines, which went up to 22 in 2023. At both editions, the top two contributions came from athletics and shooting, but Hangzhou saw an increase from 20 to 29 in athletics while shooters brought home 22 medals in comparison to just nine the last time around. These two events alone accounted for a combined increase of 22.

In shooting, the addition of team events pushed the medal tally up but it also showed the

improving depth in various categories as Indian shooters went toe-to-toe with China here.

Athletics was always expected to ring in the medals, but some impressive achievements are stand-outs. For the first time, India had a women's javelin gold through Annu Rani, a men's 3000-m steeplechase winner in Avinash Sable.

Chopra and Kishore Kumar Jena clinched a first ever 1-2 in javelin for India, while Tejaswin Shankar's decathlon silver with a national record was a significant moment. And no one will forget Parul Chaudhary's dream late sprint to gold in the women's 5000 m. Aditi Ashok's brilliant silver in golf, two bronze medals in roller skating and one in canoeing were additions from events where India didn't win a medal in 2018. The addition of chess and cricket to the events roster meant India won two additional medals each from these two events.

While, on paper, badminton accounted for just an increase of one medal, it was a historic showing by Indian shuttlers in Hangzhou as they finally ended the wait for a first ever gold, thanks to Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty. The men's team also reached the final for the first time in Asiad history, clinching silver, while HS Prannoy's bronze was the first in men's singles since 1982.

The five events where India saw a dip were tennis, bridge, kurash, wushu and table tennis. But in table tennis, the bronze won by Sutirtha Mukherjee and Ayhika Mukherjee — they defeated the strong Chinese — was actually one of the most significant among the 107 medals.



Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti in Kolkata on Saturday. ANI

Never deprived West Bengal of MNREGA dues: Union Minister

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, OCTOBER 7

UNION MINISTER Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti on Saturday countered the Trinamool Congress (TMC), saying that the BJP-led government at the Centre never deprived West Bengal of its MNREGA dues and statistics of years are "indicative" of that.

The remarks from the Union Minister of State for Rural Development came at a time when the Trinamool Congress (TMC) is organising a sit-in outside Raj Bhavan, demanding that the Centre release pending funds to the state under various social welfare schemes.

Addressing a press conference at BJP party office in Salt Lake area of the city, the Union Minister alleged that there have been discrepancies in the utilisation of MNREGA funds in Bengal. "I wanted to meet them (Abhishek Banerjee and other TMC leaders in Delhi) and waited nearly two-and-a-half hours for them. But they kept shifting goalposts on the number of members of their delegation. Their claim that I ran away from Krishi Bhavan is a complete lie," she said.

TMC national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee and party members along with those engaged in MGNREGA work, recently staged a protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi and marched to the Rural Development Ministry at Krishi Bhawan where they were scheduled to meet Jyoti.

NRI woman gets death for killing husband

MANISH SAHU LUCKNOW, OCTOBER 7

A SHAHJAHANPUR court Saturday handed down death sentence to a 38-year-old British woman and life imprisonment to her friend for murdering the former's NRI husband in Shahjahanpur's Banda in 2016.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Pankaj Kumar Srivastava held Ramandeep Kaur and her friend and accomplice Gurpreet Singh guilty of murdering Ramandeep's 34-year-old husband Sukhjeet Singh and handed down the death sentence and life imprisonment.

"Of the total 17 prosecutions examined by the court, the witness of Ramandeep's nine-year-old son Arjun Singh, the sole eyewitness of the incident, was crucial. Arjun explained to the court how his mother and Gurpreet killed his father in his sleep in their house," said Shahjahanpur government counsel Shree Pal Verma.

On October 5, the court held Ramandeep and Gurpreet guilty, following which they were taken into custody.

The court held them guilty under IPC for murder and acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention. The court also held Gurpreet guilty under the Arms Act and sentenced him to three years of imprisonment.

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IMPORTANT DATES & EVENTS

09.10.2023 (Monday) from 11:00 AM Opening of Helpdesk, Commencement of Registration & EMD Submission	06.11.2023 (Monday) upto 06:00 PM Closing Time of Registration & EMD Submission	07.11.2023 (Tuesday) Bidding for Function Sites, Kiosks, Mobile Tower Sites, CNG/Green Fuel Sites and Institutional Plots
08.11.2023 (Wednesday) Bidding for Industrial, Residential and Small Size Residential Plots	09.11.2023 (Thursday) Bidding for Commercial & Group Housing Plots, Janak Place Shops and Built up Shops	



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For further details contact: Commissioner (Land Disposal), Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi-110 023

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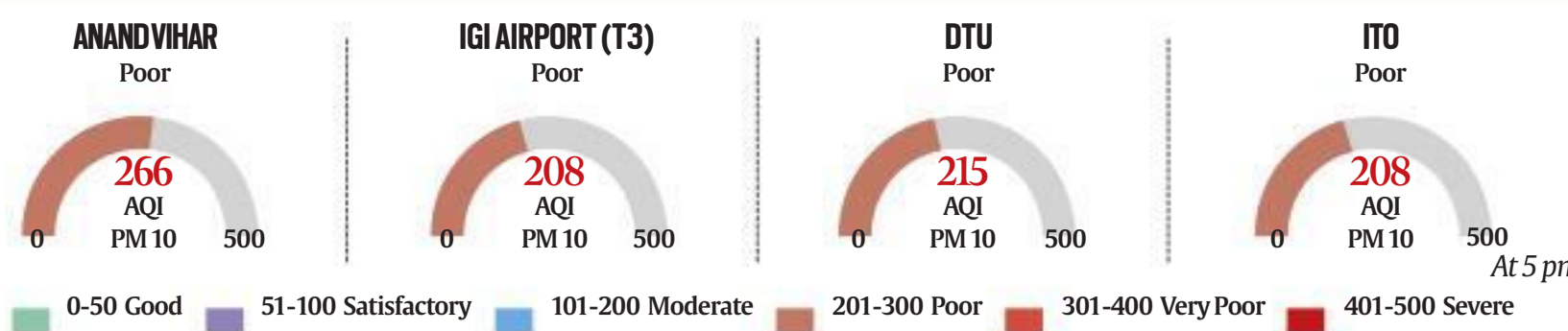
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4 THE CITY



SKYWATCH
FORECAST: October 8
 Clear sky, Mist in the morning.
MAX: 36 **MIN: 21**
 1°C below normal 2.3°C below normal

HARDLOOK

Delhi's liquor case shadow

With Sanjay Singh's arrest and Manish Sisodia's bail hearing bringing the Delhi Excise policy case front and centre again, *The Indian Express* takes a look at the arrests made, bail granted, and what the courts have said about the dramatis personae so far

NIRBHAY THAKUR
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

AN AAP MINISTER, a Rajya Sabha MP, several businessmen — multiple arrests have been made over the past year in two cases filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for alleged irregularities in the formulation and implementation of the Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22. *The Indian Express* takes a look at the key players and the status of the case against them.

WHO: Vijay Nair, AAP communications in-charge.

ALLEGED ROLE AS PER ED CHARGESHEET: Accused of being a middle-

man between the 'South Group' which allegedly gave Rs 100 crore as kickbacks to enter the liquor retail segment in the Capital, and the AAP. Also accused of laundering money received as kickbacks during AAP's Goa Assembly poll campaign.



AAP workers protesting Sanjay Singh's arrest. Amit Mehra

former Akali Dal MLA Deep Malhotra; and others in connection with its probe.

"The attached assets worth Rs 52.24 crore include immovable properties worth Rs 7.29 crore — two immovable properties of Manish Sisodia and his wife Seema, land/flat of Rajesh Joshi/Chariot Productions Media Pvt Ltd. and land/flat of Gautam Malhotra. The attachment also includes movable assets worth Rs 44.29 crore including bank balances of Manish Sisodia (Rs 11.49 lakh), Brindco Sales Pvt. Ltd. (Rs 16.45 crore) and others," an ED spokesperson said.

On July 8 last year, Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar sent a report to L-G VK Saxena and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal flagging "deviations" from laid-down procedures in the formulation of the excise policy. It flagged the apparent reversal of Sisodia's earlier policy on dry days. As per the report, extension of the licence period without an increase in fee prima facie led to "undue benefit" to licensees without "any justification".

CASE STATUS: Sisodia was first arrested by the CBI in February and by the ED in March. In the ED's chargesheet, Sisodia was named a "key conspirator".

Earlier this month, while hearing his bail plea, the Supreme Court asked the CBI and ED if there was any evidence to connect the proceeds of the alleged money laundering activity with the AAP leader. "Where is the evidence? Dinesh Arora himself is the recipient... Except for the statement of Dinesh Arora, is there any other evidence?" Justice Sanjiv Khanna, presiding over a bench that also comprised Justice S V Bhatti, asked Additional Solicitor General SV Raju who appeared for the ED and CBI in the matter.

"How will you establish money laundering by Sisodia factually and legally?... He may be aware it may be used, as per your case, but he never came in actual physical possession," the apex court had said. "You have to establish a chain... This doesn't fully establish," Justice Khanna said. "You see, the money has to flow from the liquor lobby to the person.

WHO: Manish Sisodia, former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister and then Excise Minister.

ALLEGED ROLE AS PER ED CHARGESHEET: Accused of extra-procedural interference in framing the new excise policy, tweaking it for the benefit of select liquor entities, and causing loss of several hundred crore to state exchequer in excise revenue.



The ED had earlier attached assets belonging to Sisodia; owner of Brindco Spirits Amandeep Singh Dhali; Rajesh Joshi, director of a private firm involved in ad campaigns; Gautam Malhotra, son of liquor baron and

Both of us agree it is difficult to establish the chain because everything is done under cover... But that's where your competence will come in," he said, adding the case against Sisodia will fall flat.

Sisodia's counsel Dayan Krishnan had earlier said, "Not a single penny has been traced to me. So they say Vijay Nair portrayed himself as the representative of Sisodia. Laughable to say the least... We are talking about a premium investigating agency. Why have they not been able to trace a single penny to me?"

WHO: Dinesh Arora, Delhi-based restaurateur. He is involved in operations of several restaurants across Delhi-NCR, including Chica Delhi, Unplugged Courtyard, and La Roca Aerocity.

ALLEGED ROLE AS PER ED CHARGESHEET: Accused of being a "conduit for kickbacks" between the 'South group' and AAP.



The ED claimed Arora told them he had spoken to many restaurant owners at Sanjay Singh's request and "arranged cheques amounting to Rs 82 lakh for collection of party funds for the upcoming elections". It also claimed Arora told officials he met Sisodia five-six times and CM Kejriwal once.

"As elaborated... Amit Arora paid Rs 2.2 crore to Sisodia through Dinesh Arora for getting policy changes in his favour in the GoM report/excise policy 2021-22. This amount is directly a bribe/kickback to a government functionary and is proceeds of crime under section 2(1)(u) of PMLA, 2002. In this manner, Sisodia participated in the generation of this proceeds of crime," the ED said in May.

CASE STATUS: CBI arrested Arora last year. In November, he turned approver and got bail. This July, he was arrested by the ED. He later became an approver in the ED case as well.

WHO: Sanjay Singh, AAP Rajya Sabha MP.

ALLEGED ROLE AS PER ED CHARGESHEET: The agency,

which arrested Singh Wednesday, called him a "key conspirator".



It sought 10-day custody, alleging that Rs 2 crore illegal cash changed hands at Singh's official North Avenue residence.

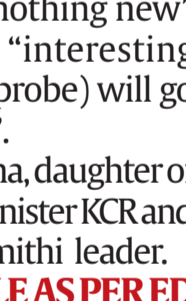
"Sanjay Singh exploited and gained illegal money/kickbacks, which is proceeds of crime generated from the liquor policy (2021-22) scam... (he) has been part of the conspiracy of collecting kickbacks from liquor groups... (he) has a close relationship with Dinesh Arora since 2017 as revealed by (the latter) as well as from his call records," the ED application stated.

CASE STATUS: Sent to 5-day ED custody Thursday after approver Dinesh Arora's statements. In its order, Judge MK Nagpal had said, "This bribe or kickback amount of Rs 2 crore received by the accused is alleged to have been as a part and in furtherance of criminal conspiracy of the scheduled offences case of CBI. It prima facie appears from material placed before this court that this amount was delivered at residence of this accused... and CDRs and cell location chart of mobile phones of... employee of approver Dinesh Arora and of the... associate of accused are there to corroborate this claim..."

Singh's counsel said the ED investigation "is nothing new" and is one of the "interesting cases where the (probe) will go on and never end".

WHO: K Kavitha, daughter of Telangana Chief Minister KCR and Bharat Rashtra Samithi leader.

ALLEGED ROLE AS PER ED CHARGESHEET: The ED alleged Kavitha is one of the prominent members of the 'South group'. Others alleged to be part of the group include Ongole MP Magunta Srinivasulu Reddy's son Raghav Magunta, P Sarath Chandra Reddy, son of P V



Ramprasad Reddy and co-founder of Hyderabad-based Aurobindo Pharma.

According to the ED, the South Group "secured uninhibited access, undue favours, attained stakes in established wholesale businesses and multiple retail zones (over and above what was allowed in the policy)". The ED complaint states that to "recover kickbacks given by the South Group, partners of the 'South Group' were given a 65% stake in M/s Indospirit" in collusion with its owner Sameer Mahendru, also an accused in this case.

CASE STATUS: Kavitha has not been arrested in the case. She was, however, summoned by the ED in September. She was earlier questioned by the agency in March. The Supreme Court later asked the ED to not summon Kavitha for questioning before November 20, when her plea challenging the central agency's summons will be heard.

WHO: Sameer Mahendru, Managing Director of M/s Indospirit Group.

ALLEGED ROLE AS PER ED CHARGESHEET: Calling him the 'kingpin' of the policy, the ED said Mahendru "used proxy/dummy persons to conceal the real owner of his businesses".



As per the ED case, Mahendru had a 35% partnership stake in Indospirit LLP, which got a wholesale L1 licence. He also obtained two retail zone licences under the name of Khao Gali restaurants which is under the name of his father-in-law "but (he) used to take all financial decisions in Khao Gali" and was the beneficial owner of the company, it is alleged. The ED alleged the profit the company made between November 17, 2011, and August 31, 2022, of Rs 50 crore, is "nothing but undue benefit generated out of criminal activities".

The ED alleged Mahendru was directly/indirectly controlling manufacturing, wholesale and retail businesses in violation of the excise policy. "He extended his scheme of cartelisation beyond his own entities by defeating the objectives of the policy... he was also involved in heavy kickback in advance and allowed dummy partners in Indospirit," the remand application read.

Mahendru allegedly told the ED that when he was initially told by Nair that the South Group "was keen on investing in Delhi business, that they had deep pockets, political connections and friends of Kejriwal", he resisted joining this partnership as he felt the group wanted to own a stake in his company without making much investment.

CASE STATUS: Mahendru was arrested by ED last September. The Delhi High Court in July granted him six weeks' interim bail on medical grounds. It later refused to extend it. A Delhi court also denied him interim bail.

EXCISE POLICY: COURT DISPOSES OF PLEA

ED cited pesticide use, tried to shift me out of lock-up: Singh to court

JIGNASA SINHA & JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

A DELHI court Saturday disposed of an application moved by AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh, who alleged the Enforcement Directorate (ED) was creating "fictitious" grounds by citing pest control as a reason to shift him to a local police station lockup where he could be tortured far from the line of sight of a CCTV.

Special Judge Vikas Dhull disposed of the plea after the ED clarified that the pest control was pre-planned and it had no intention of shifting Singh. The judge observed the plea had become infructuous after the ED's submissions. Singh was arrested by the ED in connection with the alleged Delhi excise scam earlier this week and sent to 5-day custody.

Through his counsel, Singh has expressed apprehensions for his safety, citing an alleged bid by the agency to shift him to a police lockup late in the night on October 5 on the basis of "weird and strange" reasons.

Dr Farrukh Khan, Changhez Khan and Prakash Priyadarshi, advocates who moved the application on behalf of Singh following their meeting with him after his first night in custody on October 5, stated that late in the night, the ED tried to shift him from the premises of its headquarters at Dr A P J Abdul Kalam Road to Tughlak Road police station citing spraying of pesticide in the cell where he had been

Special Judge Vikas Dhull disposed of the plea after ED clarified that the pest control was pre-planned and it had no intention of shifting Singh

lodged.

"... On being asked about the reason for the said shifting... the applicant/accused was provided with very weird and strange reply... that the said proposed shifting is being initiated due to use of pesticide in the lock-up..." the application said, adding that Singh had reasonable apprehensions that this was being done on "fictitious" grounds as part of a veiled bid to subject him to torture.

"... It is also beyond reasonable comprehension... that the so-called premier investigating agency... has only one lock-up in the entire headquarters... even if the pesticide, as claimed, has been used in said lock-up... the applicant/accused ought to have been shifted to another lock-up/remand room situated at the Directorate of Enforcement's Headquarters..." the application further stated.

After Singh refused to be shifted, according to the application, he was "made to sleep outside the lock up and was subject to inhuman treatment".

The application also stated that according to the court's orders granting five-day custody to the ED, the agency was required

to ensure that Singh's interrogation "only be conducted in such place having CCTV coverage, in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, and the said CCTV footage shall also be preserved".

"... In lieu of the above-said direction, as contained in para 15 of the order... the respondent is only trying to shift the applicant/accused... so as to purposefully deviate and defy from direction..." it stated.

The plea requested that directions be issued to not shift Singh to any other location from its headquarters till he was in the ED's custody.

In response, the special counsel for ED submitted that the pest control was taken up in the lockup at the ED's office, which was planned on October 3, prior to lodging Singh there.

"It is further submitted that since the applicant/accused had refused to be shifted to the other place due to pesticide treatment in the lockup room, therefore, his consent was taken in writing for keeping him in the interrogation room at the ED office," the ED submitted.

The agency's counsel further submitted that the ED has no intention of shifting the AAP MP to the lockup at Tughlak Road police station since the work of bug control at the lockup in the ED office was completed.

"In light of submissions made... the application filed by applicant/accused has become infructuous and stands disposed of accordingly," the judge observed.

Monu Manesar sent to four-day custody of Gurgaon police

AISWARYA RAJ
GURGAON, OCTOBER 7

'COW VIGILANTE' Mohit Yadav alias Monu Manesar was remanded to four-day Gurgaon Police custody in connection with an attempted murder case in Pataudi, Saturday.

Tarannum Khan, Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate of a local court, remanded Monu to four-day custody after police sought remand for seven days. The remand application submitted by police said they needed to recover the empty cartridges used in the commission of the offence. Police also sought remand to identify and probe Monu's connections with various gangsters.

Following his arrest last month, Monu had been lodged in a jail in Rajasthan's Bharatpur in connection with the murder of Junaid and Nasir who were allegedly killed by cow vigilantes after they were suspected of transporting cattle in February.

As per the application filed by police: "The accused Monu Manesar was issued a production warrant for 17.09.2023 from the Honourable court and was sent to Bharatpur District Jail on 25.09.2023. Subsequently, a production warrant for the accused was issued from Ajmer District Jail for 07.10.2023, and he was brought for investigation with the permission of the Honourable court. During investigation, accused



Police also sought Monu's remand to probe his connections with gangsters

Monu alias Mohit made statements about the crime and it is necessary to recover the empty cartridges, which are kept in the gun house of Shahpura (Kolhapur), Maharashtra. The identification of the accused Monu alias Mohit's connections with various gangsters needs to be thoroughly investigated."

The Gurgaon Police Crime Branch will also question Monu regarding his connection with gangsters. A senior officer, on condition of anonymity, said, "We will be questioning him to unearth various angles; this will include the link he is suspected to have with gangster Lawrence Bishnoi."

The case dates to a clash in February in Haryana's Pataudi. Four people were injured, including Mohin Khan, 20, who suffered a gunshot wound.

The charges against Monu in this case include IPC sections of rioting, unlawful assembly, criminal conspiracy, attempt to murder, disappearance of evidence and section 25 of the Arms Act.

BRIEFLY

2020 riots: Man who pointed gun at cop gets bail

New Delhi: Shahrukh Pathan, who allegedly pointed a pistol at a policeman and threatened to kill him during the 2020 Northeast Delhi riots, was granted bail Saturday. Pathan, however, will remain in jail as he is an accused in another rioting case. Additional Sessions Judge Amitabh Rawat pronounced the order on a bail plea by Pathan, who was accused of being part of a riotous mob that inflicted gunshot injury to a person.

Jewellery shop heist: Accused sent to judicial custody

New Delhi: A court Saturday sent Lokesh Srivas, the main accused in the Bhogal jewellery shop burglary, to seven days of judicial custody. Srivas, who was earlier brought to the national capital from Chhattisgarh on a transit remand on Wednesday, was sent to two days of police custody the next day. PTI

Delhi prisons get devices to trace phones inside cells

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

THE DELHI Prisons has procured 10 non-linear junction detectors from a US-based firm which will help them detect metal objects and phones hidden inside cells, officers said. The detectors can detect objects up to a depth of two feet in the ground or concrete, they added.

Earlier, prison authorities had procured two non-linear junction detectors in 2021 on a trial basis. "Following satisfactory results, we have procured 10 such devices to help us detect these hidden objects inside inmates' cells," added officers.

Each of these devices cost Rs 15 lakh. The devices will be used in all jails of Tihar, Mandoli and Rohini.

Breach in Haryana channel, city's water supply to be hit for two days

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

WATER SUPPLY is set to be disrupted in several parts of the city for at least the next two days after a channel that brings raw water from Haryana to Delhi was "breached," according to the Delhi Jal Board (DJB).

The DJB said Saturday that the Carrier Lined Channel (CLC) was breached near Barwasni village in Sonapat, Haryana, and water production would be affected from the Haiderpur Phase I and II water treatment plants, and Bawana, Dwarka and Nangloi plants, for the next two days.

Till the CLC is restored, water will only be available at low pressure. Parts of the city that will be hit include North, Northwest,



Parts of the city that will be hit include North, Northwest, West and parts of South Delhi including Delhi Cantt. Archive

West and parts of South Delhi including Delhi Cantt area.

These water treatment plants together produce around 357 MGD (million gallons per day) of water. The Haiderpur

plant produces around 240 MGD of water, while the plant at Nangloi produces around 45 MGD, Dwarka 52 MGD, and Bawana 20 MGD. The DJB usually produces around 990 MGD

of water, which is below the estimated demand of around 1,380 MGD for the city.

The CLC carries a part of Delhi's raw water supply from Haryana — from the Hathnikund barrage, the Western Yamuna Canal carries water from the river to Munak, and then through the CLC and the Delhi Sub Branch water reaches the water treatment plants.

The CLC itself carries around 750 cusecs of water from Munak to Haiderpur.

The DJB in a communication issued on Saturday said that raw water received through the CLC and the Delhi Sub Branch had reduced.

In a similar incident in June this year, the CLC had developed cracks at Barwasni village in Sonapat, affecting water supply in Delhi.

Writer Ambai wins Shakti Bhatt Literary Prize for body of work

UDBHAV SETH
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

WRITER CS Lakshmi, popularly known by her pseudonym Ambai, has won the Shakti Bhatt Literary Prize for her decades of fiction and non-fiction on women's rights and activism.

"I began writing at the age of 16 and I am going to be 79 next month," shared Lakshmi, who

was born in Tamil Nadu and has published in both English and Tamil, "So my world view has surely changed, not in terms of its fundamental aspects but in terms of its practical aspects."

"I write only what I honestly want to write and not for whatever is demanded by a group of readers. I don't even know if I have a committed readership. The need for compromise comes when one feels that money is an important

factor in life. That has not been so for me," she shared in a statement.

Lakshmi has been an active academic in women's studies and founded SPARROW (Sound and Picture Archives for Research on Women) in 1988, a project to archive women's art. It includes banks of oral narratives, text and visuals, and digital art. Funding was hard to come by at first, but money started coming in from foundations and governments.

Anti-dust campaign kicks off

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

A MONTH-LONG anti-dust campaign to control air pollution caused by dust began in Delhi Saturday. A total of 591 teams of 13 departments and agencies, including DDA, Delhi Pollution Control Committee, MCD, PWD and DJB, have been deployed for inspections, according to Environment Minister Gopal Rai.

The construction and demolition sites will follow norms pertaining to dust control, like setting up anti-smog guns, covering up the construction area with tarpaulin or green net; 82 mechanical road sweeping machines, 530 water sprinklers, 258 mobile anti-smog guns are being deployed for the anti-dust campaign.

As part of the Graded Response Action Plan, Stage 1 of which kicked-in Friday, government departments will ensure that dust mitigation measures are put into practice at construction sites and water sprinkling is done along roads.

Meanwhile, Rai inspected the Wazirpur area Saturday, as it is among the 13 air pollution hotspots in the city, where traffic congestion and construction are sources of pollution. The AQI in Delhi on Saturday remained in the 'poor' category at 216.

SWEeper ARRESTED, SAY POLICE

Secretly filmed in washroom during IIT-D fest: DU students

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

A FEW women students from a Delhi University college alleged that they were secretly filmed while they were changing inside a washroom at IIT-Delhi, for a fashion show at the institute's fest, on Friday.

In a video posted on social media, they also alleged that no action was taken against the accused by the administration.

One of the students posted on X (formerly Twitter) and alleged, "On 6.10.23, (our society) participated in a fashion show at IIT-Delhi and faced a really traumatic experience. A house-keeper recorded alleged videos while some girls were changing in the washroom. Shame! No action has been taken yet."

On Saturday, DCP (West) Manoj C on Saturday said a 20-year-old contractual sweeper has been arrested and sent to judicial custody. Further investigation is under progress," said the DCP.

On Saturday afternoon, IIT-Delhi issued a statement and said, "The accused, in an unfortunate and regrettable incident dated October 6, was immedi-



IIT-Delhi, in a statement Saturday afternoon, said it "treated the matter with the utmost seriousness and urgency". Archive

ately handed over to the Delhi Police which is investigating the matter. He was identified as an employee of an agency to which housekeeping services have been outsourced."

The institute added that it "treated the matter with the utmost seriousness and urgency it deserved. The Institute is fully cooperating with the police and has a zero-tolerance policy for any such instances. The institute has also strengthened existing

measures to ensure a safe and secure environment for all students and visitors at the fest."

Newly elected Delhi University Students' Union President Tushar Dedha Saturday wrote to the SHO of Kishangarh police station requesting "urgent action in the tragic incident".

In his letter, Dedha said, "The students claimed that someone... made a private video of them while changing clothes... I ask for strict and immediate action, putting a jammer to stop the video from spreading... forcing the IIT Delhi administration to identify... and take immediate strict action against him/them."

Similar incidents of sexual harassment were reported at Delhi University colleges over the past few years.

In March, students of Indraprastha College for Women had alleged that several men scaled the boundary walls of the college during a two-day fest and harassed several women students.

A similar incident was reported during an event at Miranda House College last year in October.

Allegations against me false and motivated: Brij Bhushan

NIRBHAY THAKUR
GURGAON, OCTOBER 7

FORMER WRESTLING Federation of India (WFI) president and BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh claimed at a city court Saturday that the allegations against him, in the sexual harassment case filed by six wrestlers, are false and motivated.

He also sought to question the nature of the grievances of the female wrestlers and the changes incorporated in them over time, terming the latter "cosmetic and improved" to implicate him.

"Nothing happens in this bizarre world without reason," Singh said in court. He also said the real grievances of the wrestlers weren't sexual harassment but "something else".

"Almost every complainant changed her statement. Cosmetic and improved statements were given to implicate the accused," Advocate Rajiv Mohan, representing Bhushan, told the court.

He also added that some complaints were not supported by a single independent witness. It was also argued by Mohan that no sexual advances were made by the accused.

Mohan said that one of the



Bhushan is facing allegations of sexual harassment and stalking among others by six women wrestlers. PTI

complainants, who had filed a complaint 11 years after the alleged incident, had falsely complained against Bhushan because she wasn't selected for a tournament in 2015.

He said another complainant who couldn't get selected in a tournament because her birth certificate was missing had given

statements to falsely implicate Singh.

Reading a complaint where a wrestler had said that she hesitated to complain against the accused, Mohan said that the complainant "likes her career more than her modesty".

As Mohan was reading the complaints where it was alleged that he inappropriately touched the wrestler under the pretext of checking her breath, Additional Metropolitan Magistrate Harjeet Singh Jaspal asked the advocate whether Bhushan was qualified to check the breathing of athletes.

The court of ACMM Jaspal was hearing arguments on the charge against Bhushan, who is facing allegations of sexual harassment and stalking among others by six women wrestlers. The matter will now be heard on October 16, where Mohan will make further arguments.

Atishi makes case for online gaming firms, BJP calls it 'shocking'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

DELHI FINANCE Minister Atishi sought to make a case for the rapidly growing online gaming industry from what she termed the heavy burden of taxes, in addition to demanding the withdrawal of tax notices worth Rs 1.5 lakh crore, issued by the central government to it at the 52nd GST Council meeting.

The BJP termed Atishi's support for the industry "shocking", which is "ruining lakhs of lives" across the nation, especially in small towns.

"While the central government talks about promoting startups, the GST Council seems bent on burdening the emerging online gaming industry with excessive taxes," Atishi said prior to the meeting earlier during the day.

At the meeting, Atishi submitted that the current valuation of the industry in the country stood at Rs 23,000 crore and subjecting it to a tax rate of 28% would be detrimental.

Terming them unstable, Atishi sought to argue that such tax conditions will impact the industry and other sectors.

"Many companies will be on the verge of closure, leading to unemployment for over 50,000 young programmers

and web developers who work in this sector; 40 crore users will be impacted by an erratic tax decision," she said.

Atishi also said that the GST Council's decisions could potentially destroy the "sunrise sector" of the Indian startup ecosystem.

"The online gaming sector is currently the largest and fastest-growing sector in the startup industry, with more than 50,000 people working in it. Foreign investors have poured in investments exceeding 17,000 crore rupees in the sector. Over 400 million people engage in gaming platforms for entertainment, playing games," she said.

At its 50th meeting, the GST Council, she said, had decided to impose a 28% GST on online gaming sector, which is the highest GST tax bracket, adding that Delhi had dissented against the decision.

Reacting to Atishi's submissions, Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said it was shocking to see Delhi's Finance Minister supporting online gaming. "Everybody knows that online gaming is another form of gambling with little lower stakes... It seems the problem with Atishi is that she has to oppose every decision of the central government and so she has today criticised centre for levying tax on online gaming," Kapoor added.

Apple airpods, gold ornaments: 7 loaders held for theft at IGIA

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

SEVEN LOADERS at the Delhi Airport were arrested for their alleged involvement in stealing ornaments and electronic devices from bags of passengers, officers said Saturday. Police recovered a huge stash of gold ornaments, luxury watches, Apple airpods and foreign currency from the accused.

An immediate FIR was lodged on the complaint of a passenger, Paramjeet Kaur, a resident of Punjab's Taran Taran, who flew to Delhi from Melbourne on September 16, police said. "She had to take another flight from Delhi to Amritsar. While boarding the flight to Amritsar, her baggage was found to be overweight and she opened her bags to adjust the articles. All this time, her wheelchair assistant, whom she had booked, was observing her," DCP (IGI Airport) Devesh Mahla said.

Paramjeet alleged that when reached home, she realised her gold valuables were missing from her purse, which was in her checked-in

baggage. A case was lodged with the IGI Airport police station and the loaders of the batch were thoroughly frisked and the terminal's CCTVs were also checked. Subsequently, police said they found a video in the phone of one of the loaders, Manoj Kumar, sent to him by another loader, Hari Darshan, who is heard saying that "this gold is fake and no one will buy it".

The two men confessed to their crime. "During questioning, Manoj claimed to have stolen many items from bags of passengers in connivance with officials," said the DCP.

Five more loaders were arrested for allegedly being part of the racket.

The DCP said a similar incident occurred in August when Goa resident Rajesh Sen travelled from Delhi to Goa through Air Vistara on August 16 and handed over his luggage for check-in at the Air Vistara counter at IGI Airport. "He alleged his check-in baggage had a luxury watch worth more than Rs 4 lakh, but it was missing after he collected his check-in baggage at the Goa airport," the DCP said.

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न पुण्यं न पापं न सौख्यं न दुःखम् न मंत्रो न तीर्थं न वेदा न यज्ञाः ।
अहं भोजनं नैव भोज्यं न भोक्ता चिदानंदरूपः शिवोऽहं शिवोऽहम्
(निर्वाण षट्कम्)

I am beyond virtues, sins, joy or sorrow. I am beyond mantras, pilgrimage, Vedas or yagyas. I am not food, eatable, or its eater. I am of the form of aliveness, eternal bliss, auspiciousness. I am Shiva.
(Nirvana Shatakam)

Adi Kailash

Adi Kailash, also known as Chotta Kailash, is a sacred mountain located in the state of UTTARAKHAND. A religiously significant peak, it is counted among one of the five holy abodes of Lord Shiva.

Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board
uttarakhandtourism.gov.in

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Indian Air Force Day

Indian Air Force: The valiant vanguard

The guiding principle of 'People first, mission always' serves as the cornerstone of the IAF's ethos, propelling the men and women in blue to excel in their roles



Sanjay Kumar Shah
Director (Govt & Public Sector
Advisory) at Nangia Andersen LLP



The Indian Air Force's mission extends beyond national defence to include providing close air support to the Indian Army and Indian Navy. The IAF also plays a crucial role in assisting civil authorities during natural calamities and internal conflicts

After World War-II, the IAF was involved in wars with Pakistan on the western front in 1947, China in 1962 and again Pakistan in 1971 in the eastern theatre. Other major operations undertaken by the IAF include Operation Vijay, Operation Meghdoot, Operation Cactus and Operation Poomalai. Flushing out Pakistani militants during the Kargil conflict in 1999 jointly with Indian Army (Op Safed Sagar) or surgical strike on Balakot terror camps in February 2019 to avenge the assault on the Army convoy; the IAF has defended Indian sov-

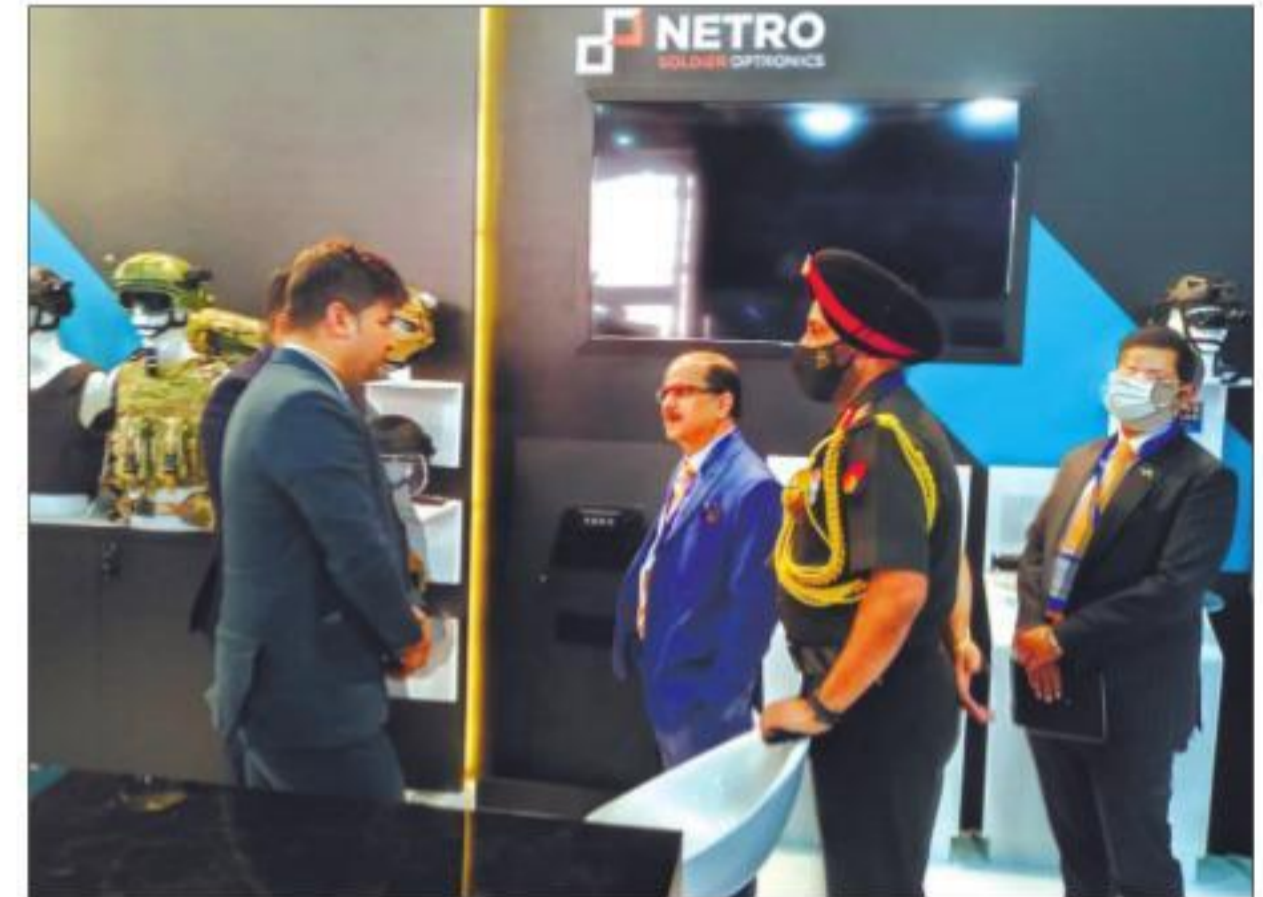
eighty from the high grounds.

The technological advancement processes a knowledge-based strategy over the skill-based conventional tactics. On the path of modernisation IAF has added inventories, heralded effective replacements and upgradation of existing resources to enhance its operational potential. For seamless command & control, extended outreach and an effective 'sensors-to-shooter' loop, the IAF has perfected its networks and embarked on potent space-based asset creation

(tri-services). Apart from LCA, AEW, Globemaster, Apache and Chinook, IAF is waiting to embrace AMCA and FGFA. The modern-day conflict usurps changes in doctrine advocating for more unmanned combat air and ground apparatuses backed by intricate algorithms powered by generative AI & ML in a synergetic environment. The IAF Centre of Excellence for Artificial Intelligence under the aegis of UDAAN (Unit for Digitisation, Automation, Artificial Intelligence and Application Networking) is aimed at high-end computing and big data storage capabilities, coupled with full spectrum AI software suites for enhanced functional capability.

The guiding principle of 'People First, Mission Always' has been the driving force behind the welfare, motivation, and exemplary professionalism displayed by the men in blue. In today's intricate and dynamic world, characterised by the convergence of economic and military power, on its 91st Foundation Day we greet IAF in all gravitas- 'Glory galore waits ashore'.

Charting new horizons in global defence cooperation



As the World Defence Show 2024 gears up for its second edition to be held between 4-8 Feb 2024, in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, India's participation takes a momentous leap, with exhibition space expanding by an impressive 93%. This expansion stands as a remarkable testament to India's growing prominence on the global stage.

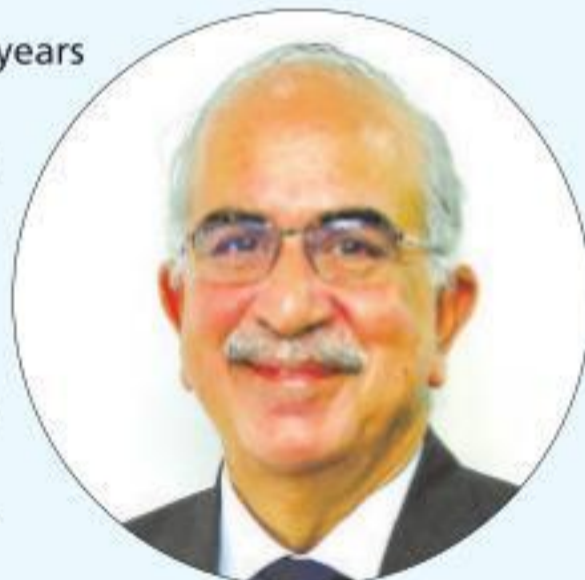
The show serves as a unifying platform for the global defence community, promoting collaboration across borders and facilitating partnerships in technology, intelligence, and hardware. As it enters its second edition, the event is set to showcase exhibitors from more than 60 countries, host 100 official delegations, and attract a diverse global audience. It offers a dynamic platform for engaging presentations, in-

sightful panel discussions, and immersive technology experiences. Under the overarching theme of 'Equipped for Tomorrow', the show introduces 'Journey to the Future' as a pivotal component, unveiling innovative features, exhibits, and premieres that showcase the cutting-edge advancements driving the defence landscape forward.

With its substantial presence of global experts, World Defence show becomes a premier global forum, positioned to extend the reach of international cooperation beyond the event itself. The event invites the global defence community to collaboratively shape the future. With India's heightened presence, the stage is set for the grand unveiling of an era defined by innovation, unity, and progress.



Lockheed Martin extends its heartfelt congratulations to the Indian Air Force for 91 glorious years of service in protecting the Indian skies. As we celebrate IAF Day 2023, we salute the unwavering dedication of the men and women in service and cherish our seven-decade long partnership with the Indian Air Force, from the Super Constellation to the Super Hercules. The C-130J Super Hercules, which supports critical humanitarian, special operations, and disaster relief missions, represents a strong legacy of partnership between the US and India. As we look towards the future, Lockheed Martin remains fully committed to enhancing India's national security through our F-21 offering that packs the most advanced capabilities opening up the path for futuristic adaptations, affordable operating and lifecycle costs, and strategic partnership opportunities. Our F-21 offering will be manufactured by Indians, here in India, for India, and then offered to the world."



MICHAEL FERNANDEZ, Country Head, Lockheed Martin India

BRAHMOS Missile – Galvanising Indian Air Force's Firepower

THE Indian Air Force (IAF) has played a crucial role in every major war that India has fought showing superb capabilities in the face of unique operational challenges. The IAF has unflinchingly carried out its role of defending national airspace and conducting aerial warfare missions during conflict situations.

A formidable weapon that has multiplied the combat potential of the Indian Air Force is the BRAHMOS Air-Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM). The supersonic cruise missile system armed with the frontline Su-30MKI fighter aircraft has become a lethal strike weapon in the IAF's arsenal.

The Su-30MKI armed with BRAHMOS missile is a combination of lethal strike with the ability of air fighting within and beyond the visibility range. It has provided IAF with the capability of attacking targets protected by powerful air defence assets, including aircraft carriers. With its impeccable anti-ship and land-attack power, supersonic BRAHMOS-ALCM can neutralise both maritime and ground-based targets in day-and-night, all-weather conditions from stand-off ranges.

"In our quest for empowering our Armed Forces with the best of the systems, BrahMos continues to provide the most potent weaponry while maintaining cutting-edge technological superiority. The unparalleled combination of BRAHMOS-Sukhoi has em-



powered the IAF to an unprecedented level," remarked Atul D Rane, DG (BrahMos), DRDO and CEO & MD, BrahMos Aerospace.

The air version of BRAHMOS is lighter than its other variants and weighs 2.5 tonne, though it is equally potent in firepower and devastating capability as its range and maximum speed of 290 km and 2.8 Mach respectively remain unchanged. The powerful BRAHMOS Air-Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM) system has been inducted into the IAF in January 2020.

Developed as a joint venture (JV) military-technological programme involving India's DRDO and Russia's NPOM, the suc-

cessful induction of BRAHMOS in all three services has made India the first and only country in the world to complete the "supersonic cruise missile triad".

BRAHMOS has also achieved historic milestones in the flagship "Make In India" programme by successfully indigenising major sub-systems. All launcher systems for the weapon are also being manufactured domestically. 100% of ground support equipment for the weapon complex are also being made in India.

BRAHMOS missile system has significantly proved its mettle in the global weapons export map. After successfully

signing the historic defence export contract with the Republic of Philippines, BrahMos Aerospace is in advanced talks with many more interested friendly countries.

"BRAHMOS has become a fine testimony of 'Aatmanirbharta in Defence' fortifying India's steady rise as an emerging, responsible power of the 21st century and transforming its military and technological prowess at the world stage. We are currently focused on taking this momentum forward to achieve more successful results on the exports front," noted Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Joshi, Dy CEO of BrahMos Aerospace.

BrahMos Aerospace, armed with a full-fledged design centre, an Missile Industrial Consortium, along with active participation from both India and Russia, for producing different sub-systems, a world-class integration, and check-out facilities with stringent quality control, has a strong network of over 200 small and medium Indian public and private defence sector enterprises and institutions.

With a futuristic vision in mind in terms of high-end military technology, BRAHMOS is working on the new, lighter version called BRAHMOS-Next Generation (NG) which will prove to be the ultimate force multiplier.

BrahMos salutes the air warriors on the occasion of the 91st anniversary of the Indian Air Force.

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Indian Air Force Day

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Boosting self-reliance: First for C295 deal

SEPTEMBER marked a significant month for the aerospace industry in India with the Indian Air Force (IAF) taking delivery of the first of the 56, C295 aircraft. The second aircraft is expected to be delivered in May 2024 followed by a steady production rate of one aircraft per month until August 2025. Notably, the remaining 40 aircraft from the IAF's order will be manufactured and assembled at an Assembly Line being established in Vadodara, a collaborative effort between Airbus and Tata Advanced Systems Ltd (TASL).

The C-295 aircraft boasts an impressive payload capacity, capable of accommodating up to 9 tonnes of cargo or approximately 70-71 troops. This remarkable capacity enhances the Indian Air Force's (IAF) operational capabilities, facilitating the efficient transport of both personnel and equipment to diverse locations. Moreover, the aircraft is designed to excel in low-level flight characteristics for tactical missions, capable of flying at speeds as slow as 200-210 km/hr.

Beyond benefits to the end user, the



VIKAS MANRAL
Global aerospace & defence expert

deal is a major step towards meeting self reliance in aerospace sector—a significant leap towards 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' & 'Make In India' initiatives by the government. This would be the first time C295 aircraft will be manufactured outside Europe.

This is the first project of its kind in which a military transport aircraft will be manufactured in India by a private com-



pany. Also the time of the deal looks impeccable as, the biggest defence PSU-Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd is treading on growth path with its "highest-ever revenue from operations of around ₹26,500 crore (provisional and unaudited) for 2022-23 as against ₹24,620 for the previous fiscal and a healthy order book of ₹81,784 crore as on March 31, 2023. With multiple orders for 83 light combat aircraft (LCA) Tejas, 70 HTT-40, 6 Dornier (Do 228) and 156 more 'Prachand' Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) deal on the anvil, HAL will have to focus

on speed of and efficiency for executing these orders seamlessly.

It will be a big respite for IAF & HAL, who were finding it difficult to service the ageing fleet of HS 748 Avro, the 5.1-tonne payload capacity HS 748 Avro is a medium-sized twin-turboprop airliner originally designed by the British firm Avro in the late 1950s. From the early 1960s onwards, they were licence-produced in India by HAL. HAL built 89 Avros, 72 for the IAF and 17 for Indian Airlines. The last aircraft was manufactured in 1988. About 56 planes remain in IAF ser-

vice. The replacement process is planned to complete by 2030-31.

The manufacturing deal for C295 aircraft will certainly be followed by the MRO business for keeping the fleet ready over the lifetime. The deal becomes more important with IAF seeking to procure anywhere between 40-80 aircraft that will seek to replace the old workhorses of the force — AN-32s and, possibly, the IL-76s.

The rise of aircraft manufacturing/ assembly capability by a private player will not only breed healthy competition but also gradually enhance capacity for capturing & executing international orders in India beyond the domestic orders from Indian defence.

Indeed, the successful manufacturing and deployment of the C295 aircraft are pivotal factors in shaping the future of the Indian Aerospace industry. By flattening the learning curve through these collaborations, India can gain access to advanced technologies, expertise, and best practices, ultimately enhancing its aerospace industry's competitiveness.



Pratt & Whitney congratulates Indian Air Force on its 91st Indian Air Force Day. Pratt & Whitney's legacy with IAF goes back several decades – and today, we are proud that our engines are an significant part of IAF's fleet modernisation. From the C-17 Globemaster IIIs to the latest C-295 – Pratt & Whitney's reliable and versatile engines are powering IAF's critical cargo, humanitarian, and tactical missions for the citizens of India. We remain committed to our partnership and continue to invest in the future growth of India's aerospace & defence ecosystem."

ASHMITA SETHI
President and Country Head,
Pratt & Whitney (UTCPL)



On the occasion of the 91st Indian Air Force Day, we salute the valiant guardians of the skies. At Rolls-Royce, we feel honoured to have served the Indian Air Force for all these decades, and proudly reaffirm our commitment to further strengthen this partnership in the years to come. We will also continue to support India's defence indigenisation vision by participating in co-development and co-creation opportunities for critical technologies to be made in India, for the world."

KISHORE JAYARAMAN
President – India and South Asia, Rolls-Royce

HAL delivers first LCA Tejas trainer to IAF

HINDUSTAN Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) handed over the first trainer version of the twin seater Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas to the Indian Air Force (IAF) in Bengaluru. An additional seven LCA twin-seater aircraft are scheduled for delivery next year.

The LCA Tejas twin seater is a lightweight, all-weather multi-role 4.5-generation aircraft designed to meet the training requirements of the IAF and can also seamlessly transition to a fighter role when necessary. It is an amalgamation of contemporary concepts and technologies such



as quadruplex fly-by-wire flight control, carefree manoeuvring, advanced glass cockpit, integrated digital avionics systems and advanced composite materials for the airframe.

The introduction of the LCA twin-seater variant places India among the select group of nations with the ability to develop and deploy such capabilities within their defence forces. This achievement is a significant milestone and a testament to the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative of the Government of India, further enhancing the nation's self-reliance in defence technology.

SMPP: Asia's sole bulletproof manufacturer

SMPP Pvt Ltd has achieved a remarkable milestone by receiving three prestigious national awards from three different Indian defence ministers. These awards recognise our exceptional achievements in developing cutting-edge bullet proof (BP) protection products, safeguarding both soldiers and weapon platforms across land, air and sea. Today, SMPP proudly stands as Asia's sole company and one of just five globally with the expertise to manufacture 'Boron Carbide,' the world's lightest and toughest metalloid, for bulletproof applications.

With a supply of over 2 lakh BP jackets to the Indian Army, besides supply of BP Jackets and Helmets to all central armed police forces, PMFs and state police forces in India and also to the Indian Air Force and the Navy, SMPP is proud to be the only Indian company to be given the BIS certification for meeting the most stringent standards of quality and exporting their products to over 45 countries.

In the fixed and rotary wing aircrafts, SMPP is providing armour protection to various national and international customers of repute including Airbus Helicopters and A-400M aircrafts, LCH and LUH of HAL, Mi-17 helicopters, Chinook, Sea-Sprite and Augusta helicopters etc. All export orders have been won by them through intense global competitions. Add-



on weight being critical for aerial platforms, SMPP uses the world's lightest available protection solutions using Boron Carbide Ceramics. Their integrated solutions offer exceptional ballistic protection against a wide range of threats from 7.62mm AP to 12.7mm AP ammunition. Talking to their executive director, Ashish Kansal who is a graduate from IIT Delhi and double masters in engineering from USA, he said, we offer unique protection solutions for transport aircraft and he-

licopters by manufacturing the shaped ballistic protection plates from Boron Carbide. Traditionally helicopter armour panels have been flat, but we manufacture shaped panels that not only improve protection but also reduce the overall weight of platform. Their monolithic panels have a 'multi-hit' absorption capability of stopping multiple bullet impacts. The nation is proud of SMPP which is producing 100% indigenised products and has several IPRs to their credit.

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8 GOVT & POLITICS

Dhankhar, Gehlot battle of words turns verse as old bonhomie sours amid polls

Vice President and Congress CM trade fireworks over the former's 'frequent' visits to Rajasthan

HAMZA KHAN
JAIPUR, OCTOBER 7

"Khata kya ki humne, pata he nah!" (What was our crime, we don't know)

THIS IS the first line of a poem penned by Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar that he recited in Sikar on Friday. It refers to his "pain and hurt" at being "dragged" into a "political" row by Chief Minister and senior Congress leader Ashok Gehlot over his recent visits to poll-bound Rajasthan.

In the last 10 days, Gehlot has attacked Dhankhar on several occasions over the latter's "frequent" visits to the state. In his first statement against the V-P on September 27, the CM said, "The Vice-President is doing up-down (between Delhi and Rajasthan). Whether it is the Governor or the Vice-President, we respect them... but elections are here. I would want that the Vice-President becomes the President and only then we will welcome him. Please



Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar with CM Ashok Gehlot. File

spare us. Now he is visiting and touring day and night, is there any logic? What logic is this?"

Gehlot also said, "Elections are going on in Rajasthan. If you keep visiting repeatedly what would people think of you? What do you want? These constitutional institutions have a dignity, irrespective of the government of the day."

A day later, he said, "Politicians should come but please do not send the Vice-President, it is a

constitutional post. We respect the President and the Vice-President. Yesterday, the Vice-President came and visited five districts. Kyatukhai, bhair (Is there any logic)? It is election season. If you come now it will send all kinds of message which is not good for democracy."

On Friday, Dhankhar said he was not doing anything wrong and shot back at Gehlot, saying: "Some people ask why I keep

coming again and again... I was surprised because the one who said it hasn't read the Constitution or the law and did not keep the dignity of his post. Had he glanced at the law, he would have found out that India's V-P's travels don't happen all of a sudden, but after much thought, brainstorming and consultation."

The CM's remarks might be surprising for Dhankhar considering the apparent bonhomie between the two, as was visible at a felicitation programme for the V-P in the Rajasthan Assembly in September 2022.

While attacking Dhankhar, Gehlot too said that he has had "good relations" with the former for about 50 years.

Behind Gehlot's "anger" is the spate of visits to the state by the V-P in August-September, and the Jat vote, among other things.

In 2023 so far, the V-P has visited at least 13 districts in Rajasthan — some of them multiple times — which made up over a third of the state's 33 districts (before the creation of new districts,

taking the number now to 53), and account for over half the Assembly seats, at 106 out of the total 200.

In these 13 districts, the BJP currently has 31 of 106 seats. In Jhunjhunu, Tonk and Barmer it has just one each, and two each in Jodhpur, Nagaur and Bikaner.

The V-P has attended programmes at Sainik schools and various educational and other institutions across the state.

He has also interacted with scientists and personnel at various agricultural institutes besides other official engagements, one of which was in Merta City, Nagaur, in May, where he unveiled the statue of former legislator Nathuram Mirdha, who was a freedom fighter and a popular leader among farmers and Jats.

About four months later, Nathuram's granddaughter Jyoti Mirdha, former MP from Nagaur, joined the BJP. In his attack on Dhankhar, Gehlot also charged that the V-P was meeting "local BJP leaders" during his visits.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Army looking at converting logistics units into TA units

Territorial Army hiring interpreters, cyber security experts

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

THE INDIAN Army, in its plan for larger manpower optimisation, is deliberating to convert its logistics and transport units into the Territorial Army (TA), a top defence source said on Thursday.

The TA, according to the source, is recruiting interpreters for India-China border personnel meetings (BPM) and cyber security experts to support the Army. "It is in a deliberation stage right now. We are discussing conversion of logistics and transport units among other administrative units into TA," the source said, adding that the move will have huge financial implications as it will reduce the burgeoning pay and pension burden on the government at present.

A Territorial Army's role is to effectively relieve the regular Army of various static duties such as road opening or protection of lines of communication. TA units are provided to the regular Army as and when required for specific roles such as providing aid to civil authorities during disaster or maintenance of essential services. The official said, a TA gives an opportunity to "able-bodied and employed" citizens to do the uniform and serve the country.

Talking about the hiring of Mandarin interpreters, the source said that five of them have been hired in the first phase, based on their proficiency in spoken and written Mandarin. "We selected the best. They have already been deployed at forward locations where BPMs with the Chinese take place," the source said,

EXPLAINED
E Overhaul plans

AS PART of the larger transformation of the Army, several efforts are underway, including recruiting veterans with expertise in specific areas for its training institutions on contractual basis, cross-skilling technical trades, outsourcing several services at its static units. The efforts to downsize elements of both combat and combat-support arms of the Army are slated for implementation in the next five years in phases.

adding that the induction took place in August this year even as the process had started in January.

Whereas, the hiring of cyber security experts is awaiting a final sanction but is at an advanced stage, the source added. "We are hopeful of getting the sanction by the end of this month. On a trial basis, we plan to induct five to six cyber experts in the first go," the official said.

Around 14 battalions are currently involved in counter-insurgency and counter terrorism roles in the northeast and J&K.

The source said that several TA units have also been inducted in Ladakh and are providing protection to lines of communication and other critical border infrastructure of the Border Roads Organisation.

"For instance, the oil sector marketing unit has been overseeing supply of petroleum products in the area, including aviation fuel, as a large number of aircraft are flying everyday (in the region)," the source said.

The source added that there are no immediate plans to expand TA units in coastal areas and island territories even as there are plans to equip the existing TA battalion in Andaman and Nicobar Islands better. Currently, there are 43 infantry TA units totally integrated with the regular Army in J&K and the northeast.

Indian Territorial Army is an auxiliary military organisation of the Indian Army. Raised on October 9, 1949, it will be completing 75 years this month. Various ministries and state governments often put in a request for raising TA units for various roles, including for plantation drives, supply of petroleum and oil exploration and protection of critical infrastructure.

The TA units also give protection to border infrastructure projects in sensitive areas as well as railways projects in the northeast connecting Manipur and Nagaland and are involved in the maintenance of anti-infiltration obstacle systems along the Line of Control.

They have also been roped in to support the additional forces in Manipur during the ongoing crisis in the state.

Several celebrities like cricketers Kapil Dev and MS Dhoni have been given honorary Territorial Army ranks and many of them often play a major role in motivating the forces and to support a specific cause.

India-Sri Lanka ferry service set to begin from October 10

ARUN JANARDHANAN
CHENNAI, OCTOBER 7

THE MUCH-AWAITED passenger ferry service between India and Sri Lanka is scheduled to commence operations on Tuesday (October 10), around 12 years after the plan was first mooted and a memorandum of understanding was signed between the two countries.

The ferry will operate between Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu and Kankesanthurai in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. The transit time is expected to be three hours. The Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) will operate the ferry service. "The service would offer an excellent opportunity for the people of India and Sri Lanka to make a low-cost trip to Jaffna and Tamil Nadu," an SCI document said.

The vessel to be used as the ferry is called Cheriyapani. The price of a ticket is yet to be revealed, but passengers will be allowed to take luggage weighing up to 40 kg for free. The ferry can accommodate 150 passengers, said TN Minister for Public Works E V Velu, who added that the state government was closely associated with the service.

The initiative is a revival of maritime connections that trace back to the early 1900s. The Indo-Ceylon Express or Board Mail, which operated between Chennai and Colombo via the Thoothukudi port, was halted in 1982 due to the civil war in Sri Lanka. The resumption of ferry services follows the signing of an MoU on passenger transportation by sea, signed by the two countries in 2011.

The plan was first mooted after the war in 2011, during a period when Sri Lanka was earnestly attempting to shed its image as a "refugee-producing" country.

The new ferry service is anticipated to boost religious tourism, commerce, and trade in the coastal areas of both countries.

Stronger security measures a must to take nation to the top, says Shah

AVANEESH MISHRA
DEHRADUN, OCTOBER 7

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said the Narendra Modi government has been a great success in terms of improving law and order in three hotspots of Jammu and Kashmir, leftist extremist areas and the North-East. He made the statement while drawing a comparison between ten years of the UPA government's tenure since 2004 and the last nine years of the Narendra Modi government.

Speaking at the 49th All India Police Science Congress (AIPSC) in Dehradun, Shah said the Modi government plans to take India to the top in every field by the time India celebrates 100 years of Independence. "Hard work is needed for that, but the first condition is strengthening our law and order, and internal and border security. For that, the Home Department has made several changes, and now in the Amrit Kaal, it is the time to implement those changes. The Police Science Congress is very important in that regard," he said.

"I can say with confidence that every person in the country can take a sigh of relief looking at the

situation of J&K after the removal of Article 370... that our Jammu & Kashmir is now part of India forever. Similarly, because of crime reduction in leftist extremist areas, development is reaching villages. A new era of health, education, and infrastructure is reaching every street and locality. The Narendra Modi government is also successful in connecting the Northeast with peace," he said.

Shah said the six themes selected for discussion during the AIPSC covers all issues on law and order as well as internal and border security. The themes were — policing in the 5G era, narcotics: a game-changing approach, coordination between Police and CAPFs, NCRB, internal security and social media challenges, and community policing.

Comparing the Modi government to the previous one, he said there were a total of 33,200 violent incidents under the UPA in the three hotspots — J&K, NE and LW-NE areas — between 2004 and 2014, while under the NDA there were just 12,358 such incidents. "In those 10 years, 11,947 security personnel and civilians died, while just 3,240 deaths happened in these nine years. I assure that in the next five years, this will further reduce," said Shah.

Uttarakhand to issue home mini-bar licence with caveats

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, OCTOBER 7

THE UTTARAKHAND government, in its excise policy for 2023-24, has issued a new provision to issue licences to individuals for maintaining home mini-bars. With an annual licence fee of Rs 12,000 and certain riders, the licence holder will be permitted to store certain quantities of liquor at home with a maximum of 9 litres of Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL), 18 litres of foreign alcohol, 9 litres of wine and 15.6

litres of beer at any given time.

To obtain the home mini-bar licence, the applicant will have to submit an affidavit affirming compliance with certain criteria including, the mini-bar must be used exclusively for personal purposes, and no commercial activities will be permitted.

Additionally, the mini-bar must remain closed on notified dry days and no person below the age of 21 years to be allowed in the bar premises.

This new policy aims to provide residents with a convenient and legal way to enjoy alcohol.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath at the 24th regional council meeting in Narendra Nagar, Uttarakhand, on Saturday. Express

'States' inclusion in Central Regional Council a huge benefit to GDP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, OCTOBER 7

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shah on Saturday chaired the 24th meeting of the Central Regional Council in Narendra Nagar, Uttarakhand and asked the members state to focus on issues like cooperation, dropout rates among school children and malnutrition.

In his address, Shah said the role of regional councils has

changed from advisory to action platforms under PM Narendra Modi's leadership. He said that Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh included in Central Regional Council have a huge contribution in the GDP and country's development.

Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami and UP CM Yogi Adityanath also attended the meeting. MP CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan took part via video conferencing.

BJP leaders sound fraud alert over parcels sent in Paatil's name, party issues advisory

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
SURAT, AHMEDABAD, OCT 7

THE GUJARAT BJP unit on Saturday issued an advisory after a fraud alert was sounded by some party office-bearers, as they received parcels sent in the name of state BJP chief CR Paatil. The party is contemplating filing a police complaint, sources told *The Indian Express*.

"All workers are informed that they should not accept a parcel for which they have to pay on delivery, and should send it back,"

the BJP note said. The party clarified that no parcels were sent out by either Paatil or his office to any office-bearer or party worker.

Among those who received such parcels included Gujarat BJP vice-president Gordhan Zadaphia, and state secretaries Jahanavi Vyas and Shital Soni. Vyas posted a picture of the parcel on her Facebook page. The delivery person asked for Rs 1,500 for it, she said. The BJP leader added that when she checked with Paatil's office, she was told that no such package has been sent to her.

Zadaphia could not be

reached for comment. Paatil said, "We are looking into the matter and trying to find out who are involved in such types of activities. Once I get detailed information about such people, we will decide on registering an offence."

According to Paatil, there was a "mattress cover" in the parcels. "Till now, we have come to know that such parcels were sent to three BJP leaders — Gordhanbhai Zadaphia, Sheetalben and Jahanavi Vyas — in my name. They have told the courier guy that 'if Paatil sir wanted to send such a gift, he would send it for free'," he said.

1,739 citizenship certificates granted in 8 months: MHA

MAHENDER SINGH
MANRAL
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

A TOTAL of 1,739 Citizenship Certificates have been granted by the Ministry of Home Affairs in nine states and 31 districts to foreigners under the provisions of the Citizenship Act, 1955 in the last year.

The ministry's annual report for 2022-23 from April 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022 showed the certificates were granted by various competent authorities — MHA and authorities delegated powers of the Central government in nine states and 31 districts. "Of 1,739, 1386 were granted by Registration under Section 5 and 353 were granted by Naturalization under

Section 6 of the Citizenship Act, 1955," it said.

The report also said that an online portal to process applications for Resumption of Indian Citizenship under Section 8(2) of the Citizenship Act was launched by National Informatics Centre (NIC) on December 8, 2022. "Processing of all Citizenship applications has been made paperless; October 15, 2019 and end to end processing is being done electronically," it added. According to the report, the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA) was notified on December 12, 2019 and came into force on January 10, 2020.

"It aims to facilitate grant of citizenship to migrants belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian communities

from Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan who had come to India on or before December 31, 2014 and who had been exempted by the Central government by or under clause (c) of sub-section (2) of section 3 of the Passport (entry into India) Act, 1920 or from the application of the provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946 or any rule or order made there under," the report said.

The report also said the CAA is a focused legislation which seeks to provide a relaxation to aforesaid specific communities from the specified countries with a clear cut-off date.

"It is a compassionate and ameliorative legislation... The CAA does not apply to Indian citizens. Therefore, it does not in any way take away or abridge the

rights of any Indian citizen. Further, the present legal process of acquiring Indian citizenship by any foreigner of any category as provided in the Citizenship Act is very much operational and the CAA does not amend or alter this legal position in any manner whatsoever. Hence, legal migrants of any religion from any country will continue to get Indian citizenship once they fulfil the eligibility conditions already provided in the law for registration or naturalization," the report added.

The report also said that the Constitution of India has provided special provisions under Sixth Schedule to grant protection to tribal and indigenous people of the North-Eastern region. "CAA has excluded areas under Sixth Schedule of the Constitution and

areas covered by Inner Line Permit system under Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation. Hence, CAA does not affect the protection granted by the Constitution to indigenous population of North Eastern States," it states.

The report also said the a gazette notification was issued by the MHA on October 31, 2022, for delegating powers of the Central government for registration as a citizen of India under Section 5 or for grant of certificate of Naturalization under Section 6 of the Citizenship Act, 1955 in respect of any person belonging to the specified minority communities — Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian in Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan, to Collectors of two more Districts; Anand, and Mehsana of Gujarat

Over 38 lakh foreigners visited India from April to Oct last year, says report

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

THE NUMBER of foreigners visiting India more than doubled in the past year as per the annual report of the Ministry of Home Affairs for 2022-23, with maximum number of travellers coming from Bangladesh, United States of America, and United Kingdom. Meanwhile, a total of 1,298 foreigners were deported during the same period.

The MHA's annual report from April 1, 2022 to October 31, 2022 shows that the over 38,34,984 foreigners who visited India during this period were from the Bangladesh (8,42,869) followed

by the US (8,05,692), UK (3,75,157), Australia (1,84,343), Canada (1,45,221), Sri Lanka (1,11,455), Nepal (88,460), Germany (86,006), Malaysia (83,808) and Singapore (78,888).

These 10 countries accounted for 73.06% of the total arrival of foreigners in the seven months, while the rest of the countries accounted for 26.94% of total incoming traffic of foreigners. Whereas, over 1,298 foreigners from Nigeria (645), followed by Uganda (178) and Bangladesh (163) were deported by the Foreigners Regional Registration Officers (FRRO).

The report also said that due to Covid-19 pandemic, the MHA had curtailed movement of inter-

national travellers (both foreigners as well as Indians) since February 2020, and only started relaxing visa, travel restrictions from May 2020.

To give tourism industry a much-needed boost, the MHA issued 3,13,414 tourist visas (regular tourist visa & e-tourist visa) free of cost to foreign nationals from October 16, 2021 to March 31, 2022. "From April 1, 2022 to September 27, 2022, long term visa (LTV) were granted to minority communities from Pakistan (902), Afghanistan (112) and Bangladesh (8).

The MHA had also extended visas on gratis basis of all Ukrainian and Russian nationals after February 24, 2022.

All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Rajkot, Gujarat- 360110
A Central Autonomous Body under PMSSY, MoH&FW,
Government of India (www.aiimsrajkot.edu.in)

Adv No. AIIMS/Rajkot/Admin/2023-24 DATE: 07/10/2023

DIRECT RECRUITMENT IN GROUP 'A', 'B' & 'C' (NON-FACULTY) POSTS AT AIIMS RAJKOT

Applications are invited from eligible candidates for filling up of various Group 'A' (4), Group 'B' (97) and Group 'C' (30) posts in AIIMS Rajkot on direct recruitment basis. For detailed advertisement and information applicants may visit Institute website www.aiimsrajkot.edu.in Sd/- Deputy Director (Admin), for Executive Director, AIIMS, Rajkot

UJVNL LIMITED
(An Uttarakhand Govt. Enterprise)

H. O. "UJJARAL" MAHARAJI BAGH, GMS ROAD, DEHRADUN - 248008, C.N.No. 148191UR281902325868
Tel: 0135-2763508, 2763804, Fax: 0135-2765507, website: www.ujvnl.com

No. 977 **Tender Notice** Date: 07.10.2023

The office of Executive Engineer (E&M), Pashulok Barrage, Rishikesh invites sealed tenders from interested parties. Brief summary of tenders is given below:-

1. NIT No. 09/EE(E&M)/PB/2023-24 & 10/EE(E&M)/PB/2023-24
Name of work/supply/services etc.: 1. Overhauling of Transformers and Installation of earthings at Virbhadra Barrage, Pashulok, Rishikesh
(1) 2. Supply, Installation & testing of fire protection system along with fire safety products at Virbhadra barrage, Pashulok, Rishikesh.
Estimated cost : 1. ₹ 5,86,000/- + GST Extra, 2. ₹ 9,42,242/- + GST Extra
Date of availability of bid document on website: 07/10/2023 from 17:00 Hrs.
Last date for submission of tender: 30/10/2023 Up to 15.00 Hrs.
For fuller & further details, kindly visit our website. The tender document can be downloaded from the Nigam's website www.ujvnl.com.

Executive Engineer (E&M)
"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

GOVT. OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE: KEONJHAR
Tel. 06766-258301(O) email: se_nerwkrj@rediffmail.com

eProcurement Notice for Road Works under MMSY-TRIP
Identification No. Road Online NCB No. 392
No. 3654 / Date: 06.10.2023

1. Name of the work :- Construction and Maintenance of roads under MMSY-TRIP for Financial Year 2023-24 in the District of Keonjhar.
2. No. of work :- 04 (Four) Nos.
3. Estimated Cost :- As per Annexure in NIT.
4. Class of Contractor (Eligible) :- As per Annexure in NIT.
5. Period of Completion :- As per Annexure in NIT.
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/O S.E.N.E.R.W. Circle, Keonjhar	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Keonjhar	Road Online NCB No. 392	17.10.2023 at 11.00 A.M.	31.10.2023 at 5.00 P.M.	30.10.2023 at 5.00 P.M.	01.11.2023 at 10.00 A.M.	Will be intimated later

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in
Sd/- Chief Construction Engineer, R.W. Circle, Keonjhar
OIPR- 2517711/0030/2324

Department of Industries and Commerce
Government of Rajasthan Jaipur
e-Tender Notice 23/2023-24
UBN is: RS12324SLOB00022

On behalf of Government of Rajasthan, e-tenders are invited for under taking complete exterior & interior designing & fabrication works of the Rajasthan State Pavilion (Hall 3 (FF)) at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi for India International Trade Fair-2023 under two-part bid system on turnkey basis.

The proposal should be conceived in accordance with the theme of the Fair "VASUDHAIVA KUTUMBKAM UNITED BY TRADE".
The details of specific jobs/tender documents can be downloaded from Rajasthan Government e-tender portal <https://eprocrajasthan.gov.in> or <https://spppsrajasthan.gov.in> or <https://industries.rajjasthan.gov.in/rajsico> and should be submitted online on eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in only

Last date for submitting e-Tender : 17.10.2023 up to 3.00 PM
Date of opening of e-Tenders : 17.10.2023 at 4:00 PM

Contact Person:-
Sh. Dinesh Sethi, Director Pavilion, First Floor, Udyog Bhawan, Jaipur -302005, Phone No.0141-2227824
DIPR/C/1534/2023

Rajasthan Cooperative Recruitment Board, Jaipur
10-B, Jhalana Institutional Area, Jhalana Doongri, Jaipur
Phone-2709827/2710072 Website: <https://rajrb.rajjasthan.gov.in>
F-8(P)/R.C.R.B./2023-24/4044 Date: 6/10/2023

Notification
Examinations for recruitment to various posts in The Rajasthan State Co-Operative Bank Ltd. (Apex Bank) and Various District Central Cooperative Banks (DCCBs).

Online applications, as per competent approval, are invited from eligible candidates to fill up the 635 posts in the The Rajasthan State Co-Operative Bank Ltd. (Apex Bank) and Various District Central Cooperative Banks of Rajasthan State as indicated below:-

S.No.	Name of the Post	No. of Post (Non-TSP Area)	No. of Post (TSP Area)	No. of Post (Baran Sahariya)	Total Post
1	Senior Manager	01	00	00	01
2	Manager	81	07	01	89
3	Computer Programmer	05	00	00	05
4	Banking Assistant	494	35	11	540
	Total	581	42	12	635

The Board reserves the right to increase or decrease in any of the above posts at its sole discretion.
Candidates who are interested to apply for the above posts are required to visit our website <https://rajrb.rajjasthan.gov.in> for detailed information and procedure to fill up the application forms online only.
For submission of online application, a link on our website will be available from 18.10.2023 to 17.11.2023 till 23.59 PM. The candidates are required to submit applications complete in all respects by this closing date and time.
In case of any query applicants may contact on telephone no 0141-2710072 or seek the same by e-mail at helpdesk.rajrb@rajasthan.gov.in. Further applicants are advised to visit our website regularly for any updates and related information.
In the event of any dispute regarding the recruitment process, the decision of the BOARD shall be final and binding.

Sd/-
(Bhoma Ram)
Member Secretary

"IMPORTANT"

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



Through Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, it is our endeavor to ensure that every patient gets quality health facilities, on time and with minimum hassles

- Narendra Modi, Prime Minister



Jan Jan Ki Swasthya Sevaon Ki Digital Udaan Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) Ke Saath



Get Your Digital Health Account Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA)

- Health Records, Anytime, Anywhere**
Digitally store, view and share your health records whenever required
- Freedom from Queues**
Book online appointments and get queue-less OPD visit facility
- Easy Access**
Get easy access to services from registered healthcare providers
- Teleconsultation**
Avail teleconsultation from verified healthcare professionals

ABHA Milestones

- 46 Crore** ABHA holders
- 31 Crore** health records linked digitally
- 2 Lakh** Verified Health Facilities
- 98 Lakh** people skipped the queue and availed instant OPD registration using ABHA

To create ABHA > Log on to abha.abdm.gov.in OR Scan the QR Code to download ABHA app

For more information abdm.gov.in | 14477 Follow us @AyushmanNHA

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE
(SURVEY & CONSTRUCTION)
Dy. Chief Engineer (Const.), North Western Railway, Bikaner for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-Tenders under Two packet system for the following works:-

1. **Tender No.:** NWR-SC-BKN-12-2023-24
2. **Name of the work with its location:** Supplying and stacking 65 MM gauge stone ballast machine crushed (Hard Stone) conforming to RDSO Specification along the cess, including station yards, between Churu (including) and Ratangarh (including) Section between Km 280.280 to Km 325.900 in connection with Churu-Ratangarh Doubling Project.
3. **Approx. cost of the work:** Rs. 18,78,24,156.59
4. **Bit Security (Earnest Money) to be deposited:** Rs. 10,89,100.00
5. **Date for submission of e-Tender:** On 27.10.2023 upto 15.00 hrs.
6. **Details and particulars of website where e-tender can be seen & filled up:** www.irps.gov.in
7. **Official e-mail address:** dycec@bkn.railnet.gov.in

Note :- 1. No manual tender will be accepted. 2. The Bid Security (Earnest Money) shall be deposited in cash through e-payment gateway or submitted as Bank Guarantee bond from a scheduled commercial bank of India or as mentioned in the tender documents. The bank guarantee bond should be issued in favour of FA & CAO/Construction, North Western Railway Jaipur otherwise tender will not be considered. 1072-CQ/23

Follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/NWRailways) [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/NWRailways) [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/NWRailways) [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/NWRailways) [Twitter](https://www.twitter.com/NWRailways)

M.P. PASCHIM KSHETRA VIDYUT VITARAN Co. Ltd.
(SURVEY & CONSTRUCTION)
Gph Compound, Pologround, Indore, Ph. : 0731-2426144/166/204
(E-mail : sepurchase06@gmail.com, CIN-U40109MP2002SGC015121)
No.MD/WZ/06/PUR/NIT-298-Corrigendum/14691 Indore, Dated : 06.10.2023

CORRIGENDUM TO THE NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Online tenders have been invited through the publication of the NIT-298 dated 05.10.2023 for Items/ Material/Services as per Tender Specifications. Out of the published TS-1734 to 1740 therein, there is corrigendum to the TS-1734, 1735 & 1738 of the Part-(a) thereof, and shall be read correctly as follows:-

(a) **Items/Materials/Services**

TS. No.	Name of Item	Estimated Cost (In Lacs)	Online Tender Opening Date
1734	Engagement of an Agency (SI) for Supply, Installation, Implementation, Configuration and Integration of RFID Based Inventory Management System at MPPKVVCL, Indore under RDSS scheme	1300.00	17.11.2023
1735	Engagement of an Agency (SI) for Design, Engineering, manufacture, Supply, wiring, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of Hardware & Software for implementation and support (AMC) of Substation Data Acquisition and Control (SDAC) System and its Integration with other Systems and Associated Works at MPPKVVCL, Indore, under RDSS scheme	16000.00	21.11.2023
1738	Appointment of Advanced Metering Infrastructure Service Provider (AMISP) for 41566 Nos. Smart Metering on HT connections & LT High Value connections on DBFOOT basis in MPPKVVCL, Indore under RDSS scheme.	5671.03	31.10.2023

In respect of TS-1734, 1735 & 1738 Pre-bid conference will be held on dated 19.10.2023, 20.10.2023 & 17.10.2023 respectively. All the other TS & contents of the NIT-298 Dated 05.10.2023 published on 06.10.2023 remain unchanged & applicable. For further detailed information, visit website <http://www.mpvz.co.in> or <https://www.mptenders.gov.in>

M.P. Madhyam/112572/2023 CHIEF ENGINEER (PURCHASE)

बैंक ऑफ इंडिया Bank of India

ZONAL OFFICE: SIWAN ZONE
1st Floor, Tarwara More, Siwan - 841226,
E-Mail- zo.siwan@bankofindia.co.in

[SEE PROVISO TO RULE 6 (2)]
SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF MOVABLE PROPERTIES

Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Movable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 6(2) 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 hypothecated/pledged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Bank of India Secured Officer, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 09-11-2023 (mention date of the sale), for recovery of Rs.26.11 Lakhs+ interest due to the Bank of India, Kuchaikote Branch Secured Creditor from M/s Gauri Shankar Indane Service Proprietor - Mr. Ravi Pandey (mention name of the Borrower (s)) and NA (mention name of the Guarantors). The reserve price will be Rs.11.06 lakhs (Rs 5.53 lakhs each vehicle) for and the earnest money deposit will be Rs1.11 Lakhs.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MOVABLE PROPERTY:-

Vehicle Type - ASHOK LEYLAND LTD Vehicle No - BR28GA1693 Chassis No - MB1A3DDH8HEAY5609 Engine No - HAEZ421119 Model - 2017	Vehicle Type - ASHOK LEYLAND LTD Vehicle No - BR28GA1694 Chassis No - MB1A3DFD4HEGX0447 Engine No - HAEZ419631 Model - 2017
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For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Bank of India Secured Creditor's website i.e. www.ibapi.in.
Date - 07.10.2023
Place - Siwan

Authorized officer
Bank of India

Indian Institute of Information Technology, Design and Manufacturing, Kancheepuram
Chennai-600127, Tamil Nadu, India
(An Institute of National Importance under MoE, Govt. of India)

ADMISSION TO PhD PROGRAMME - JAN 2024

Advt. No.: IIITDM/PhD/Admission/03/01/Jan-2024 dated 29/09/2023

IIITDM Kancheepuram located at outskirts of Chennai is an Institute of National Importance setup by the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India. IIITDM Kancheepuram invites online applications for admission to PhD programme for JAN 2024 session.

Online application form and information regarding academic qualifications, eligibility and financial assistance are available on the Institute website (<http://www.iiitdm.ac.in>). Contact us on phdadmission@iiitdm.ac.in for additional information.

Last date for online application: 31.10.2023 REGISTRAR

ICAR- Indian Veterinary Research Institute
Izatnagar-243122 (U.P.)

Walk-in-Interview

Walk-in Interview is scheduled on **16th October, 2023** for engagement of purely temporary position of one Young Professional-1 (YP-1) under ICAR Lal Bahadur Shastri Outstanding Young Scientist Award project on "Targeted Delivery of Bistrionic DNA Vaccine Constructs Using Bioengineered Mesoporous Silica Nanoparticles for Canine Mammary Tumour Therapy".

Essential Qualification: Graduate degree in Veterinary Science, biotechnology or relevant basic & life sciences.
Desirable Qualification: Post graduate degree in life sciences, experience of animal cell culture, histopathological analysis, Molecular biology techniques, Immunological techniques, laboratory animal handling, data handling, computer programming etc.

Emoluments: Rs 25000 per month, Time & Venue: 16 th October, 11.00 AM at Facility for research and Training on Biosensors, Division of Veterinary Biotechnology.

For more details, interested candidates may log on to Institute website www.ivri.nic.in. No TA/ DA will be given for appearing in the interview. **Contact Person: Dr. Sonal, Senior Scientist**, Veterinary Biotechnology, ICAR-IVRI, Izatnagar (Email sonalvet@gmail.com, Mob No. 9411221075)

EXPRESS NETWORK

BRIEFLY



BRS MLC K Kavitha

Quota will inspire women around world: Kavitha

London: Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) leader Kalvakuntla Kavitha said the Women's Reservation Act will inspire women around the world to come forward in public life and called them to mobilise around the issue. During an interaction organised by the think tank Bridge India in London on Friday night, the BRS MLC addressed a diaspora audience at Central Hall Westminster near the Houses of Parliament on the topic of 'Gender Equality in India's Political Representation'. PTI

HARYANA Man gets death for minor daughter's rape

Palwal: A special POCOS court in Palwal has sentenced a man to death for raping his minor daughter for three years, a senior police official said on Saturday. In the verdict announced on Friday the court also imposed a fine of Rs 15,000 and directed the government to pay the victim a compensation of Rs 10.5 lakh. The victim also gave birth to a child at 16 who has been adopted by an NGO, District Attorney Vikas Sharma said. PTI

KARNATAKA Fire breaks out at cracker shop, claims six lives

Bengaluru: Six people were charred to death after a fire broke out at a firecracker godown-cum-shop in Attibele in Anekal taluk here on Saturday, police said. Four persons, including the shop owner, sustained burns and were given treatment. One of them who received serious injuries has been referred to another hospital, they said. The blaze occurred around 4.30 pm, police said, adding fire-fighters are at the spot. ENS

MAHARASHTRA Maoist with Rs 11L bounty surrenders

Mumbai: A 28-year-old woman Maoist, with a bounty of Rs 11 lakh, surrendered before the Gadchiroli police on Saturday, said officials. The woman identified as Rajani alias Kalawati Samayya Veladi was involved in several attacks on government employees, including an ambush-cum-encounter that left 12 jawans dead in 2017. ENS

Threat to writers: Postmark led cops to accused

JOHNSON TA
BENGALURU, OCTOBER 7

IT TOOK just one postmark on the top right corner of the envelope to bring a nearly two-year chase to an end.

A threat letter posted from a southern Karnataka post office last year led the Bengaluru Crime Branch police to Shivaji Rao Jadhav, who was arrested on September 28 for sending multiple letters to prominent Kannada literary personalities over the past two years.

The 41-year-old school dropout allegedly accused the writers of being "anti-nationals" and threatened them with dire consequences. A co-convenor of the Hindu Jagarana Vedike, a Sangh Parivar affiliate, in central Karnataka, Jadhav worked in the binding section of a printing press in Davangere.

Since 2022, seven cases had been filed by writers across the state in connection with the threat letters, including one each by Kum Veerabhadra at Kottur Police Station in Vijayanagar district, B.L. Venu at Chitradurga Layout station and B.T. Lalitha Naik at Sanjaynagar Police Station in

Bengaluru; and two each by Banjagere Jayaprakash at Harohalli Police Station in Ramanagara and Vasundhara Bhoopathi at Basaveshwara Nagar Police station in Bengaluru. Some writers had received multiple threats — 19 letters were sent to Veerabhadra's home, while Naik had received three.

Initial police investigations revealed that all the threat letters were handwritten and signed off by one "Sahishnu Hindu (Tolerant Hindu)".

"The letters had the same handwriting. They were posted from different post offices in different districts of the state to evade the police," Bengaluru Police Commissioner B. Dayananda had said in a statement on September 30.

While the investigators were initially unable to zero in on the accused, they had identified the various post offices from where these letters were despatched to the writers. The police had also obtained the data of cell phones active near these post offices on the day the letters were posted.

However, it was one anomaly in the post office region that led them to Jadhav, police sources said. While most of the threat letters



Shivaji Rao Jadhav, 41, was arrested on Sept 28

were sent from post offices in central Karnataka's Davangere, Chitradurga, Raichur and Shivamogga, one was posted from Mandya in southern Karnataka.

"One letter was posted from Kyathanahalli village in Pandavapura in Mandya, which is not a region that sees a lot of Hindutva activity. We discovered that a Hindu Jagarana Vedike meeting was held in the region at the time the letter was posted last year," a police officer said.

An investigation into the Mandya event revealed that only a handful of the 200 participants were from central Karnataka — the region from where nearly all the other threat letters were posted. The police obtained the phone data of these participants and cross-referenced it with the records of mobiles active in central Karnataka post offices on days the earlier threat letters

were posted. This helped the police zero in on Jadhav.

"There was CCTV footage from one post office, but there was no way to establish the identity of the person until the lead from the Mandya event was developed," police sources said.

After Jadhav's identity was established, the police picked him up from Davangere on September 28. He was produced in a Bengaluru court on September 29 and taken into custody.

"Shivaji Rao Jadhav studied till Class 8 and dropped out of school. He worked in the binding unit of a press for over 25 years and is unmarried. He is an avid reader, and followed the statements and quotes of well-known writers appearing in the media. He wanted to mentally harass (the) writers he saw as being anti-Hindu," sources said.

As soon as Jadhav was nabbed, he admitted to having written dozens of threat letters and claimed to have acted on his own, police sources said.

Jadhav visited public libraries to look at books by the writers he wanted to target to obtain their addresses, which are usually provided in the books, police said. Jadhav, who wrote all his

threat letters in Kannada, called his targets "anti-India, anti-national, traitors".

In a police complaint filed on July 2, 2022, 78-year-old Naik, a former state minister, activist and writer, said the threat letter she had received also mentioned names of 61 other personalities.

The letter to Naik accused writers and progressive thinkers of wrongly questioning lessons on patriotism, nationalism and national security incorporated in school textbooks during the tenure of the previous BJP government from 2019-2022. The letters also accused the writers of "aligning with anti-national forces".

The four-page letter to Naik said that she had attended events of groups like the PFI and SDPI. "If you attend anti-national events in future, you will be putting your life in danger," the letter warned.

The Sanjaynagar police booked a case of criminal intimidation and causing intentional insult to breach peace under the IPC.

After the writers approached Chief Minister Siddaramaiah over the threat letters, Bengaluru Police constituted a crime branch special investigation team (SIT) in August on directions of state police chief Alok Mohan.

LAND DISPUTE KILLINGS

UP officials face the heat after 12 deaths in 3 weeks

ASAD REHMAN
LUCKNOW, OCTOBER 7

IN A span of three weeks between mid-September and early October, Uttar Pradesh has witnessed the murder of 12 people in four different incidents related to land disputes. Following each of these incidents, police and revenue officers — a total of 42 officials — faced disciplinary action, including suspension, for alleged negligence and laxity in dealing with the land disputes.

The state government had held multiple meetings over the past few weeks instructing senior officials to ensure timely intervention in land disputes, with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and UP Chief Secretary Durga Shanker Mishra calling on senior officials to be on their toes.

The *Indian Express* takes a look at the four incidents that took place in four different districts, the arrests made, and action taken against officials.

2 dead in Kanpur Dehat

The latest of the four incidents took place on Thursday night in the Gajner area of Kanpur Dehat district, where two brothers were killed and four members of their family were injured. Eight accused were arrested after a case of murder was registered against 11 people.

The incident took place at Shahjahanpur Ninaya village, where the family of one Mohanlal Shukla attacked rival, Satnarayan Lohar, and his family with sticks and other weapons. Brothers Satyanarayan (72) and Ram Veer (60) were critically injured in the attack and died during treatment. Ram Veer's wife Madhu (55), their daughters Madhu and Kaajal, and son Sonu are also undergoing treatment for injuries.

In a complaint before the Kanpur Dehat District Magistrate, Mohanlal Shukla alleged that despite having lodged written complaints with the local police regarding the dispute, no action was taken. On Saturday, following the murders, eight police officers — Gajner Inspector Sanjesh Kumar, two sub-inspectors, and five constables — were suspended for alleged negligence. Two officials of the Revenue department also faced action.

6 killed in Deoria

On October 2, six persons were killed over an almost decade-old land dispute that flared in Deoria's Fatehpur village. A former zila panchayat member, Prem Yadav (53), was attacked with blunt objects and killed by

one Satya Prakash Dubey and members of his family. In retaliation, a group of people killed Satya Prakash, his wife and three children, including two daughters. Police have arrested 20 people in connection with the killings.

Following the incidents, 15 officials were suspended and departmental action was ordered against eight employees of the Revenue Department on Thursday for not acting on Dubey's previous complaints.

It was found that nine complaints had been sent to the state government's Integrated Grievance Redressal System (IGRS) by Satya Prakash Dubey in relation to the land dispute.

Doctor beaten to death in Sultanpur

On September 24, a 53-year-old doctor was allegedly beaten to death over a land dispute in Sultanpur district. Three people were booked, including the son of a man, Ajay Narayan Singh, from whom the doctor had bought land. According to the doctor's wife, her husband had purchased two plots for Rs 50 lakh from Ajay Narayan Singh's father, Jagdish Narayan. "Despite paying the full amount, Jagdish and his son were not handing over possession of the land. Ajay Narayan asked for more money. We paid Rs 50,000 more, and then they asked for Rs 2.5 lakh more," the doctor's wife had said.

Jagdish Narayan Singh (70), his sons Ajay Narayan Singh (49) and Vijaya Narayan Singh (46) have been arrested in connection with the case. Following the doctor's death, local station house officer, R.A. Upadhyay, was suspended for alleged negligence and a departmental inquiry was ordered against him.

3 killed in Kaushambi

On September 15, three members of a Dalit family were shot dead in Kaushambi's Mohideenpur village, allegedly over a property dispute, while they were sleeping outside their hut early in the morning. Soon after the incident, relatives of the victims set the houses of the accused on fire. Nine persons have been arrested so far in connection with the murder, including neighbours of the victims.

More than two weeks after the incident, the local station officer and the outpost-in-charge were removed and sent to police lines. On Friday, six consolidation officers of the Revenue Department were suspended in action taken by the state government for alleged laxity in handling the land dispute.

Sikkim floods haven't affected ops along LAC: Defence Ministry

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

THE FLOOD in Sikkim has affected the state's hinterland but the operational situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) has continued to remain stable, the Defence Ministry said on Saturday.

The formations responsible for the Border Management Posture are maintaining high state of readiness and are optimally stocked as per the sustainable operational logistics plan, the ministry issued a statement.

"Indian Army along with all agencies and civil administration continue their relentless search and rescue operations, while at the same time focusing on resuscitation of communication and other infrastructure in a well-coordinated manner," it said.

A glacial lake outburst in South Lhonak Lake in north Sikkim this week led to the flood after the water level in the Teesta river increased by about 50-60 feet.

The exact assessment of the damage is yet to be corroborated due to the inclement weather and incessant rains, the ministry said. Some of the Army camps along the Teesta river banks were damaged or washed away. A vehicle parking area at Burdang was flooded and 23 soldiers who were taking a temporary overnight transit halt there

were submerged in the silt or swept away.

The Defence Ministry said at the site of the incident, silt and mud measuring up to 30-40 feet has been deposited. So far, bodies of eight Army personnel have been recovered.

A massive search and rescue operation is being conducted and the Indian Army, BRO, NDRF, state disaster relief teams, paramilitary forces, police, civil administration and local population of Sikkim and north Bengal are engaged in it. On October 4 evening, one soldier was rescued by villagers from an area 18 km downstream of Burdang.

As per the ministry, excavators and plant equipment have been digging up the site of the incident at Burdang. Since October 6, Leo Life Detector Radar, REECO Radar and Army dogs have also been employed.

The Army has issued advisories through civil administration and deployed look out teams along with state police to ask the locals to report any sightings.

The ministry said ammunition experts have been deployed to destroy any explosives recovered, in a controlled manner. National Highway-10, the lifeline of Sikkim, has been rendered unusable due to the damage to the road surface. Approximately 1,500 tourists are stranded in Lachung and Lachen valleys in north Sikkim.



Army personnel inspect damage after flash floods in Naga village, north Sikkim, Saturday. PTI

Not beggars, want equality: Bengal CM accuses Centre of discrimination

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, OCTOBER 7

AT A time when over 50 people are feared dead and more than 100 people are still missing due to the glacial lake outburst flood at Lhonak Lake in Sikkim, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday accused the Centre of discriminating against the affected people of North Bengal despite the gravity of the disaster and number of deaths reported.

"I am stunned by the central discrimination against our affected people of Darjeeling and

Kalimpong and North Bengal, despite the gravity of disaster and number of deaths there too. We are not beggars and we are certainly for Sikkim, but we want equality of treatment and non-discrimination in matters relating to central help in disaster management," she tweeted.

Meanwhile, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh today informed that the bodies of eight Army personnel, who were part of a group of soldiers that went missing, have been recovered. Twenty three Army personnel went missing in Sikkim after a cloudburst triggered massive flash floods in the Teesta river on Wednesday.

One soldier was rescued later that day. "Deeply pained by the tragic loss of precious lives including eight Army personnel in the recent flash floods," Singh tweeted. The flash floods have affected over 25,000 people, damaging over 1,200 houses and washing away 13 bridges in Sikkim, according to the state government.

The Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority today said that 25,065 people were affected in Mangan, Gangtok, Pakyong and Namchi districts. So far, 2,413 people have been rescued. Authorities opened 22 relief camps where 6,875 people were lodged.

Chandigarh woman cop 'cheated' by loan apps with access to phone gallery: Police

SAURABH PARASHAR
CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 7

A WOMAN constable of Chandigarh Police on Saturday lodged a complaint claiming that she had lost around Rs 43.81 lakh to cyber fraudsters after having downloaded some loan apps.

As per details, the owners of such short loan apps managed to get access to the gallery of the mobile phone of the woman and had allegedly circulated some morphed, objectionable pictures of the constable among her friends and relatives in a bid to blackmail her when she failed to

pay up the money. Unhindered access to the photo gallery of a person is one of the pre-requisites for availing loans from most short loan apps.

According to details, the incident started in January this year when the police constable downloaded an app on her phone — called 'Real Money' — to get a small loan of Rs 1800 in her account. What the constable thought would be a quick loan and quick repayment led to a series of circumstances that saw her loan amount ballooning to around Rs 71 lakh by September.

A police officer, involved in investigating the case, said, "The app

from which she borrowed the initial amount added a hefty interest on the loan. In order to repay the loan, the police constable then hit upon a novel idea, under which she kept downloading one loan app to clear the loan taken from a second such app. It ended up becoming a vicious circle. By September, the constable had downloaded multiple loan apps, and her total outstanding had shot up to around Rs 71 lakh. Of this, she paid from Rs 27 lakh that she had received as loan amount from the apps downloaded. Apart from this she had also paid another Rs 43.81 lakh from her own pocket and after borrowing money from

friends and relatives."

A copy of the FIR is with *The Indian Express*.

A case was registered under sections 384 (extortion), 419 (impersonation), 420 (cheating), 471 (forgery of documents), 509 (insulting the modesty of woman), and 120B (conspiracy) of the IPC at Cyber Cell police station of Chandigarh.

SP (cyber) Ketan Bansal said: "It is probably the first case when the cheating amount started at Rs 1,800 and shot up to Rs 71 lakh in a matter of months. The investigation is in its initial stages. The particular case also involves angle of extortion possibly."

Two Indians among three killed in Canada plane crash; probe on

SAGAR RAJPUT
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 7

A 25-YEAR-OLD trainee pilot from Vasai in Mumbai was killed along with two others when their plane crashed in Canada's British Columbia province in Chilliwack city, nearly 100 km from Vancouver, on Friday. The trainee pilot was identified by the authorities as Abhay Gadroo.

The plane, a Piper PA-34 Seneca, a twin-engine light aircraft, crashed into trees and bushes behind a motel, killing all three onboard. Besides Gadroo,



Abhay Gadroo

there was another Indian onboard. Local authorities are investigating the crash.

Gadroo's childhood friend Gaurav Goel said he left India in 2021 for commercial pilot licence training. "He was to complete his 200 hours' training in Canada after which he planned to return to India," Goel said.

On Saturday morning,

Gadroo's family got a call from Canadian authorities informing them about the crash. Gadroo is survived by his parents and a younger brother.

The younger brother is completing the formalities in Canada to bring back Gadroo's body to India for his final rites.

Gadroo's family originally hails from Kashmir and has been staying in Krishna Vandan Society at Evershine City. Goel remembered him as very helpful and jolly. "He was very active in sports. He had a smiling face and was very extrovert. He would go out of his way to help others," Goel said.

Meth seizures with Myanmar link put Mizoram cops on alert

SUKRITA BARUAH
GUWAHATI, OCTOBER 7

TWO MASSIVE seizures of the drug crystal methamphetamine in two successive days in Mizoram — both involving Myanmar nationals and with a combined worth of Rs 65 crore — have set off alarm for the law enforcement machinery in the border state.

These two seizures come a month after 3 kg of the same drug had been seized by the Mizoram Police's Anti-Narcotics Task Force.

Mizoram DGP Anil Shukla told *The Indian Express* that the "most worrying" pattern in these massive seizures is the involvement of Myanmar nationals.

"The most worrying part is the involvement of Myanmar nationals, who are couriers and using Mizoram as a route. There is a free movement regime in place through which Myanmar nationals can travel up to 16 km into Mizoram... We are stepping up vigilance and our efforts to curb the movement of drugs in the state," he said.

'Safe so far': Indians in Israel wake up to sirens, panic calls

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, OCTOBER 7

INDIAN EXPATRIATES in Israel on Saturday woke up to sirens after militants from the Gaza Strip launched a major, coordinated early-morning assault on the country, firing rockets and sending fighters across the heavily fortified border to infiltrate several Israeli towns.

Thousands of Indians, a large number of them from Kerala, work as caregivers in Israel.

Jiby Yohanna from Kerala, who lives 8 km away from Tel Aviv, said that while local residents were used to sporadic missile strikes, Saturday's attack had caught everyone off-guard.

"When tension escalates, we watch missile attacks, and see how they are being destroyed by the Iron Dome (Israel's air defence system). But this time... the assailants mainly targeted people on the road," he said.

Yohanna, a native of Kerala's Idukki district, said the assailants came in vehicles and sprayed bullets on civilians out on streets.

"Jews have been observing Simchat Torah (a Jewish holiday) and Sabbath (day of religious observance) since Friday evening. Only a few people were out," he said. He said the Indians in the country was "safe, so far".

"The Israel Defence Force has issued an alert to all people to return to the safety of bunkers in the wake of the attack from Hamas (the Palestinian militant group that controls the Gaza Strip). We were advised not to venture out. Heavy shelling had happened in the morning hours. Normally, casualties of this mag-

nitude do not happen in the Israel side. This time, civilians were targeted," he said.

According to *The New York Times*, around 70 Israelis were reported dead by emergency medical groups, and Israel had retaliated with strikes on Gaza cities. At least 198 Palestinians were killed in either gun battles or airstrikes, the Gaza Health Ministry said.

Shyni Babu, who has worked as a caregiver in Israel for the last 13 years, said friends and relatives in Kerala were calling her in panic. "We are getting panic calls from

families and friends in Kerala. But the situation improved in the afternoon," she said.

"Being caregivers to the elderly, we seldom go outside. So, as of now, we are all safe. All the houses have bunkers and we return to safety on hearing alarms," she added.

Around 12,000-14,000 Indians work in Israel, mainly as caregivers. What makes the job of a caregiver in Israel attractive for nurses in India is the easy immigration process and better salary. There is a big demand for Israeli visas in Kerala as Israel is an

ECNR (emigration clearance not required) country. Those aspiring for the job of caregivers need not clear IELTS (International English Language Testing System) or OET (Occupational English Test) — they only need to attend a short-term course in Hebrew.

In May 2021, 32-year-old Soumya Santhosh from Kerala was killed in Israel after shelling from Gaza. She had been employed as a caregiver in the Israeli city of Ashkelon. She was hit by the attack while on a video call with her husband, who was in Idukki.

Across THE AISLE



PCHIDAMBARAM
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LAST WEEK, I had referred to the battle lines drawn between the BJP and I.N.D.I.A. I had not used the acronym NDA because, at present, no political party of significance has declared that it is an ally of the BJP. Significant partners of the NDA in the 2019 elections — Shiv Sena, Akali Dal, Janata Dal (United) and, recently, the AIADMK — have parted ways with the BJP. On the other hand, the UPA of 2019 has grown into a larger alliance called I.N.D.I.A. that is seemingly stronger.

RIVAL FIREPOWER

As I had expected, the BJP has marshaled its forces around Sanatan Dharma, conversion, love jihad, Women's Reservation Bill, the new Parliament building and the outcomes of the G20 Leaders' Summit. The Hon'ble Prime Minister has addressed eight rallies in six days in four states. In non-BJP ruled states, he has unfailingly castigated the state government (and its chief minister) as the most corrupt among all the state governments. In BJP ruled states, he has invariably described the state government (and its chief minister) as the best governed among all the state governments. Mr Modi does not believe in understatement.

The leaders of I.N.D.I.A. have concentrated their fire power on inflation and unemployment. In the last week, they have expanded their targets to include hate speech (Mr Ramesh Bihuri MP), curbing of freedoms (NewsClick and its

editor), denial of states' dues (MGNREGA funds to West Bengal), encroachment on states' rights (no new medical colleges or seats in Tamil Nadu), undermining the Courts of Justice (pendency of 70 recommendations of the Collegium), Chinese incursions (continued silence), terrorist incidents (Kashmir), slowing economic growth (after 7.2 per cent GDP growth in 2022-23, estimated growth in 2023-24 will be 6.3 per cent), misuse of intelligence and investigative agencies (cases against Opposition leaders only) and the growing cult of personality (Mr Modi will be the face of the party in the elections in five states).

No one anticipated there will be a cat among the pigeons. Mr Nitish Kumar, chief minister, sprung a surprise on the nation by revealing the results of the caste headcount (survey) conducted in Bihar. Not surprisingly, the OBCs accounted for 63 per cent of the state's population. Issues such as One Nation One Election and Uniform Civil Code were swept away by the tide of caste... Not since demonetisation has the BJP been so rattled

of an I.N.D.I.A. government.

SEARCHING FOR RESPONSE

Not since demonetisation has the BJP been so rattled. Leaders of the party (who have been forbidden to think or speak) are waiting for a cue from Mr Modi. Mr Modi has realised that his project to build 'Hindu' as a monolithic vote bank against Muslims, Christians and other minorities is in danger. His claim to be the protagonist of OBC rights is under challenge. His gambit that the 'poor' are entitled to the first claim on the nation's resources fell flat because it is the poor who have been neglected and short-changed by his government. Besides, it did not answer the question why the reservation of 10 per cent for the economically weaker sections (EWS) did not include the poor among the SC, ST and OBC. Mr Modi is still in search of an effective response to the challenge posed in the name of OBC.

Mr Modi faces another problem too. The opposition to an All India caste census is not from the Bihar unit of the BJP but from its central leadership. Mr Modi has the daunting task of opposing the demand for a nationwide caste census while keeping his flock in Bihar (and perhaps U.P.) together.

ECONOMIC SHARE

The Congress' leaders — Mr

Mallikarjun Kharge and Mr Rahul Gandhi — have strongly endorsed the caste headcount. It is well to remember that OBC is not a monolithic bloc. In some states it has already been divided into OBC and MBC (most backward classes) or OBC and EBC (extremely backward classes). In the early years, the Dravidian movement overcame this hurdle by uniting the OBCs around 'Tamil identity' and under the large tent of 'non-Brahmin'. Eventually, as some of the OBCs gained political power and influence, M Karunanidhi was obliged to recognise the MBCs. The danger of taking this sub-categorisation to the extreme will be atomisation of the OBCs.

Caste unites as well as divides. If the OBCs must win their legitimate rights, especially in the economic market place — their share of income, capital, loans, contracts, licenses, jobs and economic opportunities — they must remain united as far as possible. But, what about the more disadvantaged MBCs or EBCs? There is no one solution that will fit all situations. A possible solution is OBC reservation with a sub-reservation for the economically weaker sections (EWS) among the OBCs. Of course, this suggestion will require further debate and refinement.

The ca(s)(e) is among the pigeons. It will be a fascinating duel between the BJP and I.N.D.I.A. At present, the numbers and the momentum appear to be on the side of I.N.D.I.A.

Fifth COLUMN

TAVLEEN SINGH
Twitter @tavleen_singh



It's an election, not war

ARE WE facing a general election next year or a civil war? I ask the question seriously, silly though it may sound. It is because I find myself alarmed by the tenor of campaigning by our two main national parties. They seem to believe they are in this fight to destroy their opponents, not just defeat them electorally. This is true of the campaign on social media and in real life. On social media last week there was a juvenile and ugly poster war.

First, came a Congress Party poster that called the Prime Minister 'Jumla Boy' which roughly translated means that he makes fake promises. In the picture he is shown with his head rested against the back of the head of his loyal comrade Amit Shah. The Home Minister was the first person to use the term electoral 'jumla' to dismiss charges that Narendra Modi had not fulfilled his promise in 2014 to put Rs 15 lakh in the bank accounts of every Indian if black money in Swiss accounts was brought back. The BJP's response to this poster was to upload a poster depicting Rahul Gandhi with ten heads as 'Ravan'. This led to senior Congress Party officials accusing the BJP of trying to 'murder' their leader. Both posters were nasty and in bad taste.

Meanwhile, in real life, we saw the Prime Minister charge the Congress Party with treason while campaigning in Bhopal. He said, "Their leaders speak the language of our enemies. They have faith in what terrorists say. They have no faith in what my country's military (leaders) say." While all this was going on, the man who is seen as Modi's main opponent was in the Golden Temple in Amritsar doing 'seva' and musing about his father's feelings on that "dark night" after his grandmother, Indira Gandhi, was assassinated. What I found interesting was something else Rahul said as he reminisced about the assassination of his grandmother, in the temple in which her assassins convened to plan her murder. He said that he had seen a "small ray of hope" the day after the assassination and knew that it was this that would "change India into what it is today".

It is hard to know exactly what he meant. But, with respect I would like to remind him that it was the murder of thousands of Sikhs by Congress workers seeking to avenge the murder of Indira Gandhi that enabled the change we see today. The Congress Party's superpower till then had been that it was seen as truly secular compared with the BJP. It had spent decades in power and its 'socialism' had failed to provide ordinary Indians with such basic things as clean water and electricity. But it was forgiven these failures because of its secular credentials.

After that awful first week of November 1984, when the bodies of dead Sikhs lay in the streets of Delhi, it became hard to believe in Congress secularism. It was this that led to the relentless rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party and Narendra Modi. It is because of losing its superpower that Congress will find it hard to defeat Modi in next year's Lok Sabha election especially now that it has compounded its mistake by adopting a policy of soft Hindutva. Almost not a day goes by when we do not see Congress leaders praying in some temple or other. Do they really believe that soft Hindutva will defeat hard Hindutva?

A question that I puzzled over before sitting down to write this piece is why Rahul Gandhi is doing 'seva' in the Golden Temple when he should be campaigning for his party. It will not be easy for Congress to take on Modi's electoral juggernaut, but it might help if his main challenger was seen at election rallies instead of in temples, vegetable markets and railway stations. Gimmicks have a place in politics but only if there is a solid political platform and a political message alongside them. What exactly is the Congress Party taking to the electorate this time other than promising freebies that will debilitate the economy permanently? From speeches made by the Gandhi siblings we have learned that they despise businessmen so where are they going to find the money to give women monthly pocket money and jobless youths dole?

Modi's message this time is openly narcissistic. He takes personal credit for everything that his government has done and personal credit for improving India's image in the world. He gives personal guarantees for future schemes. He also makes it clear in every speech he gives that he sees opposition leaders as traitors and terrorists. He leads his party's cheerleaders in talking about the I.N.D.I.A. group as an Indi-Alliance and as 'ghamandiya' (arrogant) leaders.

It is largely because he has taken so aggressive a tone that the coming election has begun to sound more like a civil war. This is not good, but nobody can deny that Modi's message is totally clear when compared with the message that his opponents are trying to send. When they meet next time to decide which seats who should contest, they would do well to spend some time on clarifying why people should vote for them, instead of a popular and populist prime minister who has managed to deliver on welfare schemes with more efficiency and elan than the Congress Party ever did.

Gearing up for the battle

inside TRACK COOMIKAPOOR



BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD

THE REAL winner in the just released Bihar caste survey is not Nitish Kumar, but Lalu Prasad, who has been demanding this data since 2015. While Nitish's Kumi caste is a mere 3 per cent, Lalu's Yadav community constitutes 14.27 per cent, which, along with 17.7 per cent Muslims looks like a winning combination. A shell-shocked BJP, which had planned its 2024 poll strategy hoping to ride a wave of Hindutva sentiment in the wake of the inauguration of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya late January, along with illuminating temples all over India, has been caught off guard. The Mandal parties — SP, JD(U) and RLD — which were virtually wiped out in the last decade hope to be back in business. While Modi attacked the Congress for trying to divide Hindu society along caste lines, there is a possibility that the BJP may counter Mandal-2 with a demand for the implementation of the Rohini Commission report, which was submitted in August. Justice Goria Rohini took six years to sub categorise OBCs so that the economically backward classes (EBCs) among OBCs get a fair representation. Focusing on EBCs has for long been part of the BJP's poll strategy.

REPEAT PERFORMANCE

This is the second time Prabir Purkayastha, founder of the NewsClick portal, has been arrested. The first time was during the Emergency, when he was a student at JNU and he claimed it was a case of mistaken identity. The Delhi Police was under tremendous pressure from then DIG P S Bhinder to apprehend D P Tripathi, the SFI student leader who had successfully organised a one-day strike on the campus. Since Tripathi was underground, the police randomly picked up Purkayastha, who was an easy target sitting on the JNU lawns with his girl friend. At the police station, photographs showed that they had indeed picked up the wrong person. But the police were too embarrassed to acknowledge their mistake, since they had already proudly announced the arrest to Sanjay Gandhi. Purkayastha remained in jail under the dreaded MISA for a year, though the real Tripathi was arrested shortly afterwards. Purkayastha's recent arrest is not a case of mistaken identity, but of mistakenly applying a wrong law. He was arrested under an Act meant to prevent terrorism, though one would have supposed he

should have been detained for breaking the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, if, as alleged, he has not disclosed large sums received from a millionaire close to the Chinese government. In any event, there were no grounds for raiding the homes and terrorising the families and confiscating the mobiles and laptops of some 46 journalists, many of whom were not even on the staff of the portal and received minimal payments. For instance, a senior freelance journalist was targeted though she was paid a mere Rs 12,000 for writing three articles on intolerance towards free speech in India. The police's line of questioning was to somehow get her to confess that she had covered the Delhi riots during Trump's 2020 visit to India, the farmers' agitation or written defaming articles on the G20 meet, all of which would have apparently been viewed as 'anti-national' activity.

FOOT IN MOUTH

Recently Rahul Gandhi twice spoke rather unthinkingly in public. Others in the Congress had to face the flak for his bloopers. Gandhi announced that the party was winning decisively in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh and probably in Telangana, but acknowledged that the going was tough in the Rajasthan poll. Understandably, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot was deeply embarrassed since his catchy poll campaign centered on his certainty of returning to power. He could only remark sportingly that he hoped to prove his party leader wrong. Similarly, it was Congress lawyer Abhishek Singhvi who had to hastily delete his tweet on Rahul's slogan "jitni abaadi utna haq", warning that talk of proportionate quotas sowed the seeds of majoritarianism. Singhvi hastily deleted the tweet after he realised Rahul Gandhi had advocated the slogan in Karnataka to woo the OBC vote. Prime Minister Modi has also picked on the slogan to embarrass the Congress in the South on delimitation.

STRAWS IN THE WIND

After the SP's impressive win in the Ghosi assembly by-election last month, SP leader Ram Gopal Yadav called on BSP leader Mayawati to thank her for not putting up a candidate and permitting her supporters to vote for whomever they chose. The SP is far keener on an alliance with the BSP for the parliamentary poll in 2024 than with the Congress since the national party is virtually moribund in the state. Gopal once again raised the issue of an SP-BSP alliance for 2024. Mayawati told him to return on January 15, her birthday. Mayawati last week met senior leaders of her party to discuss poll preparedness and maintained that presently the party was equidistant from both groups. She is watching the political situation to decipher which way the electoral wind is blowing.

history HEADLINE

ADRIJA ROYCHOWDHURY



IN 1939, at the height of the freedom struggle, a group in Bombay sought to put up a statue of Mahatma Gandhi. On learning about it, Gandhi is reported to have been livid. That this was one matter where he didn't have his way is evident from the Mahatma statues that are everywhere, all these years later — from government buildings, maidans, street corners and neighbourhoods in India to those in cities abroad.

More often than not, in many of these statues, the Mahatma is imagined in two iconic postures: seated in a meditative pose or standing with a staff in hand. It was after the Mahatma's death, though, that the practice of making his statues picked up.

Ram Sutar, 98, the sculptor most famous for creating Gandhi's statues, narrates how he made a 4-foot sculpture of the Mahatma for the first time in 1948, soon after the news of his death broke. Sutar was then studying in Dhule, Maharashtra.

Through the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, statues of colonial officials commissioned by the British, created in studios and foundries in England, had started being replaced by statues of local freedom fighters being made by the first group of Indian sculptors.

Historian Tapati Guha-Thakurta has, in her article "Why Statues Matter", noted how in the 1930s and 1940s, Debi Prosad Roy Chowdhury "can be seen to step in and take over, here, a practice that was still largely a monopoly of Western sculptors".

It was Roy Chowdhury's bronze sculpture of Gandhi on his Dandi March in Calcutta that shot him to fame. He managed to complete the statue in 1958, only after taking recourse to melting a bronze bust he had made of his own father — to meet an acute shortage of metal in Calcutta that year — to replace the leg of his Gandhi statue that had been damaged while being lifted to the pedestal.

The placement of Gandhi in New Delhi was, of course, of monumental concern to the Central government. Sutar narrates how he was commissioned to create a sculpture of Babu to replace the one of George V that stood under a canopy at India Gate sometime in the 1960s.

Sutar sculpted Gandhi with his hands placed on the heads of two children surrounding him and another model of a seated Gandhi in a meditative pose. The latter came to be selected for the canopy.

However, in response to huge opposition from parliamentarians and Gandhians against the idea of placing the Mahatma under a canopy meant for the King of Britain, it was decided to place it at

What the many Gandhi statues tell us about India



New Delhi's Gandhi Vatika has several Gandhi statues. Adrija Roychowdhury

Parliament in 1993. In the years to come, the 16-foot Gandhi statue became an iconic space of protests by parliamentarians.

Sutar's other statue of Gandhi made its way to Patna's Gandhi Maidan in 2013. Currently, it is the tallest statue of Gandhi in the world.

These large state-sponsored statues of Gandhi aside, in the villages and smaller towns of India, statues of Gandhi tend to take on a whole new avatar. As historian Sumathi Ramaswamy explains, many of them are rather crude or humble with variations in iconography that one will not find in large public statues in the big cities.

"One of my favourite examples is a photograph of a Gandhi statue located in Rajahmundry in Andhra Pradesh that I came across in (photographer) Raghu Rai's book. It depicts Gandhi being protected by a cobra over his head, a typical Vaishnav iconographic depiction," Ramaswamy says. In early 1950, Hindu monk Paramahansa Yogananda created the Gandhi World Peace Memorial at Lake Shrine, California, where a portion of the Mahatma's ashes are kept. Although not a statue, it marked the beginning of the long list of monuments dedicated to Gandhi that came up globally in the following years.

In 1968, the British Prime Minister unveiled a bronze statue of Gandhi, created by Polish sculptor Fredra Brilliant, at Tavistock Square in London to mark the centenary celebrations of the Mahatma's birth. In 1993, a statue of Gandhi was unveiled at Pietermaritzburg, a province of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, to mark the centenary since Babu was thrown off a train at Pietermaritzburg railway station. In 2015, the British government installed

another statue of Gandhi at Parliament Square in Westminster, London.

Despite the large pantheon of nationalist leaders that India boasts of, it is only the statue of Gandhi that has, time and again, been the object of state gifts to nations. Political scientist Simona Vittorini has argued that the act of gifting Gandhi statues is part of India's "soft power strategy".

In recent years though, Gandhi has also come to be seen through a more critical lens. It has resulted in cases of vandalism of his statues in many parts of the world. In some of them, the attack reveals a critique of aspects of Gandhi's life and past views that were largely ignored until recently.

The Separatist movements in the diaspora and protests within India too have found echoes in acts of vandalism carried out on the statues of Gandhi abroad. In 2020, for instance, supporters of the Khalistan movement vandalised a statue of Gandhi in front of the Indian Embassy in Washington DC. Slogans in support of Khalistan have been smeared across Gandhi statues in Toronto and Milan, among others.

Meanwhile, within India, the statues of Gandhi are beginning to find new companions. The statues of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Subhas Chandra Bose have, of course, made huge headlines. Statues of B R Ambedkar too have been in proliferation across the country. At Sutar's studio in Noida, where his workmen are busy sculpting hundreds of statues, he says he is not working on any Gandhi statue at present. Prominent among the statues being made in his studio now are those of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, Ambedkar, Nadaprabhu Kemppegowda as well as Lord Shiva.

She SAID

SHALINI LANGER

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IF MARRIAGES are made in heaven, spectacles clearly have no space in it.

This above fact has been well-known to those of the female gender who have spent countless hours at the optician being persuaded about why one particular frame is better than the other — and why four pieces stuck together can cost so much — to realise very few see beyond the glass in the middle. As well as those who have gone on to suffer through the best years of their lives with contact lenses — a better part of that time spent on all fours looking

Can't shatter the glasses ceiling

for the damn things. Those small transparent discs were clearly not designed for human fingers or, for that matter, eyes with poor vision (which rather defeats the purpose, doesn't it?). Or for fingers which have come within touching distance of anything irritable in the preceding hours — you can never be sure how many is long enough. The red eyes that follow in the consequent struggle to put the lenses in does no one any good, especially a partner waiting for you to re-surface.

I have known friends who have "lost" their contact lens within the eye. Having heard that story, I once spent days worrying if, after one particularly long night, I had actually taken the lenses out, or had they just swam to somewhere deep inside

my brain and were now waiting to sneak up in some scan.

Why do we put up with all this? Because long before age wins over vanity, we notice — the difference between the days we wear spectacles, and days we won't. Dorothy Parker might have been rather general in quipping that "Men seldom make passes at girls who wear glasses", but that phrase tends to stick, and before they become men, boys certainly don't.

It was hard to tell the difference at the most recent celebrity wedding, where the only good part was that Bollywood prevailed over politics. We are talking of Parineeti Chopra weds Raghav Chadha, or of one stiff groom trying to keep up with his giggly, gregarious bride. That apart, what

was most striking in the pastel cornucopia, where again more was less, was an absence — Chadha was not wearing his glasses.

Call me obsessive, but I didn't even need to see filmmaker Kiran Rao's work to be impressed with her. It was enough for me that the woman marrying a Bollywood star, a heartthrob for many, matched her white sari with glasses at their wedding. Rao-spotting became a habit of sorts after that, and she never disappointed — even if their marriage did. It might have helped that she seemed to have a wardrobe full of piquant glasses. Not like our collection — one to go, one to spare, and one scratchy one held on to for rainy days. Though, of course, rains and glasses are another bad mix.

Back to celebrity weddings, there was at

least a recent one we could cheer for. Over in bad, bad Pakistan, their biggest woman star Mahira Khan got married at a small, private event to a long-time partner, owning proudly her age and her grown-up son. There were many moist eyes as Mahira acknowledged finding love after her first bad marriage.

We recognise that his heaven too must have required some touch-up, and, surely, plenty of contact lenses. But there are some fairy tales we want to believe in.

Till then, notice a camera? Slide those glasses up your forehead, or take them off — and then hope that the general direction of your eyes is somewhere towards the lens.

National Editor Shalini Langer curates the fortnightly 'She Said' column

GUTERRES CONDEMNS ATTACK
UNSC To MEET TODAY

The UN Security Council will meet Sunday after Hamas launched an attack on Israel. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres condemned the attack by Hamas and urged "all diplomatic efforts to avoid a wider conflagration."

BATTLE CONTINUES TO RAGE
IN 22 LOCATIONS ALONG THE GAZA STRIP

ISRAELI SOLDIERS, CIVILIANS TAKEN HOSTAGE,
BROUGHT INTO GAZA, NUMBER UNKNOWN

BODIES ON STREETS OF ISRAELI CITIES;
PEOPLE FROM BOTH SIDES HUNKER DOWN, FLEE

Israel and Palestine at war again

AP & REUTERS
OCTOBER 7

THE INFILTRATION of fighters into southern Israel via land, air and sea marked an unprecedented escalation by Hamas that forced millions of Israelis to hunker down in safe rooms. Palestinians in Gaza braced themselves as Israel launched airstrikes in response, which Gaza health officials said had killed 198 people. Gazans rushed to buy supplies in anticipation of days of conflict ahead. Some evacuated their homes and headed for shelters.

In the Israeli town of Sderot, the bodies of at least six people gunned down at a bus shelter were laid out on stretchers on the street. In the kibbutz of Nahal Oz, just 4 kilometers from the Gaza Strip, terrified residents who were huddled indoors said they could hear constant gunfire echoing off the buildings as firefights continued.

"With rockets we somehow feel safer, knowing that we have the Iron Dome (missile defense system) and our safe rooms. But knowing that terrorists are walking around communities is a different kind of fear," said Mirjam Reijnen, a 42-year-old volunteer firefighter and mother of three in Nahal Oz.

In Gaza, the roar of rocket launches could be heard and residents reported armed clashes along the separation fence with Israel, near the southern town of Khan Younis, and said they had seen significant movement of armed fighters. "We are afraid," Palestinian woman, Amal Abu Daqqa, told Reuters as she left her house in Khan Younis.

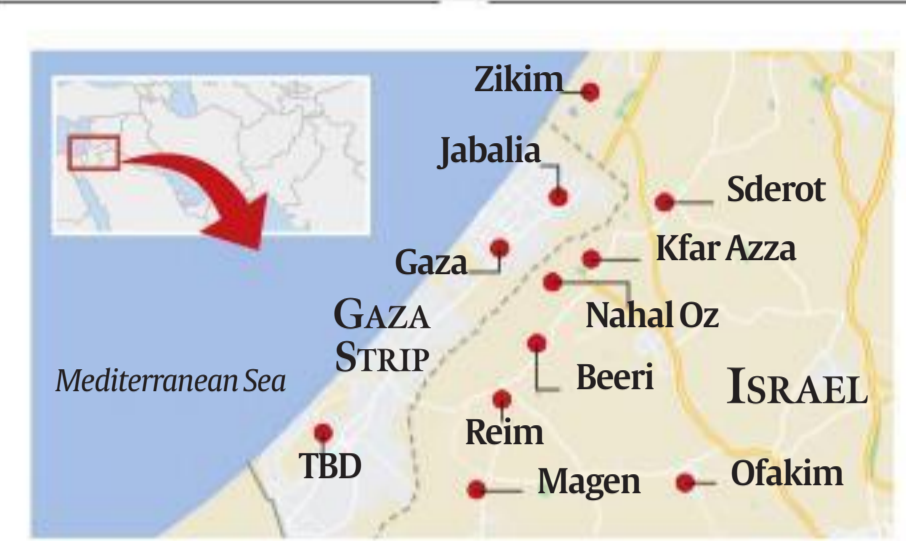
Hamas takes hostages

Israeli Army spokesman Daniel Hagari said militants were holding hostages in standoffs in two towns, Beerli and Ofakim, which is 15 miles (24 kilometers) from the Gaza border.

Videos released by Hamas appeared to show at least three Israelis captured alive, and AP



(Clockwise from above) Fire and smoke rise following an Israeli airstrike in Gaza City on Saturday; Israeli police officers evacuate a woman and a child from a site hit by a rocket in Ashkelon, southern Israel; Palestinians flee their homes fearing Israeli strikes in the southern Gaza Strip. Reuters/AP



How the Hamas attack on Israel unfolded

ROCKET BARRAGE AS A COVER

At about 6.30 A.M., Palestinian Islamist group Hamas fired a huge barrage of rockets across southern Israel. Hamas said it had fired 5,000 rockets in a first barrage. Israel's military said 2,500 rockets were fired. Smoke billowed over residential Israeli areas and people sheltered behind buildings.

DAWN INFILTRATION

The barrage served as cover for a multi-pronged infiltration of fighters, with the Israeli military saying at 7.40 A.M. that Palestinian gunmen had crossed into Israel. Most fighters crossed through breaches in land security barriers separating Gaza and Israel. But at least one was filmed crossing on a parachute while a motorboat was filmed heading to Zikim, an Israeli coastal town and military base. Videos issued by Hamas showed fighters breaching the security fences, with the dim light and low sun suggesting it was at around the time of the rocket barrage.

FIGHTING AT MILITARY BASES
Israel's military said at 10 a.m. that Palestinian fighters had penetrated at least three military installations around the frontier — the Erez border crossing, the Zikim base and the Gaza division headquarters at Reim. It said fighting at Erez and Zikim continued.

Hamas videos showed fighters running towards a burning building near a high concrete wall with a watchtower and fighters apparently overrunning part of an Israeli military facility and shooting from behind a wall. Several captured Israeli military vehicles were later

pictured being driven into Gaza and paraded there.

BORDER TOWN RAIDS

Fighters raided the Israeli border town of Sderot and were reported to be in another border community, Be'eri, and the town of Ofakim 30km east of Gaza. Many residents of southern Israeli towns have fortified areas in their homes. Israel military ordered residents to shelter inside. By mid morning Israeli police chief Yaacov Shabtai said forces were engaging gunmen in 21 locations.

CASUALTIES

A Reuters photographer saw bodies on the streets of Sderot. Hamas videos showed dead civilians, Israeli soldiers and Palestinian fighters. Israel's Foreign Ministry said Hamas gunmen had gone house-to-house killing civilians.

TAKING CAPTIVES
Israel media has reported that gunmen have seized hostages in Ofakim. Islamic Jihad said it was holding several Israeli soldiers captive and Hamas social media accounts showed footage of appearing to show captives being taken alive into Gaza.

ISRAELI STRIKES

At 9.45 am, blasts were heard in central Gaza and Gaza city and at 10.00 a.m. Israel's military spokesperson said the airforce was carrying out strikes in Gaza. REUTERS



An ambulance damaged by an Israeli air strike in southern Gaza Strip. Reuters

photos showed at least three civilians brought in Gaza, including the two women. Israeli television showed images of a young man stripped down to his pants being led on foot in a chokehold and reported that elderly women with dementia as well as workers from Thailand and the Philippines were among the captives.

The Israeli military confirmed that a number of Israelis had been taken captive.

A top Hamas official, Saleh Aroui, told Al-Jazeera TV that his group is holding "a large number" of Israeli prisoners including senior officers adding that they will be used in a prisoner exchange to free Palestinian detainees in Israeli jails. Neither side said how many.

Israel has a history of making heavily lopsided exchanges in order to bring captive Israelis home.

Assault may bring chill to Israel-Saudi ties

DOUGLAS SCHORZMAN

THE ASSAULT on Israel is unfolding after weeks of rising Palestinian despair over warming relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia, a traditional defender of the Palestinian cause.

Now, the violence poses a threat to an effort by the Biden administration to help broker a formal diplomatic relationship between Saudi Arabia and Israel after a series of cooperative steps by officials from both countries in recent weeks.

In late September, Israel's tourism minister became the first Israeli Cabinet minister to make a public visit to Saudi Arabia. At the

same time, the Jordan-based Saudi ambassador to the Palestinians visited the West Bank in the first known visit by a Saudi official to the region since Israel captured it in the 1967 war.

Saudi Arabia has not recognised Israel since it was founded in 1948 and until now had signalled that it would not even consider normalising relations until Israel agreed to allow the creation of a Palestinian state.

SEETHING TENSIONS: Tensions between Israelis and Palestinians have been surging for months, as have warnings of the risk of all-out war.

Most of the recent focus has

been on the occupied West Bank, where recurring Israeli military operations have sparked frequent gun battles.

April: An Israeli police raid at the Aqsa Mosque compound in Jerusalem prompted Palestinian rocket fire from Gaza. The Israeli military responded with airstrikes in southern Lebanon and Gaza targets of Hamas. The situation slowly calmed.

MAY: Israel and the Iran-backed Islamic Jihad militant group fought a short battle — the second in less than a year. After the death in an Israeli prison of Khader Adnan, a hunger-striking Palestinian militant, Islamic Jihad

launched a barrage of rockets. A week later, Israeli airstrikes killed three top Islamic Jihad leaders, setting off another round of fighting. The violence subsided after a cease-fire was mediated by Egypt and the United Nations.

JULY: The Israeli Army conducted a large-scale incursion in Jenin, a city in West Bank, in what it said was an effort to root out Palestinian militants. The operation killed 12 Palestinians and one Israeli soldier, and sent thousands fleeing from their homes.

SEPTEMBER: An unusual series of clashes took place near the fence that divides Gaza from Israeli territory. At least one Palestinian was killed and dozens were wounded. NYT

E
EXPLAINED

Appalling assault, says Biden; Germany UK support Israel, Iran hails fighters

ASSOCIATED PRESS
OCTOBER 7

PRESIDENT JOE Biden on Saturday decried the "appalling assault" by Hamas militants and his administration pledged to ensure Israel has "what it needs to defend itself" after the surprise attack that drew worldwide condemnation and anger from Israel's allies.

Biden made clear in a call with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that "we stand ready to offer all appropriate means of support," according to the White House. Secretary of State Antony Blinken rushed to the White House for meetings. "Terrorism is

never justified. Israel has a right to defend itself and its people," Biden said. Blinken had been planning a trip to the Middle East, with stops in Israel and Saudi Arabia, later this month, but those plans are now on hold, according to US officials.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said his country stands beside Israel, a sentiment echoed by the Austrian chancellor, Karl Nehammer. British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak tweeted that "Israel has an absolute right to defend itself."

Mikhail Bogdanov, Russia's deputy foreign minister, said Moscow was in touch with "all parties, including Arab countries" and urged "an immediate cease-

fire and peace" between Hamas and Israel. Saudi Arabia called for a halt to the fighting.

In Iran, Israel's regional arch-enemy, members of parliament opened their session Saturday by chanting "Death to Israel". Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said "today's operation created a new page in the field of resistance and armed operation against occupiers," ISNA news agency reported. An adviser to Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei congratulated Palestinian fighters for launching the attack on Israel. In Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps, hundreds took to the streets to celebrate the operation by Hamas.



Palestinians atop a damaged tank near the Gaza Strip fence on Saturday. AP

Pak goes ahead with eviction plan, Afghans cross border

SAJJAD HUSSAIN
ISLAMABAD, OCTOBER 7

THE PAKISTAN government has decided to go ahead with its controversial plan to evict all illegal immigrants — including around 1.7 million Afghan refugees — from the country by October 31, saying that the decision was in line with international practices, according to a media report.

The move came as law enforcement agencies continued their crackdown on people they call "illegal aliens", a sizeable number of families have been crossing the border into Afghanistan over the past week.

"No country allows illegal people to live in their country whether it is Europe, whether it is countries in Asia, in our neighbourhood. So, accordingly, this is in line with the international practice that we have taken this decision," caretaker For-eign Minister Jilani said. "But now I think it has been more than 40 years, so the gov-

E
EXPLAINED
Criticism from Amnesty, UNHCR

ernment of Pakistan has taken a decision," he said, noting that the situation in Afghanistan had stabilised.

The caretaker foreign minister said Pakistan had been discussing the migrant issue with Afghanistan "for a very long time" and called on international humanitarian agencies to help with the process.

Separately, speaking to reporters on Friday evening, caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi called on all foreign nationals illegally residing in Punjab to depart voluntarily, saying that provincial authorities had collected initial data on foreign residents.

He was stern in his warning, saying that any foreigner found staying unlawfully in the province would not be permitted to remain, and stressed that illegal immigrants should leave Punjab of their own accord. In case they didn't, he cautioned, a comprehensive crackdown would ensue. PTI

Sunak, Trudeau stress need for de-escalation of India-Canada row

ADITI KHANNA
LONDON, OCTOBER 7

BRITISH PRIME Minister Rishi Sunak and his Canadian counterpart Justin Trudeau have underscored the importance of de-escalation of the India-Canada diplomatic row and respect for the rule of law in a call, which was dominated by the standoff over the killing of a Sikh separatist leader in Canada in June.

According to a Downing Street statement, the British Indian leader spoke to Trudeau on Friday evening during which he was updated on the situation relating to Canadian diplomats in India. Both leaders agreed to stay in contact as Sunak reaffirmed the UK position of respect for the rule of law after Canada's allegation of Indian involvement in the killing of a pro-Khalistan wanted terrorist.

"Prime Minister Trudeau up-



dated on the situation relating to Canadian diplomats in India," reads the Downing Street statement. "The Prime Minister [Sunak] reaffirmed the UK's position that all countries should respect sovereignty and the rule of law, including the principles of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. He hoped to see a de-escalation in the situation and agreed to remain in contact with Prime Minister Trudeau on the next steps," it said. The Canadian Prime Minister's Office from Ottawa echoed the statement, saying that Trudeau provided an update on the current situation between Canada and India. PTI

Afghanistan: Two 6.3-magnitude tremors kill over 100, injure 500

ASSOCIATED PRESS
ISLAMABAD, OCTOBER 7

TWO 6.3 magnitude earthquakes killed dozens of people in western Afghanistan on Saturday, the country's national disaster authority said.

The United Nations gave a preliminary figure of 320 dead, but later said the figure was still being verified. Local authorities gave an estimate of 100 people killed and 500 injured, according to the same update from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Mohammad Abdullah Jan said four villages in the Zenda Jan district in Herat province bore the brunt of the quakes and aftershocks. Dozens of houses have been damaged.

The United States Geological Survey reported the 6.3 magnitude tremors. It said the epicentre was 40 kilometres northwest of Herat city. There was an aftershock with a 5.5 magnitude.

A map on the USGS website indicates seven earthquakes in the area. At least five powerful earthquakes struck the city around noon, Herat city resident Abdul Shakor Samadi said.

"All people are out of their homes," Samadi said. "Houses, offices, and shops are all empty and there are fears of more earthquakes. My family and I were inside our home, I felt the quake." His family began shouting and ran outside, afraid to return indoors.

The World Health Organization in Afghanistan said it dispatched 12 ambulance cars to Zenda Jan to evacuate casualties to hospitals.

"As deaths and casualties from the earthquake continue to be reported, teams are in hospitals assisting treatment of wounded; assessing additional needs," the UN agency said on X, formerly known as Twitter. "WHO-supported ambulances are transporting those affected, most of them women and children." Telephone connections went down in Herat, mak-

ing it hard to get details from affected areas. Videos on social media showed hundreds of people in the streets outside their homes and offices in Herat city.

Herat province borders Iran. The quake also was felt in the nearby Afghan provinces of Farah and Badghis, according to local media reports.

Abdul Ghani Baradar, the Taliban-appointed deputy prime minister for economic affairs, expressed his condolences to the dead and injured in Herat and Badghis.

The Taliban urged local organisations to reach earthquake-hit areas as soon as possible to help take the injured to hospital, provide shelter for the homeless, and deliver food to survivors. They said security agencies should use all their resources and facilities to rescue people trapped under debris.

"We ask our wealthy compatriots to give any possible cooperation and help to our afflicted brothers," the Taliban said on X.

13 ECONOMY

CRUDE WATCH OIL PRICES RISE

Oil prices rose on Friday but posted their steepest weekly losses since March, after another partial lifting of Russia's fuel export ban compounded demand fears due to macroeconomic headwinds.
REUTERS

RBI'S MONETARY POLICY REPORT FOR OCTOBER 2023

Inflation likely to ease below 4% target in next fiscal, says RBI

HITESH VYAS
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 7

CONSUMER PRICE index (CPI) based inflation is expected to ease below 4 per cent in fiscal 2024-25 if monsoon remains normal and there are no further policy shocks, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said.

"For 2024-25, assuming a normal monsoon, and no further exogenous or policy shocks, structural model estimates indicate that inflation will average 4.5 per cent, in a range of 3.8-5.2 per cent," the RBI said in its Monetary Policy Report for October 2023.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das has said that the central bank may rethink on cutting the repo rate only when it sees CPI inflation at around 4 per cent or below it on a durable basis.

The survey projects CPI inflation to be at 4.3 per cent in the fourth quarter of FY2025. CPI inflation was at 6.83 per cent in August 2023.

Many analysts expect the RBI to start cutting repo rate only in 2024 when inflation may soften to near 4 per cent target.

"We are pushing out the first rate cut from February to April, while retaining our fore-



The RBI left the repo rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent on concerns over high inflation. PTI

cast for 100 basis points (bps) in cuts in 2024 which would take the policy repo rate to 5.5 per cent by end-2024," Nomura said in a report.

Deutsche Bank's chief economist (India & South Asia) Kaushik Das said the RBI will embark on a rate cut cycle starting from April 2024.

In its monetary policy announced on October 6, the RBI left the repo rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent on concerns over high inflation which poses a major risk to macroeconomic stability and sustainable growth. During FY2024, the RBI expects CPI inflation to be at 5.4 per cent, with Q2 at 6.4 per cent, Q3 at 5.6 per cent and

Q4 at 5.2 per cent.

The RBI said the baseline forecasts are subject to several upside and downside risks. The upside risks emanate from more persistent food price increases due to weather related disturbances, which could then feed into inflation expectations; further hardening of global commodity prices amidst an escalation of geopolitical tensions; and a larger pass-through of input cost pressures to output prices.

The downside risks could come from an early resolution of geopolitical tensions, a steep correction in global crude and commodity prices in the event of a sharp slowdown in the

WHAT THE RBI SURVEY PROJECTS

■ The central bank may rethink on cutting the repo rate when it sees CPI inflation at around 4 per cent or below it on a durable basis

■ The survey projects CPI inflation to be at 4.3 per cent in the fourth quarter of FY25

global growth, and further improvement in supply conditions.

On Friday, RBI Governor highlighted that volatile energy and food prices in the wake of lingering geopolitical tensions and adverse weather conditions render uncertainty to the inflation outlook and said that the RBI remains vigilant of the evolving inflation dynamics.

The RBI's rate setting Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) observed that the recurring incidence of large and overlapping food price shocks can impart generalisation and persistence to headline inflation.

'Consumer confidence at four-year high'

Mumbai: The RBI said its consumer confidence survey for the current period reverted to its recovery path after a brief pause in July 2023 round of the survey. The current situation index reached a four-year high of 92.2 on the back of respondents' better assessment of current general economic situation and employment conditions in September 2023.

"General economic outlook as well as the prospects for employment, income and spending are expected to improve over the next one year. The future expectations index also reached a four-year high of 122.3 in the latest survey round," the RBI survey said. Households remain optimistic on future earnings even though sentiment on current earnings remained around its July 2023 level. ENS

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

GIVEN THE volatility in international crude oil prices, Moody's Investors Service expects the profitability of India's oil marketing companies (OMCs)—Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPLC), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation (HPCL)—to weaken if oil prices are at elevated levels as the three companies will have little room to pass on the higher costs to consumers in view of the impending 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

"The OMCs' marketing margins—the difference between their net realised prices and international prices—have already weakened significantly from the high levels seen in the quarter ended 30 June 2023. Marketing margins on diesel turned negative since August while margins on petrol have narrowed considerably over the same period as international prices increased," Moody's said in a recent report. It added that to some extent, the slump in marketing margins has been mitigated by strong refining margins—the difference in the value of all refined products coming out of a refinery and the value of crude processed to derive those products. While Moody's expects the OMCs operating performance to weaken over the next few quarters if oil prices remain at elevated levels, the companies' earnings for financial year 2023-24 (FY24) are still likely to be strong, thanks to a spectacular show in the April-June quarter when they gained from strong marketing and refining margins.

"The three companies' fiscal 2024 earnings will remain strong and higher than historical levels, even if crude oil prices remain at current levels of \$85/bbl-\$90/bbl in the second half of fiscal 2024. This is attributable to the OMCs' exceptionally strong earnings in 1Q (April-June) of fiscal 2024. The three companies' EBITDA (earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation) in the first quarter alone was close to their average annual EBITDA for the last few years," Moody's said.

Last week, Nomura had also cautioned that the spurt in international crude oil and fuel prices was leading to an under-recovery



The companies have not revised prices since early April of last year. File

of over Rs 7 per litre for the OMCs on diesel and petrol sales, adversely impacting the profitability of the OMCs, which have a cumulative market share of around 90 per cent in India's fuel retail sector. Under-recoveries refer to the difference between the retail price and the international price of the fuel.

As per the pricing methodology followed by the OMCs, petrol and diesel prices should be revised daily based on the 15-day rolling average of international benchmark prices. However, the companies have not revised prices since early April of last year, when global crude oil and fuel prices had surged in the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

With Assembly elections in five states around the corner and Lok Sabha polls likely in a few months, analysts and industry insiders say that it is unlikely that the OMCs would hike prices of diesel and petrol. Although petrol and diesel prices are deregulated, the three OMCs in the past have kept fuel prices frozen around key elections, particularly if the global rates dictated a price increase.

After incurring heavy under-recoveries for much of last year, the OMCs were in the process of recouping their accumulated losses from 2022-23 (FY23) in the current financial year. There were indications from the government and the OMCs that they could revert to daily price revisions soon as most of their last year's accumulated losses had been recouped. Till a couple of months back, there was anticipation that petrol and diesel prices could soon see a cut. However, with international oil prices and fuel spreads, or margins, having risen substantially leading to incidence of under-recoveries again, the resumption of daily price revisions in line

with global rates and reduction in fuel prices may only be a distant possibility. In such a scenario, fuel price cut can only be achieved if the government cuts taxes on the petrol and diesel, like it did on two occasions over the past couple of years, or the OMCs decide to bear deeper losses at the government's behest. On the other hand, if oil prices and fuel spreads fall significantly, it would enable a reduction in fuel prices.

Global crude oil prices had been firming up for a few months prior to September, which saw a sudden spurt after major oil producers Saudi Arabia and Russia surprised the world by announcing an extension of their voluntary supply cuts—totalling 1.3 million barrels per day (bpd)—till the end of 2023. The two oil-rich countries are leading the cartel of major oil producing nations in efforts to prop up crude oil prices by reducing supply despite expectations of a rise in global oil demand.

Although global oil prices have seen notable correction over the past few days due to demand-side concerns, volatility persists and it is difficult to predict the trajectory going ahead. Moody's does not anticipate high oil prices to sustain for too long as global growth weakens. Global benchmark Brent crude is currently trading close to \$85 per barrel. At this year's peak in September, it had touched \$97 per barrel.

Moody's does expect international prices of fuels to soften in subsequent quarters over demand concerns, particularly emanating from apprehensions of an economic slowdown in China, even as supplies are likely to go up as a number of refineries come back online after scheduled maintenance shutdowns.

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SECTOR WATCH MARKETS

RBI's OMO plan: Why did it catch the market by surprise?

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 7

THE RESERVE Bank of India's announcement on Friday to consider Open Market Operation (OMO) sale of government securities to manage liquidity in the system took the bond market by surprise as the central bank did not reveal any specific timeline for the proposal. In response, the yield on the benchmark 10-year government bonds shot up by 12 basis points to 7.34 per cent as the market anticipates an OMO in the near future which is expected to tighten liquidity in the system.

said while unveiling the monetary policy.

What's OMO?

The RBI uses Open market operations (OMOs) in order to adjust the rupee liquidity conditions in the market on a durable basis. When the Reserve Bank feels that there is excess liquidity in the market, it resorts to sale of government securities, thereby sucking out the rupee liquidity. Similarly, when the liquidity conditions are tight, the central bank buys securities from the market, thereby releasing liquidity into the market. It's used as a tool to rein in inflation and money supply in the system. However, when

liquidity is sucked out, it can lead to a spike in bond yields as the RBI will release more government securities into the market and the market and bond buyers demand more interest rate on these securities.

Why RBI wants OMO?

While the specific OMO calendar has not been released, the Governor, in the post-policy press conference, emphasized the bank's intent for "active liquidity management." This signals the RBI's inclination towards tighter liquidity conditions in the future, influenced by both inflation risks and financial stability concerns. This stance is in alignment with the central bank's objective of anchoring inflation at 4 per cent. The RBI's approach is clear: merely keeping inflation below the upper band of the target range (at 6 per cent) is insufficient, a more proactive approach is essential, according to Amnish Aggarwal - Head of Research, Prabhudas Lilladher Pvt Ltd.

The central bank wants to use the liquidity management to achieve the target. Historically, October-May period is observed to have high cash withdrawals due to the festive and wedding seasons.

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MAJESTIC A350

Tata Group-owned Air India has shared the first look of the latest A350 planes from its new livery at the paint shop in France's Toulouse. These new planes are supposed to reach India this winter, the Air India post added. @airindia

Institutional investments in real estate down 21% in Jul-Sep qtr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

INSTITUTIONAL INVESTMENTS in real estate declined 21 per cent in July-September period to \$793.4 million due to lesser inflows in office assets, according to Colliers India.

Institutional inflows stood at \$1,002.1 million in the year-ago period.

Real estate consultant Colliers India on Saturday released the data that showed a sharp fall of 89 per cent in investment in office assets to \$79.1

million during July-September from \$694.3 million in the corresponding period of last year.

Funds inflows in mixed-use assets too dipped 73 per cent to \$272 million during July-September period from \$100.8 million in the year-ago period.

However, the institutional investments in residential properties rose 47 per cent to \$274.6 million in the third quarter of this calendar year from \$187 million in the year-ago period.

Industrial & warehousing assets attracted \$340.3 million during July-September as against mere \$20 million in the

year-ago period.

Investments in alternate assets, which include data centres, student housing, senior housing, holiday homes and life sciences, stood at \$72.2 million during July-September period as against zero inflows in the year-ago period.

Despite fall in institutional investments in real estate during July-September period, Colliers India data showed that the inflows during January-September were up 27 per cent to \$4,558.1 million as against \$3,578.5 million in the year-ago period.

Softbank offloads stake in PB Fintech for ₹871 cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

JAPANESE CONGLOMERATE Softbank on Friday offloaded a 2.5 per cent stake in Policybazaar's parent firm PB Fintech through open market transactions for Rs 871 crore.

Softbank through its affiliates -- SVF India Holdings (Cayman) Ltd and SVF Python II (Cayman) Ltd -- sold the shares of the company. Tata Mutual Fund (MF), Kotak MF, Societe Generale, Morgan Stanley Asia Singapore Pte, Nomura Singapore, Pioneer Investment Fund Scheme II,

Saudi Central Bank, Goldman Sachs (Singapore) Pte, and Citigroup Global Markets Mauritius, among others are the buyers of shares of PB Fintech.

As per the block deal data available on the National Stock Exchange (NSE), SVF India Holdings (Cayman) sold 30,97,576 shares and SVF Python II (Cayman) disposed of 83,23,635 shares, amounting to a 0.7 per cent and 1.8 per cent stake in PB Fintech, respectively.

The shares were offloaded at an average price of Rs 762.80 apiece, taking the combined transaction value to Rs 871.21 crore.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

INDIA OFFERS a lot of opportunities to the aviation industry, and the government has taken many initiatives to promote investment in the sector, Financial Services Secretary Vivek Joshi said on Saturday.

Addressing a roundtable conference on the airport sector organised by IIFCL, Joshi said the launch of the 'Ude Desh ka Aam Nagraik' (UDAN) scheme has led to significant development of the sector in the past 7-8 years.

As a result, the number of airports has almost doubled from 74 in 2014 to 148 in 2023, giving a boost to regional connectivity.

The government has addi-

tionally given in-principle approval for setting up 21 greenfield airports across the country, he noted. Further, he said, two big airports coming up in Noida and Navi Mumbai will add to the capacity of the airports in the country.

India's aviation industry has seen a remarkable boost in recent years facilitated by the government's investor-friendly legislation, supportive ecosystem and growing demand.

The aviation industry in India is the third-largest and fastest-growing in the world, expanding at a rate of about 10 per cent during the last decade, roughly 2.5 times the global average.

To give a further boost to the aviation sector, Joshi said, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs ear-

lier this week issued a notification excluding transactions involving aircraft, plane engines, airframes and helicopters from the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC). "The ministry has exempted the aircraft leasing from Section 14 of IBC, which I think will be a great help for this sector," Joshi said.

Section 14 of the IBC deals with the power of adjudicating authority (NCLT) to issue a moratorium when admitting a company to the insolvency resolution process. Once the moratorium on asset transactions is imposed, activities like the institution of suits, continuation of pending suits, execution of judgments, transferring/ disposing of assets and recovery/enforcement of security interest are prohibited.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, SILCHAR
(An Institution of National Importance)
Assam - 788 010
Phone : (03842) 244879, Web Site: http://www.nits.ac.in
Fax : (03842) 224797, EPABX: 233841-5129

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER
E-tender invited from experienced and financially sound contractor/agency for the following work.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimated cost	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Cost of Tender Paper	Last date for submission of E-Tender	
NIT No. NIT-E/Estate/2023-24/03						
1.	Campus Housekeeping work (Except Hostel) at NIT Silchar	Rs. 3,10,00,000/-	Rs. 6,20,000/-	Rs. 10,000/-	01.11.2023 up to 04.00 PM	
NIT No. NIT-E/Estate/2023-24/04						
2.	Gardening work (Except Hostel) at NIT Silchar	Rs. 93,00,000/-	Rs. 1,86,000/-	Rs. 10,000/-		
NIT No. NIT-E/Estate/2023-24/05						
3.	Hostel Housekeeping works at NIT Silchar	Rs. 2,46,00,000/-	Rs. 4,92,000/-	Rs. 10,000/-		
NIT No. NIT-E/Estate/2023-24/06						
4.	Providing total campus security and institute vehicle driving services at NIT SILCHAR	Rs. 9,60,00,000/-	Rs. 15,88,000/-	Rs. 10,000/-		

The detailed tender notice may be seen at Institute website <http://www.nits.ac.in>, <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app> & institute notice board. Tenderers are requested to visit the website regularly for any modification if any. **Sd/- Registrar**

Rajasthan State Food and Civil Supplies Corporation Limited
5th floor, kisan bhawan, Jaikothi, Tonk road, jaipur-302015
Ph- 0141-2741924 email rfsfsc@gmail.com
File no. ()/RFSFSC/NPDS/Bid/6385 Date: 06.10.2023

NOTICE INVITING BID
e-Bids for supply of Non-PDS items at Fair Price Shop dealer in all Rajasthan are invited from interested bidders up to 26.10.2023 at 02.00 PM. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>) or <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in> of the state, and rfsfsc.org. The approximate value of the procurement is Rs. 200 Crore. UBN : FCS2324GLOB00060
Raj.Samwad/C/23/11991 General Manager (Marketing)

महाराष्ट्र राज्य मार्ग परिवहन महामंडळ, नाशिक प्रदेश
काढवरी ऑफिस कॉम्प्लेक्स, ए.डी.पेठर रोड, शिवाजी नगर, नाशिक-४२२००१
Email: emstrc@gmail.com वाकफा नाशिक
सहाय्य विभाग (विद्युत खाते)
जाहलू निविदा सूचना क्र. ०५/२०२३-२०२४
नाशिक प्रोडक्शन सेल स.स. शिवाजी नगर मार्ग परिवहन महामंडळ, नाशिक प्रदेश
नाशिक प्रोडक्शन सेल स.स. शिवाजी नगर मार्ग परिवहन महामंडळ, नाशिक प्रदेश
नाशिक प्रोडक्शन सेल स.स. शिवाजी नगर मार्ग परिवहन महामंडळ, नाशिक प्रदेश

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice
Tender No: 1st Re E-Tender No. WRD/KWACB/SR/17/836/2022_26_7_6RC/1/1
Jal Jeevan Mission -WSS to PALLICKATHOUDU PANCHAYATH in KOTTAYAM DISTRICT
Package 4 (c) -Supplying and laying 350 mm DI CWPM from WTP to OHSR at Mathrumala (Reach 3) and construction of chlorine room at WTP, Arunamoor, Supply, Erection, Testing Commissioning of Clear Water Pump sets at WTP Arunamoor and OHSR at Mathrumala.
EMD: Rs. 2,00,000/- (Rupees Two lakhs only) Tender fee: Rs. 1,10,254/(1,10,254) GST Last Date for submitting Tender: 20-10-2023 03:00:pm Phone: 04812562745 Website: www.kwa.kerala.gov.in www.etenders.kerala.gov.in
Superintending Engineer PH Circle Kottayam
KWA-JB-GL-6-1337-2023-24

14 CLASSIFIEDS & TENDERS

Classifieds

PERSONAL
It is for general information that I BRJESH KUMAR RAI (Real name) S/o Sh.Sadhan Rai...

I, Yakeel Ahmed, Address-B13 Gali.No.1 Krishna Nagar Kanti-Nagar Extension Krishna-Nagar, Delhi-110051...

I, YOGESH KUMAR S/O MURARI LAL GOYAL, R/O-2963/220, Vishram-Nagar, Tri-Nagar, Delhi-110035...

I, Vinay Saini, Son of Sh. Sube Singh Saini, R/O-House no 313, Sector-9A, Gurugram (Haryana), have changed the name of my minor daughter...

I, Sushma Dutraj W/o Prakash Kumar Ruchal R/O-13/229 Geeta Colony Delhi-110031...

I, Prakash Ruchal S/o Basant Kumar Ruchal R/O-13/229 Geeta Colony, Delhi-110031...

I, RADHIKA DEVI W/o Ashok Kumar Jha R/O 199 Main Road Firani Wala Village Bakoli north west Delhi-110036...

I, ROSAMMA W/O NO.13937326K RANK EX SEPT, CHERIAN T.M. R/O 2582, K-BLOCK, MAHIPALPUR DELHI-37, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ROSAMMA CHERIAN VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATE 7.10.23, BEFORE DELHI.

I, RANJEET SINGH S/O MOHAN SINGH R/O 5D/44, VISHNU GARDEN, KHYALA, DELHI-110018. HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RANJIT SINGH.

I, ROSAMMA W/O NO.13937326K RANK EX SEPT, CHERIAN T.M. R/O 2582, K-BLOCK, MAHIPALPUR DELHI-37, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ROSAMMA CHERIAN VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATE 7.10.23, BEFORE DELHI.

I, Rakesh chandna, s/o Radha krishan, r/o floor no EF47, 2nd-floor TDI espania sonipat, have changed my minor-daughter name, from Priditi to Paridhi chandna, for all purposes.

I, Riyazuddin s/o-Samsuddin Shah, R/O-A-32, Gali.No.-1, Near-Sai Mandir, Om-Enclave Part-1, Agwanpur, Sector-91, Faridabad-121003, Haryana, have changed my name to Riyazuddin Shah, permanently.

I, NO JC 706896P NB SUB NA Birju Mahto Have Changed My Son's Name From Piyush Kumar To Piyush Kumar Mahto For All Purpose.

I, Shailendr Kumar, S/o Veer Bai Rathaur, R/O Gram-Gopiyaganj, Bharthana Etawah-206242 (U.P.), Have Changed My Name To Shailendra Kumar, For Future.

I, Sarvesh Dhussa, S/O-Anil Kumar, Address 1006/23 DLF colony rohtak haryana 124001, have changed my-minor son name Naksh to Naksh Dhussa.

I, Sakina, Address-B13 Gali.No.1, Krishna Nagar Kanti-Nagar Extension Krishna-Nagar Delhi-110051, have changed my name to Shakeela Begum, for all, future purposes.

I, Poonam W/o Sandeep Kumar, R/O-A-701, Anantraj-Maceo, Sector-91, Meoka(121) Gurgaon, Haryana-122505, declare that in my school-Certificate issued by CBSE my name is mentioned as Poonam Kumari, And in my Aadhaar-Card, it is mentioned as Poonam.Poonam and Poonam Kumari are and the same person name.

I, Poonam Bai, W/o Vinod Kumar Yadav, H.No.-6, Shani Enclave, Maruti Kunj Road, Nayagaon, Bhandosi (168) Gurgaon (Haryana). 122102, have changed my name to Poonam Yadav.

I, Parmveer Singh, S/O-Gurdeep Singh, R/O-A-19A(FF) 32/10, Vikas-Vihar, Nilothi-Extn Nangli ND-41, have changed my name to Parmveer Singh.

I, Narendra Kumar S/o Late Vas Dev, R/O H.No.12/38, Nehru Nagar, New Delhi-110065, declare that in school records of my son Chaitanya Arora my name and wife name mentioned as Narendra Kumar Arora and Monika Arora. Now we want to remove Arora surname from School Records of my son, and we shall be known as Narendra Kumar and Monika.

I, NIRMATA SADH, W/o Churchit Sadh, R/o F-10, Lajpat Nagar-III, South Delhi, Delhi-110024, have changed my name to NAMRATA SADH, for all future purposes.

I, Munnna Parmar S/o Babu Singh R/o 10/143, Katra Wazir Khan, Rambagh Agra, Kuberpur, Agra, U.P.-282006, have changed my name to Munnna Singh.

I, Mukesh Kr Garg, S/o Sumer Chand Gupta Flat.No.-51, Swastik Kunj Apartment, Sector-13, Rohini, Delhi, have changed my name to Mukesh Kumar Gupta.

I, Mohammad Nadeem Akhter, S/o Mohammad Shamim Akhter, R/O PP-2, UGF, PP-Block, Church Road, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi-110092, have changed my name to Md. Nadim Akhter.

I, Dhruv Maheshwari R/o. W-63, First Floor, Greater Kailash-II, New Delhi 110048 have changed the name of my minor Daughter Miraya to Miraya Maheshwari for all future purposes

I, Indu Manhas W/O Sidharth Singh R/O W. No. 7 Khour, Tehsil Khour, Distt-Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir 181203, have changed my surname to Indu Bhau, for all future purposes

I, Jagdish Chander Anand S/o Ram Kishan Anand R/O House No-228, Ground Floor, Raja Garden, Ramesh Nagar, West Delhi-110015 my surname has not been mentioned as Anand in surname Column in my Passport No. F7504926.

I, Krishna Kumari Anand W/o Jagdish Chander Anand R/O House No-228, Ground Floor, Raja Garden, Ramesh Nagar, West Delhi-110015 my surname has not been mentioned as Anand in surname Column in my Passport No. F7081075.

I, Mirchani Begum, W/o Mohammad Shadab Khan, R/O A-405, 4th Floor, Mayurdhwaj Co. Group Housing Society, Geeta Colony, Shahdara, East Delhi-110031 have changed my to Nuzhat Praveen for all purposes.

I, ROHINI D/O SURESH CHAND R/O F-64-C-16-373, SECTOR-40, NOIDA, U.P. have changed my name to ROHINI PRAJAPATI for all-purpose record.

I, Suresh Devi W/O Babu Ram Sharma R/O Village-Morna, Sector-35, Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar, UP-201301, Have Changed My Name To Suresh For All Future Purpose

I, ANITA RANI, W/O SH. AMAN MITTAL, R/O-4/30, NEAR HDFC BANK, ROOP NAGAR, DELHI-110007, DOB-25-01-1969, have changed my name from ANITA RANI to BHAWNA MITTAL, after my marriage on 05/05/1992, for all future purposes.

I, Amit Kumar Maurya, s/o Sabhapati Maurya R/o C-62/B Street, No-08, West Vinod-Nagar Delhi-110092, have changed my name to Amit Maurya, for all purposes.

I, Anil Kumar Jain, S/O-Roshan Lal Jain, R/O H-37, Ashok Vihar, Phase-1, Delhi-110052, have changed my name to Anil Jain.

I, Brijesh Kumar, S/o Ramanand Yadav, R/o H.No.8P, Sector-6, Dhauraher, Rewari, Haryana-123106, have changed my name to Brijesh Kumar.

I, Faisal Ahmad S/o Mohd Iqbal R/o 243, Gali No.5, Opp.Ram Ghat, Wazirabad Delhi-110084 have changed my name to Faisal Ahmed.

I, SAROJ BANSAL, W/O, RAJ KUMAR, ADD-85-A, MODEL BASTI MASTER PRITHVI NATH MARG, KAROL BAGH, CENTRAL-DELHI 110005, changed my name to SAROJ BIDAWAT, for all, future purposes.

I, Aditya Kaitash Batani s/o Kailash Khialdas Balani r/o B-13 2nd floor Chirag Enclave Delhi-110048 have changed my name to Aditya Balani.

I, Priya D/o Late Trilok Singh Karki and W/o Senthil Kumar Sivaprakasam R/o 897, Indira Nagar Colony, Vasant Vihar, Dehradun, Uttarakhand-248001, have changed my name to Priya Senthil 0070867342-1

I, Ravina Vishwas D/o Ratan Vishwas and W/o Sapan Gupta R/o Mahendra Nagar, Rudpur, Jail Camp No 3, S.A.I Camp, Sitarganj, Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand-262405, have changed my name to Ravina Gupta 0070867344-1

LOST & FOUND
We Gurmeet Bakshi and Monica Bakshi, R/O-C-16, FF, Kailash Colony, New Delhi, have lost our allotment- letter issued in our names by Ansal housing and Construction-Ltd Against Plot.No-B-A133, Golf links-1, Greater-Noida measuring 598.00, We have lodged an FIR-Dated, 27.09.23 bearing- No.942710/2023. It is for information to general-public. If found please-contact on-9818937954.

LOST AND FOUND
Lost the Documents i.e. Two Original Sale Deeds in respect of WZ-152, GE-5, Hari Nagar, New Delhi having Regd.Nos. 7980 and 16197, Book No.1, Volume No. 21749 and 945, on pages 21 to 28 and 132 to 142, dt. 01/05/2014 and 02/11/2015 respectively registered in the office of SR-11B, Janak Puri, New Delhi favor of Lovelinder Kaur W/o Late S.S. Sarabjeet Singh, An FIR in this Effect has been Lodged Vide LR No.973378/2023 Dated: 05-10-2023. Founder inform at above address.

MATRIMONIAL
Bride wanted

CASTE NO BAR
Alliance for Mumbai based Hindu Parsi Man, 58 years, Own flat. Expectation: Educated, Divorced/ Widow. Caste No Bar. Call 9757233916. 0070867088-1

GUPTA/ AGGARWAL
Agrawal - Bisa Wanted Bride Singhal, 6'1 boy, 25 years, Post Graduate, Own business and house at Navi Mumbai, Well settled, needs homely, educated girl no demands. Mob: 9869007317/ 9137005725. 0070867330-1

KAYASTHA
Wanted Beautiful Bride for Kayastha Indian Forest Service Officer 32/170cm, B.Tech, M.Tech from IIT Kanpur. Father Renowned Neurologist Owning a Hospital. Call: 7985670572, drspradhan@rediffmail.com

SIKH/PUNJABI
PQM for Jat Sikh Boy, Dec 1995, 5'-8" M.Tech, Software Developer Working in Toronto in Canada. Whatsapp 9818520839 0020465700-1

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

ELECTRICAL WORKS
Tender Notice No. Dy.CEE/CON/NJ/PE/06/2023. Open tender in sealed cover is invited through IREPS website for the following works from the reputed contractors/firms. SN: 1; Tender No.: E-C-N-JA-07-23-SV-RNG. Name of works: Proposal for maintenance of split/Window type Air conditioner, water cooler, refrigerator, inverter, UPS and Solar Heater including repairing, replacement of related spares and painting of body parts by spray machine to keep the machine in running condition for successful commissioning and operation of the equipment at New Jalpaiguri Construction offices & ORH, Kheiganj and Bhabanipur (Kolkata), Kheiganj (Delhi), Gangtok and Darjeeling for the period of two (02) years in connection with Suez-Ranigo (NL) Project. Tender value: ₹66,93,452.65; Earnest money: ₹1,33,900.00. E-tender will be closed at 14:30 hrs. on 31-10-2023 and opened at 15:30 hrs. on 31-10-2023. The complete information and tender document of e-Tender is available at www.ireps.gov.in

PUBLIC NOTICE
My Clients Shri Surinder Kumar Jain S/o Late Shri Madan Kishore Jain R/o 180, Gujranwala Town Part-2, Delhi-110009 hereby severed all Relations & Disowned his Son Bhisesh Jain and his wife Yashika Singhal from all their moveable and immovable properties due to their hostile behaviour. If anybody is dealing with them, my client will not be responsible. Sd/- RAJESH AGGARWAL (Advocate) Enrl. No. D/5046/16 45/22, Bhushan Bhawan, Ring Road, Azadpur, Delhi-33

PUBLIC NOTICE
My clients Ashok Sharma S/o Raju Nath Sharma and Anja W/o Ashok Sharma, both R/o A-255, DDA Flats, Punjabi Camp, Jangnipuri, Delhi-110035, have debarred their son Rajesh Sharma age about 25 yrs., and his wife Nishita age about 25 yrs. from their moveable and immovable properties and have severed all relations from them, due to their misconduct, bad behaviour and bad intentions. Any person dealing with Rajesh Sharma and his wife Nishita shall be doing so at his/her their risk, cost and consequences and they are responsible for all. Clients shall not be liable and responsible for their any civil or criminal activities. Sd/- SANJEEV KUMAR (Advocate) Enrl. No. D/226/1991

PUBLIC NOTICE
Public attention is hereby drawn that my clients Sh. Umesh Yadav S/o Sh. Puran Chand Yadav and Smt. Kiran Yadav W/o Sh. Umesh Yadav both R/o HN-3, Gate No.1, Hasthal Ext., Hasthal Village, Uttar Nagar, Delhi-110059 have severed relationship all their relationship with their son named Sh. Nishant Yadav. My clients have disowned their son from their moveable and immovable properties since they are not in control of my clients and their acts are irresponsible manner. If any person will deal with them shall do so at his/her own risk and cost and my clients shall not be responsible in any manner. Sd/- NISHANT TYAGI Advocate Office: 523, Lawyer's Chambers, District Court, Sec-10, Dwarka, New Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that my clients SH. KAILASH CHAND and SMT. KUSUM LATA, R/o 34B, Shiv Ram Park Extension, Nilothi, Meer, Nangloi, West Delhi-110041, hereby disown/debar their son Jai Parkash @ Sonu, his wife Gunjan Mahour & his children from all their moveable, immovable properties, assets, bank balance, cash in hand etc. as said Jai Parkash @ Sonu & his wife Gunjan Mahour were continuously disregard & disrespect my clients and having rough, rude & harass behavior with them. Any person whatsoever dealing with said Jai Parkash @ Sonu & his wife Gunjan Mahour, shall bear his/her own consequences and for which my clients will be liable & responsible for the acts & omissions committed by said Jai Parkash @ Sonu & his wife Gunjan Mahour or any liability borne by them. Parveen Garg (Advocate) Enrol.No. D/713/86, RU-370, Pitampura, New Delhi-34, Mob.9810039884

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform the public at large that s my client JOGENDER PRASAD son of SHRI MADAN GOPAL PRASAD, resident of A-2702, Mohan Garden, Uttar Nagar, New Delhi-110059, wish not to keep any relation with their son YASH RAJ PRASAD AGED 25 YEARS, Daughter KIRTI KUMARI AGED 24 YEARS & wife SMT. NEELAM DEVI PRASAD AGED 44 YEARS, and debarred them due to their behavior, conduct and attitude which is prejudicial and detrimental to the reputation and health of my client. Anybody dealing with them shall do at his/her own risk and consequences. Ramzan A. Ansari (Advocate) Chamber No. 94, Pataliha House Courts, New Delhi-110001, M.: 9891099520

PUBLIC NOTICE
FOR AND ON BEHALF OF MY CLIENTS (1) SH. BHOLA RAM TRADANI S/O LATE SH. LAKHM CHAND & (2) SMT. SIRMAN W/O SH. BHOLA RAM BOTH R/O MSA-2, JEHELAJI APARTMENT, PITAMPURA, DELHI-110034. SERVE THIS PUBLIC NOTICE THAT HENCEFORTH MY CLIENTS HEREBY SEVERE ALL THEIR RELATION WITH THEIR SON MANSHI TRADANI AND HEREBY DEBAR AND DISOWN HIM FROM ALL THEIR MOVEABLE & IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES, AS HE IS NOT OBEDEINT TO MY CLIENTS & DUE TO HIS DISRESPECTFULNESS AND OUT OF CONTROL BEHAVIOR OF MANSHI TRADANI ANYONE DEALING WITH HIM WILL BE DOING SO AT HIS/HER OWN RISK AND IN CASE HE HERITS OR MAKES FRAUD WITH ANYONE, MY CLIENTS SHALL HAVE NO CONCERN IN RESPECT THEREOF. NAVEEN KHURANA Advocate Enrl.No.D/296/2022

CAR FOR SALE
Mileage 47500 Model -2.5 VX 7S IM 2013 Diesel Car for sale. Only direct buyers to quote with Pan/Aadhar to ICCW 4, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg N. Delhi - 110002

CAR FOR SALE
Mileage 47500 Model -2.5 VX 7S IM 2013 Diesel Car for sale. Only direct buyers to quote with Pan/Aadhar to ICCW 4, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg N. Delhi - 110002

CAR FOR SALE
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Earn While you Learn Multi Skills online. Suitable for Students, Freshers, Experienced etc. If Interested, WhatsApp Name, Place to: 7027924000. 0040692599-1

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY
OPEN TENDER NOTICE
Date: 06.10.2023
Sr. DEN/CO/WCR, Bhopal acting for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders against following works, upto 15.30 hours on the dates mentioned against each tender. The complete tender documents and detail information regarding tender, is available on the website http://www.ireps.gov.in. NIT can also be seen on the notice board of DRM (W)/WCR/Bhopal office. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders. For any correction, in these tenders, if necessary, corrigendum will be uploaded on website prior to tender opening date and copy of corrigendum will be placed on Notice Board of this office, which may be seen upto the date of tender opening. Tenderers are requested to offer their rates and submit tenders according to the provisions of GST ACT 2017. S.N.-1, NIT No.: 23-24-N-16-83, 04.10.23, Date: 04.10.2023. Name of work including Location: Supplying, stacking and loading into hoppers of 65 mm gauge 90000 cum machine crushed ballast at Guna depot. Published cost of tender ₹: ₹ 5,85,43,200, Earnest Money: ₹ 4,42,700/-, Completion period: 14 months, Last date for submitting tender: 27.10.2023, S.N.-2, NIT No.: 23-24-WV-13-84, 04.10.23, Date: 04.10.2023, Name of work including Location: Execution and Supply of AT Welding portions of 60 Kg./R-260 Rails with single shot crucible in Guna-Gwalior and Ruchiyai-Maksi section under DEN/WEST/BPL. Published cost of tender ₹: ₹ 1,43,41,390, Earnest Money: ₹ 2,21,700/-, Completion period: 18 months, Last date for submitting tender: 27.10.2023, S.N.-3, NIT No.: 23-24-S-14-85, Date: 05.10.2023, Name of work including Location: Bhopal division - Replacement of fittings craked steel channel sleepers and corroded chequed plate of pathway, and other misc. work, under ADENM/Itarsi and ADENM/Harda. Published cost of tender ₹: ₹ 63,08,911, Earnest Money: ₹ 1,26,200/-, Completion period: 12 months, Last date for submitting tender: 27.10.2023. DRM (W) West Central Railway, Bhopal

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OPEN TENDER NOTICE
Date: 06.10.2023
Sr. DEN/CO/WCR, Bhopal acting for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders against following works, upto 15.30 hours on the dates mentioned against each tender. The complete tender documents and detail information regarding tender, is available on the website http://www.ireps.gov.in. NIT can also be seen on the notice board of DRM (W)/WCR/Bhopal office. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders. For any correction, in these tenders, if necessary, corrigendum will be uploaded on website prior to tender opening date and copy of corrigendum will be placed on Notice Board of this office, which may be seen upto the date of tender opening. Tenderers are requested to offer their rates and submit tenders according to the provisions of GST ACT 2017. S.N.-1, NIT No.: 23-24-N-16-83, 04.10.23, Date: 04.10.2023. Name of work including Location: Supplying, stacking and loading into hoppers of 65 mm gauge 90000 cum machine crushed ballast at Guna depot. Published cost of tender ₹: ₹ 5,85,43,200, Earnest Money: ₹ 4,42,700/-, Completion period: 14 months, Last date for submitting tender: 27.10.2023, S.N.-2, NIT No.: 23-24-WV-13-84, 04.10.23, Date: 04.10.2023, Name of work including Location: Execution and Supply of AT Welding portions of 60 Kg./R-260 Rails with single shot crucible in Guna-Gwalior and Ruchiyai-Maksi section under DEN/WEST/BPL. Published cost of tender ₹: ₹ 1,43,41,390, Earnest Money: ₹ 2,21,700/-, Completion period: 18 months, Last date for submitting tender: 27.10.2023, S.N.-3, NIT No.: 23-24-S-14-85, Date: 05.10.2023, Name of work including Location: Bhopal division - Replacement of fittings craked steel channel sleepers and corroded chequed plate of pathway, and other misc. work, under ADENM/Itarsi and ADENM/Harda. Published cost of tender ₹: ₹ 63,08,911, Earnest Money: ₹ 1,26,200/-, Completion period: 12 months, Last date for submitting tender: 27.10.2023. DRM (W) West Central Railway, Bhopal

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY
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31st May 1983 - 8th October 2005 In fond remembrance of Gunner Balbir Kumar who lived up to the highest traditions of Gunners of the Indian Army and made the supreme sacrifice, achieving martyrdom, while guarding the frontiers during the earthquake of 8th October 2005. CO and All ranks, 237 Field Regiment (Yudhe Nipunam).

2nd May 1981 - 8th October 2005 In fond remembrance of Gunner Kishor Kumar who lived up to the highest traditions of Gunners of the Indian Army and made the supreme sacrifice, achieving martyrdom, while guarding the frontiers during the earthquake of 8th October 2005. CO and All ranks, 237 Field Regiment (Yudhe Nipunam).

INDO-TIBETAN BORDER POLICE (ITBP) 08 October, 2023 Head Constable Jaipal, Constable Shiv Prasad, Constable Dinesh, Constable Vill-Rurki, Constable Vill-Semi, Constable Vill-Gard, Constable Distt-Chamolli, Constable Distt-Rohatak, Constable Distt-Haryana.

ITBP salutes its brave hearts Head Constable Jaipal, Constable Shiv Prasad and Constable Dinesh of 38th Bn, who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty on this day in Chhattisgarh in 2010.

UJVN LIMITED H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006 Telephone: 0135-2763808, Fax: 0135-2763500 CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website: www.ujvn.com

"VOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY" Executive Engineer (E&M-SHP) Office of the Executive Engineer (E&M-SHP), UJVN Ltd., GuptaKashi, invites online bids from interested parties.

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Institute Of Medical Sciences Vihari Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow-226010 (UP) India Ph. 0522-4918503, Fax: 0522-4918506. Website: www.drmlims.ac.in

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY E-Tender No.: DYCE-JHSW-58 Date: 05.10.2023 E-TENDERING NOTICE Dy. Chief Engineer/Workshop/Jhansi for and on behalf of President of India invite "Open Tender" through on Line (E-Tendering) for the following works.

POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH CHANDIGARH NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER Online percentage rate bids are invited on behalf of the Director, PGIMER, Chandigarh from the specialized agencies dealing in similar type of work on three bid system (Eligibility Bid, Technical Bid and Financial Bid).

U.P. RAJYA VIDYUT UTPADAN NIGAM LTD PARICHA THERMAL POWER PROJECT, PARICHA JHANSI E-Tender Notice 1. E-Tender-N-PAR/COMC2/BMD-1/6000003678_00 "Boiler Tube Corrosion Mapping by using Ultrasonic Testing (UT) based Automated Robotic Crawler during Overhauling of Unit 5, CTPS PTPP Parichha." Estimated Cost Rs. 21,46,680.00 EMD Rs. 25,000.00 e-bid Submission dt.: 16.10.2023 up to 01:00 PM.

2. E-Tender- N-PAR/C/O/MC2/TMD/6000003364_00 "Miscellaneous works of pumps, repairing/Service of HP valves, safety valves, HP bypass valves and its actuators ETC of unit 5 of 2x250 MW CTPS Parichha during Overhauling." Estimated Cost Rs. 30,97,222.00 EMD Rs. 45,000.00 e-bid Submission dt.: 16.10.2023 up to 12:00 PM.

NOTE:- Total Quality of work, tender specification and other terms & conditions is as per tender document available on the e-tender portal our website www.etender.up.nic.in & uprvnl.org. Bidders are advised to visit the website regularly for updated information from time to time.

Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, PWD, Zone, Ajmer No.: ACE/AJ/TECH/F2(30A-Ajmer)/D-2392 Date:-30.09.2023 NIB No.:-PWD2324A3576 Notice Inviting Bid No. 29/2023-24

Office of the Chief Engineer: Water Resources Zone Jodhpur Notice Inviting Bid (NIB NO-CE/WRD/JDP/18/ 2023-24) Notice inviting Bid for 02 work Rs 864.05 Lacs in the State of Rajasthan India invited from interested bidders.

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION General public is hereby informed that a unidentified person Name: Unknown, S/o : Unknown, R/o : Unknown, Age : About 60 years, Height : 5'6", Complexion : Wheatish, Built : Thin, Face : Long, Wearing : Dark Yellow Colour Shirt & Black and White Colour Cafri has been found dead after accident at Outer Ring Road Flyover, Vikaspuri, Near Manohar Nagar Gurudwara, Delhi on 03.10.2023.

SEARCH FOR MISSING GIRL General public is hereby informed that one girl namely Kalpana D/o Sonu Singh R/o J-168, Gali No.4 Sardar Colony Sec-16 Rohini, Delhi. Age 14 yrs., Height 4', Complexion Wheatish, wearing Brown Colour Top and Blue Jeans. has been missing since 26.09.2023 from her house. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out this girl but no clue has come to light so far.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED See Section 82 Cr.P.C. Where as complaint has been made before me that one accused Sh. Jai Singh S/o Sh. Ram Gopal, R/o H.No. 41, T-41, Gali No.2, Nangli Vihar, Near English Foundation School, Najafgarh, Delhi also at H.No. 74, Block-C, Gali No. 2, Nangli Vihar, Near Ambedkar School, Baprola, Delhi have committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in Cr. Case 8233/2019 & FIR No. 291/2019 u/s 33A, 38 Delhi Excise Act 33 (A) 33(B), 40 has been registered at P.S. Patel Nagar, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Sh. Jai Singh cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Sh. Jai Singh has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON See Section 82 Cr. P.C. Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Kiran Devi W/o Harpal R/o 205, Barkatpur Khurja, Bulandshahr U.P. has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in CC No. 5181/2018 U/s 138 NI Act PS Karol Bagh, New Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Kiran Devi can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Kiran Devi has absconded (or is concealing herself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON See Section 82 Cr. P.C. Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Mujaimal S/o Sh. Yoonus, R/o- 509, Bajhaidakalan 4, Gulaothi, Bulandshahr UP- 203131 has committed (or suspected to have committed) the offence in case registered vide CC No. 5165/18 U/s 138 NI Act PS Karol Bagh, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said accused Mujaimal cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Mujaimal has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON See Section 82 Cr.P.C. Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Sh. Babu, S/o Sh. Liyakat Ali, R/o H. No. 472, Bajhaidakalye, Ghaziabad, UP-203131 has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case CC No. 5139/18 U/s 138 NI Act, P. S. Karol Bagh, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Sh. Babu cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Sh. Babu has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL S.M.S. MEDICAL COLLEGE & CONTROLLER OF THE ATTACHED HOSPITALS, JAIPUR No.F/MC/Store/2022-23/4244-46 Dated: 03.10.2023 NOTICE INVITING BID Online Bids for various items and services at SMS Medical College, Jaipur, are invited from interested bidders upto 09.10.2023 at 04.00 PM.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PWD, DISTRICT DIVISION, PHULERA No.: 1113 Notice Inviting Bid Bids for Short Term NIT No. 26/2023-24 of Various T.Nos. Works are invited from interested bidders upto 30.09.2023 to 10.10.2023. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in) of the state and departmental website.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY E-Tender Notice Office of the Div. Rly. Manager, Prayagraj No. 230-Elec-OP-ET Notice-71-2023 Dated: 05.10.2023 Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (OP), North Central Railway, Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites the following E-Tender on prescribed form the details of the tenders are as under:

Appeal for Identification General Public is hereby informed that a male dead body Name: Unknown, S/o Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: Approx. 50 years, Height: 5'5" Complexion: Wheatish, Built: Thin, Face: Oval, Wearing: Multi Color Check Shirt and white pant was found Near Parking No.1 Kashmere Gate Delhi. In this regard, a DD No. 94-A, U/s 174 CrPC Dt. 01.10.2023 has been lodged at PS Kashmere Gate, Delhi.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED (See Section 82 Cr.PC.) Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Kiran Devi W/o Harpal R/o 205, Barkatpur Khurja, Bulandshahr U.P. has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in CC No. 5181/2018 U/s 138 NI Act PS Karol Bagh, New Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Kiran Devi can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Kiran Devi has absconded (or is concealing herself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियंता, लोक निर्माण विभाग, रायपुर मण्डल क्रमांक 2 (छत्तीसगढ़) ई-प्रोक्च्यूरमेंट निविदा सूचना (प्रथम आमंत्रण) निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु ऑनलाइन निविदा "ई-ओ" श्रेणी एवं अधिक श्रेणी के डेटाबेस हेतु निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

कार्यालय अधीक्षता स्व. बिसाहू दास महंत स्मृति चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय, कोरबा (छ.ग.) क्र./जेएमसी कोरबा/निविदा/2023-24/2645 कोरबा, दिनांक: 06.10.2023 प्रथम निविदा सूचना स्व. बिसाहू दास महंत स्मृति चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय एवं संबद्ध चिकित्सालय कोरबा, जिला-कोरबा (छ.ग.) के मुख्य गाई हेतु प्रथम निविदा

RajCOMP Info Services Limited (RISL) C-Block, 1st Floor, Yojana Bhawan, Tilak Marg, C-Scheme, Jaipur. RISL invites ebids from the eligible bidders for the following:

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE No. 98 to 99-23-24 Divl. Rly. Manager, N.W. Rly. Bikaner for and on behalf of President of India invites open E-Tender for the following works up to 15.00 hours on 31.10.2023 as below:

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE For following tenders Issued by Engineering Department, West Central Railway, please Visit website "http://ireps.gov.in". Tender No.: DYCE/TMWCR/042023, Description of Items: Providing Service of deep screening of all types of main line track on all BG routes of Bhopal Division of West Central Railway as per scope of service, using service provider's own machines along with his own spares, consumables, staff etc. for operation and maintenance and all incidental site work.

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE No.: GSU/JPEL/NIT/23-24 Date: 06.10.2023 Sr. DEE/TRD & GSU/JP, acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders for following works. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबन्धक, मुनिट-18 कन्दनवाण एण्ड डिजाइन सर्विसेज, उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय), मकान सं० जेड 1/17, आशियाना फेज-2 कल्याण आर्वापिकेन्द्र के सामने वाली गुली में, कौंड रोड, मुद्रादाबाद-244001 ई-मेल: pm18mbd@gmail.com फोन: 3381/ M-18/563 दिनांक: 05.10.2023

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE No. GSU/JPEL/NIT/23-24 Date 05.10.2023 Sr. DEE/TRD & GSU/JP, acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders for following works. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE No. WAE-Tender/21/2023 Dated: 04.10.2023 Following E-tenders are invited by DRM (Engg.) NWR/Ajmer at 15.00 Hrs. on the mentioned date. 1. Tender No. : 128/2023 Name of Work : ADEN-Bhiliwara Sub Division : Supply of potable water through road tankers at different stations, colonies, Gang Quarters & Level Crossings for 24 months in Ajmer -Chittaurgarh section.

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE No. WAE-Tender/21/2023 Dated: 04.10.2023 Following E-tenders are invited by DRM (Engg.) NWR/Ajmer at 15.00 Hrs. on the mentioned date. 1. Tender No. : 128/2023 Name of Work : ADEN-Bhiliwara Sub Division : Supply of potable water through road tankers at different stations, colonies, Gang Quarters & Level Crossings for 24 months in Ajmer -Chittaurgarh section.

BRIDGE

Bridge hand information including Dealer: East Vulnerable: Both, NORTH and EAST cards, WEST and SOUTH cards.

West leads the jack of spades to dummy's queen, East's king, and South's ace. South then leads the nine of diamonds to dummy's ace and plays dummy's jack of hearts.

The West hand: S-J1093H-D-K8552C-K975 The South hand: S-A62H-AQ10832D-J9C-AQ

East should anticipate the eventual lead of the jack of hearts by South and decide which heart to play ahead of time.

South has at least five hearts for his opening bid and likely has six based on his jump to 4H.

Yes, definitely. If South has six hearts, which is certainly possible, the combined number of hearts between his hand and dummy is eleven.

Dealer: South Vulnerable: Both

Bridge hand information including Dealer: South Vulnerable: Both, NORTH and SOUTH cards, WEST and SOUTH cards.

Bridge hand information including West, North, East, South cards.

South was not using Key Card Blackwood and he reached 6S, which was a bit less than even money to make.

SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2446

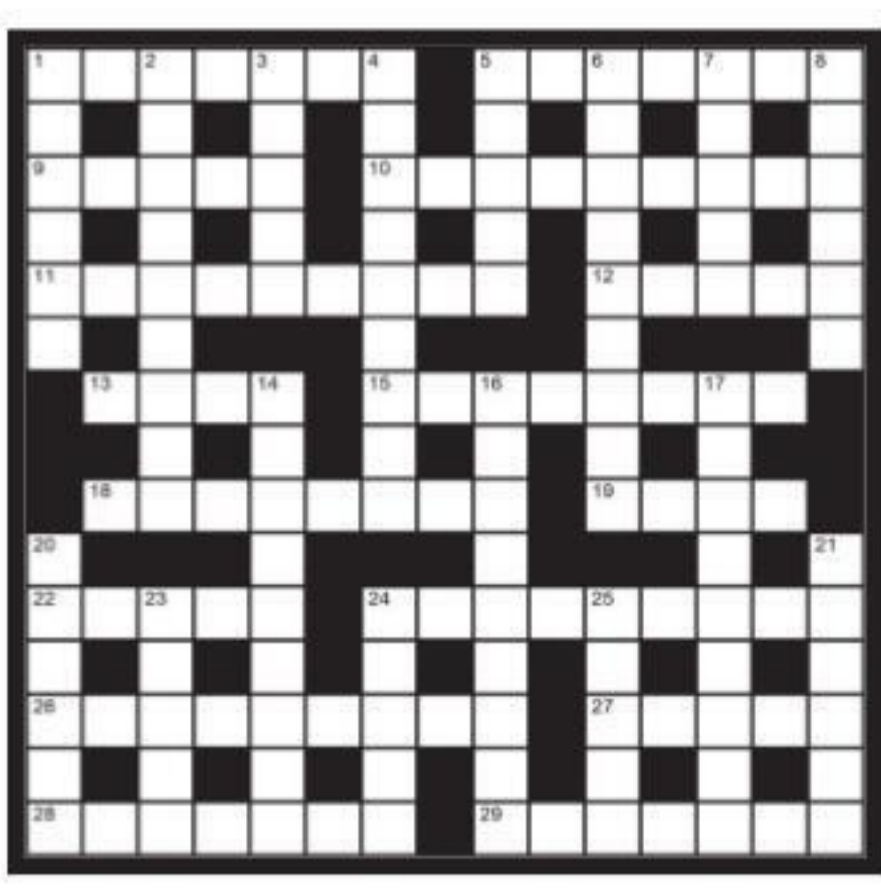
QUICK CLUES

ACROSS

- 1. Draws out; extracts (7)
2. Entangle (7)
3. Complete (5)
4. Superior age (9)
5. Benito ___; Italian Fascist leader during WW II? (9)
6. German steel city (5)
7. Compassionate (4)
8. Unlucky; unfortunate (3-5)
9. Shares a secret with; permits to participate in? (4,2,2)
10. Oozy dirt (4)
11. Set of steps (5)
12. Chief monk of Tibet (5,4)
13. In inches this will mean eight-inch-square? (3,2,4)
14. Intense hatred (5)
15. Long pin used in weaving (7)
16. Tranquilizes or soothes (7)

DOWN

- 1. Lay to rest (6)
2. Lower part of the gut (9)
3. The eskimo's home (5)
4. Misgiving (9)
5. Feeling of weariness or discontent (5)
6. Primitive weapon (9)
7. Leaves out (5)
8. Putting down (6)
9. Obliterated, squashed or wrecked (9)
10. Lessors (9)
11. Holy Communion (9)
12. Given the present situation (2,2,2)
13. Phoenician of Greek myth (6)
14. Garlic mayonnaise (5)
15. Herd (5)
16. Poker concession (1,4)



- honour (2-2)
22. Grand in behind Dravidian/Caucasoid (5)
24. The extraction of the sheet that has a tear in it (9)
26. A topping monarch (5,4)
27. Trips or routs and revolutions (5)
28. Pre-emptory demand for a rise (5-2)
29. They provide food for good oarsmen (7)

SOLUTIONS TO 2445

- 1. Get fresh shells from dumping ordeal (6)
2. A legendary archer's in little Spanish Idaho town (9)
3. Little storm erupted for gastropod mollusc (5)
4. Put up a bed, and board? That's open to negotiation (9)
5. Poison-related spasm consumes beast of burden (5)
6. Sadly lament nun's recall (9)
7. He conceals himself with a greeting to the German (5)
8. When one gets one's worth? (3-3)
14. Exposed the unfortunate Paddy's lie (9)
16. Does such a smile make one defenceless? (9)

If it's your Birthday

Sunday October 8 You're heading for a practical and more successful for that. If you spare time for some for big ambitions, you should still do so one methodical step at a time.

Monday October 9 This week's lunar alignments reveal that you have one last important chance to have a final attempt at moving one step closer to achieving a major life-long goal.

Tuesday October 10 Recent romantic stars linger on. Being romantic is a state of mind in which the world around you is as inspiring and imaginative as possible.

Wednesday October 11 It's an optimistic day. Success comes when you look on the bright side, and hope can overcome most difficulties.

Thursday October 12 There are surprises in the air and whatever happens over the next few days could be repeated over the coming months in a more positive manner.

Friday October 13 You may sign on the dotted line and make firm commitments but only as long as you intend to follow them through.

Saturday October 14 Planets are urging you to listen to your heart, but only to act when you have checked with partners, consulted friends and asked the experts.

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20) You're getting mixed messages. Partners, employers and people in authority will be in an odd mood, midweek. Family affairs are taking an interesting turn.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21) A threatened financial crisis may fail to materialise, much to everyone's relief. Midweek favours domestic routine and gatherings, but you may be too busy to appreciate what's on offer.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21) The week's stars may not be a perfect, but I'd give them a good nine out of ten. The foolish Gemini will stick to his, or her, routine.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23) The Moon, your planetary ruler, smiles loftily on your efforts early in the week, so you will cope with domestic battles and lingering family disputes with your usual skill.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23) Venus, goddess of love, is completing its excursion through sensitive regions of your chart, so you will soon have one last chance to complete a whole series of emotional, social and romantic ambitions.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23) You should by now be feeling the first ripples of optimism as Jupiter's benevolent presence permeates your chart.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23) Lively planets are jostling for attention this week and you may expect a welcome surprise.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23) Ask yourself why you are so reluctant to come clean over a number of important plans.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 23) Your social stars are fine, mainly if you're in a mood to do something different - radically different.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20) The Sun and Mercury, Uranus and Neptune are all planets to be considered this week.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19) Venus maintains its warm glow and secure identity, encouraging you to take emotional risks.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20) A financial stroke of luck on the cards, but if you expect the worst you might lose out.

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below.

ARTEE, CHIINT, DEGRS, DEIKWC. SOLUTION: EATER, DIRCS, CHITIN, WICKED.

SUDOKU 5344. 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.

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5343. Grid with solution numbers filled in.

NORTHERN RAILWAY CORRIGENDUM. Hereby, this is to notify that Northern Railway has decided to extend the last date of receipt of the bids till 23.10.2023.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON. See Section 82 Cr. P. C. Whereas a complaint has been made before me that accused person namely Akash @ Hakkash S/o Kasim R/o Gaon Ravivabad...

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED. (See Section 82 Cr.PC.) Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Anand, S/o Sohan Lal, R/o M-706, Mangolpuri, Delhi has committed...

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED. See Section 82 Cr.P.C. Where as complaint has been made before me that one accused Amod @ Virat S/o Veer Singh @ Bir Singh, R/o H.No. T-12, Ward No.3, Mehrauli, Delhi have Committed...

RAJASTHAN POLICE STATE CRIME RECORDS BUREAU. Notice Inviting Bid. Rajasthan Police invites bid from eligible bidders for the following item: RFP for AMC of Printers for 1 Year in Rajasthan.

Rajasthan Cooperative Recruitment Board, Jaipur. 10-B, Jhalana Institutional Area, Jhalana Doongri, Jaipur. Phone-2709827/2710072. Website: www.rajrb.rajasthan.gov.in. Recruitment for various posts in the Rajasthan State Co-operative Marketing Federation Ltd. (RAJFED), Jaipur.

Table with columns: S. No., E-Auction LOTNO, Train No., From, To, Train Frequency, Date and Time of Close of Auction. Includes details for North Eastern Railway.

Table with columns: S. No., E-Auction LOTNO, Train No., From, To, Train Frequency, Date and Time of Close of Auction. Includes details for various railway routes.

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY E-Tender Notice. E-Tender Notice No. - TM. Campcoaches 2023 Date: 05/10/2023. On line (through e-tendering) Tender for the following work is invited by Dy. Chief Engineer (Track Machine), Plant Depot, East Central Railway, DDU for and on behalf of the President of India...

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE. No. DNR/S&T/Sig/2023/19 Danapur, dtd. 05.10.2023. Divisional Railway Manager (Signal & Telecom), East Central Railway, Danapur Division, for and on behalf of President of India invites tenders on web portal www.irops.gov.in for the following work:



SHORT TAKES

STANDINGS

	M	W	L	T	PTS	NRG
NZ	1	1	0	0	2	+2.149
SA	1	1	0	0	2	+2.040
Pak	1	1	0	0	2	+1.620
Ban	1	1	0	0	2	+1.438
Afg	1	0	1	0	0	-1.438
Ned	1	0	1	0	0	-1.620
SL	1	0	1	0	0	-2.040
Eng	1	0	1	0	0	-2.149

*India vs Australia to take place on Sunday

Six-hitting is something you practice, says Van der Dussen

New Delhi: South Africa's Rassie van der Dussen says that in Aiden Markram, Heinrich Klassen and David Miller, they have the best finishers in their team.

In the last 20 overs, South Africa amassed 222 runs with Markram scoring a 54-ball 106 and then Klaasen's 20-ball 32 and David Miller's unbeaten 21-ball 39, provided them the perfect flourish and helped them reach 428 for 5 against Sri Lanka.

"If you look at our batting line-up we have some brilliant T20 players. Markram, Klassen, Miller and obviously Quinton have played in IPL and have played a lot of cricket in India. For us we know that if we can give them that platform we saw again today what they can do," he told reporters at the ICC mixed zone.

"Quinny and I batted normally for a large part of the innings. We know what the guys coming in can do. Klaasen, Markram and Miller are some of the best finishers in the world currently, he added. Van der Dussen says all three of them are tall and have long reach which help them hit sixes. "Six hitting is something that you practice. You get better by doing it. There is no such technical aspect to it.

"I think we all are tall guys with long reach and long levers and love pace and it helps us hit those lofty shots," he said.

On his role of being an anchor, he said: "For us the key is to look for boundaries no matter what is the stage. If we have the intent we know that we have players to execute it later. Having your own blueprint, having your boundary areas, and about having the right intent."

-PRATYUSH RAJ

BCCI to release 14,000 tickets for India-Pak game

Mumbai: The hype around the mega World Cup clash between India and Pakistan has forced the BCCI to release 14,000 tickets for the contest to be played on October 14 in Ahmedabad. "BCCI announces the release of 14,000 tickets for the highly anticipated India vs Pakistan match to be held on October 14, 2023, at Ahmedabad," the board said. PTI

You heard the great man say that so many times that you know, until he wins the World Cup, he's got a bit of unfinished business. I'm sure you know who I'm talking about.

ROHIT SHARMA, INDIA CAPTAIN

Let the Games begin

India & Australia, two teams with a storied rivalry, begin their much-anticipated World Cup campaign in Chennai today



India skipper Rohit Sharma will hope to join the likes of Kapil Dev and MS Dhoni as World Cup-winning captains. Reuters

VENKATA KRISHNAB

CHENNAI, OCTOBER 7

NUMEROUS FANS wait patiently outside the gates at Chepauk, asking anyone they see if they have a ticket or two to spare. There are also people who secretly wish to offload their tickets for 3x the actual rate. Inside the arena, the officials' phones are buzzing with polite enquiries from city's big wigs, bureaucrats, and civil servants for tickets. There are also visuals of former international and domestic players walking away in a huff, unhappy about not getting even one extra ticket.

For a World Cup that got underway on Thursday in Ahmedabad in front of largely empty seats, followed by almost similar scenes at Hyderabad, Dharamsala and New Delhi, it is safe to say the party will come alive in Chennai with India vs Australia on Sunday.

For a city that missed out on hosting the 2016 T20 World Cup, the one on Sunday is the first big-ticket event since India's last league match against the West Indies in the 2011 World Cup. Unlike 2011, when cricket hoardings dotted the city, it's been generally quiet around the town. For a venue that sees thousands of fans turn up to even watch their team – the Chennai Super Kings – practice, in the lead up to the fixture, that sort of frenzy has been surprisingly missing.

The big buzz in the city is around the movie Leo, a Vijay-starrer slated for Diwali release.

Yet, Sunday will be a whole lot different. All around the stadium, where yellow has been the favoured colour, it is hard to spot nothing but blue. Even the numerous sports-goods shops which had a yellow colour name plate

INDIA SCHEDULE: NINE GAMES IN NINE CITIES

vs Australia	October 8	MA Chidambaram Stadium, Chennai
vs Afghanistan	October 11	Arun Jaitley Stadium, Delhi
vs Pakistan	October 14	Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad
vs Bangladesh	October 19	MCA Stadium, Pune
vs New Zealand	October 22	HPCA Stadium, Dharamsala
vs England	October 29	Ekana Cricket Stadium, Lucknow
vs Sri Lanka	November 2	Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai
vs South Africa	November 5	Eden Gardens, Kolkata
vs Netherlands	November 12	M Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bengaluru

have shifted to new colours. Inside, the famous yellow jerseys of the city are being replaced with the blue-coloured ones. Yellow, traditionally Australia's colours, won't be the flavour of the city. At least, not on Sunday.

India vs Australia at Chepauk has a storied history in itself. These two teams have featured in a tied Test. In the 1987 World Cup, in their campaign-starting first game – like this time – they played out a thriller that India lost by one run. In 1998, this was the stage where Sachin Tendulkar vs Shane Warne entered folklore and gained cult status. In 2001, this is where the two teams played out the greatest series of all-time, and Chepauk threw up a nail-biting climax in favour of India that few Tamil movies can match up with.

And now as India begin the tournament, looking to break their ICC title drought, they run into an Australia team that is considered among the favourites to lift a record sixth title.

While the past head-to-head records is heavily loaded in favour of the Aussies, at the World Cups this contest has become India's most revered fixture, where if they end up on the winning side, it is known to have a knock-on effect. After all, the last time India went on to win the World Cup, they had to breach the psychological barrier of beating Australia.

The story will be no different on Sunday as well. With the chances of these two teams facing each other in the semifinals or in the final rather high, Sunday offers the opportunity for both to land the early punch. Going by how both teams performed in the six bilateral ODIs they played this year, it is hard to pick a favourite between the two. Both not only have a well-balanced squad at their disposal, but also a wealth of all-rounders, who could potentially end up orchestrating their success story. A contest where Hardik Pandya,



Australia players in training ahead of opener against India. PTI

Ravindra Jadeja and R Ashwin up against Mitchell Marsh, Cameron Green and Glenn Maxwell makes for a wonderful subplot in itself. With most of these star all rounders growing up when ODIs still had global relevance, who better than them to send a reminder that the 50-over World Cup will remain the pinnacle of ICC tournaments.

Throw in Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, KL Rahul, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, David Warner, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Pat Cummins... the star cast for Sunday definitely has all the making for the game that this World Cup desperately needs as a booster shot. While it did remain gloomy on Saturday evening, the weather forecast put out by the IMD has only predictions of slight rain which is unlikely to have any sort of impact on the match.

Chepauk is ready. So are India and Australia. Let the World Cup come alive.

GAME ZONE

South Africa's run-dezvous at Kotla

PRATYUSH RAJ
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 7

AFTER SOUTH Africa and Sri Lanka piled on a combined 754 runs on a six-lane expressway of a surface, at a run-rate of nearly 8 runs an over throughout the game, the spectators would have been left wondering whether they were watching a T20 game or an ODI encounter. The boundary count boggles—the stadium witnessed 74 fours and 31 sixes, three South batsmen scored hundreds at breakneck pace. So much so that it looked like Kotla was an Instagram app, and the sixes and fours were like watching reels, one after another.

The pre-winter ODI evening had a mid-summer IPL-night feel. Perhaps, the batsmen, most of them IPL regulars, too thought as much and tucked in. Spectators, of course love, boundaries that rolled off every sixth ball of the match. Bowlers could do nothing much, other than curse their wretched luck. Only two maidens were bowlers, one each by Kasun Rajitha and Lungi Ngidi. The most economical bowler was Dasun Shanaka, and he conceded six an over. The surface neither swung nor spun. It was quick and sufficiently bouncy, but not quick or bouncy enough to trouble batsmen. It was as though the pitch was accidentally prepared for an IPL game.

It could be the recurring theme in most venues, barring a few. In the opening match New Zealand had effortlessly hunted down England's 282 in merely 36.2 overs. Despite sloppy batting, Pakistan put on 286 against the Netherlands. The game in Dharamsala apart, this has been a batsmen's tournament. And it could turn out to be the one for batsmen.

South Africa's batsmen accepted the surface and the lightning-quick outfield with glee. Quinton de Kock slammed 100 off 84 balls, the



Aiden Markram scored 106 to lead Proteas to the highest ever World Cup total of 428. PTI

silken Aiden Markram blasted 106 off mere 54 balls; by their standards, Rassie van der Dussen registered an exceedingly slow 108 off 110 balls.

Markram was the show-stealer. Walking out to bat in the 31st over with South Africa already in a strong position, courtesy a 204-run second-wicket partnership between de Kock (100 off 84 balls) and van der Dussen. Justifying claims that he is the heir apparent to AB de Villiers, AB de Villiers, Hashim Amla and Faf du Plessis, he produced a knock that stood out both in power and grace, timing and aggression.

He teed off with a sumptuous drive off Shanaka. One over later, he hit a hat-trick of boundaries off Dilshan Madushanka, two of them were an inch-perfect straight drive. Then, hitting a flat six over the square leg off Madushanka's bowling, he completed the fastest century in a World Cup, overtaking Ireland's Kevin O'Brien (50 balls for 100) in the 2011 edition against England. He saved his best for Matheesha Pathirana, hitting three boundaries and one six in the 43rd over.

The impetus, though, was set by de Kock

FASTEST WORLD CUP CENTURIES

Balls	Batsman	For	Vs	Year
49	A Markram	SA	SL	2023
50	K O'Brien	Ire	Eng	2011
51	G Maxwell	Aus	SL	2015
52	AB de Villiers	SA	WI	2015
57	E Morgan	Eng	AFG	2019

and van der Dussen. The former took his time to get the eye in, consuming 62 balls for his 50 runs; the next came in only 21 balls. Van der Dussen played his part, though in the end, he was dissatisfied that he could not meet his self-imposed target of reaching hundred in 90 balls.

Facing such a monstrous total, Sri Lanka did not surrender meekly. They produced a fight, and piled the pressure on South Africa's bowlers. Especially Kusal Mendis, who is undoubtedly his country's best batsman. Picking lengths early, Mendis smoked eight sixes.

Three were struck in a Lungi Ngidi over, and the crowd perhaps sensed a chase. It was not to be. Rabada, who Mendis had swatted for two sixes, had the last laugh. Thereafter, the South Africans were in the mood of charity. Charith Asalanka, who scored a strokeful 79, was dropped twice on 44 by van der Dussen and on 52 by substitute Andile Phehlukwayo. Dasun Shanaka, who in his past 20 innings has crossed double figures only six times, also crunched a fifty to fill the night with more boundaries. In the end, Sri Lanka fell behind. **BRIEF SCORES:** South Africa 428 for 5 in 50 overs (Rassie van der Dussen 108, Aiden Markram 106, Quinton de Kock 100; Dilshan Madushanka 2/86) beat Sri Lanka 326 all out (Charith Asalanka 79; Gerald Coetzee 3/68)

Evergreen Shakib continues to shine

RAHUL PANDEY
DHARAMSALA, OCTOBER 7

"YOUR FIFTH (ODI) World Cup, how do you feel about that?" asked Michael Atherton at the toss. Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan could only blush and giggle. Less than a couple dozen have had the distinction to do so. Only Sachin Tendulkar and Javed Miandad have played in more (six). Tanvir Ahmed has been at five World Cups himself. A long time Bangladesh fan, who traveled to watch his team play their 2023 opener in Dharamsala only had a phrase for the skipper: It was adequate enough, "We are really proud to have him."

That longevity in international cricket corresponds with strong returns. At the World Cup four years back, Shakib was Bangladesh's leading run scorer, and wicket taker. From all his outings in the tournaments, he has more runs than the likes of Javed Miandad and Adam Gilchrist and more wickets than Brett Lee and Imran Khan. And he doesn't seem to be halting anytime soon. On Saturday, over a Dharamsala strip that offered early pace and bounce to the Bangladesh quacks, it wasn't surprising that the first couple of breakthroughs came from their star spinner.

The pacers leaking boundaries with the new ball had Shakib bringing himself in the fray as early as the seventh over. It's been in the nature of the 36-year-old. To hold himself to an answer when the tough questions are asked. As they were even before a ball was bowled at this World Cup. Why was Tamim Iqbal offered a different role than an opener, owing to which he excluded himself from squad selection? Shakib didn't hold back on calling the Bangladesh batter with most runs in the format as 'childish' and 'not a team man'. How could he hold himself back with the ball?



Shakib Al-Hasan took two early wickets to peg Afghanistan back early in the game. PTI

On the day he joined some of the royalties of World Cup cricket, Shakib had two of Afghanistan's top three literally go down on their knees – trying to reach out for his deliveries – and make Najibullah Zadran look clumsy as his leg stump lay toppled.

Ibrahim Zadran has been the top run-getter for Afghanistan in ODIs this year. Together with Rahmanullah Gurbaz, he makes for almost half the runs their team has scored in the format in 2023. End of their partnership has seen the entire Afghan batting order collapse more often than not. In came Shakib with the deathtrap.

Zadran had punished a delivery outside off in his first over; the left-arm orthodox offered him another tossed up ball well outside off stump from round the wicket. Like a juicy offering just waiting to be dispatched for a boundary, similar to three others Zadran had procured on the day. Except this was slower and on a pitch that was offering awkward

Want to win the World Cup... there's a process to it, says Rohit

VENKATA KRISHNAB
CHENNAI, OCTOBER 7

ALMOST 12 YEARS after missing out on a World Cup on home soil, Rohit Sharma is in the hot seat now, dreaming of becoming the third Indian captain to lift the crown. Part of the side in the last two World Cups, termed as "best-ever Indian team" by their previous coach Ravi Shastri, Rohit knows it is only the WC winner tag that is missing him and his generation of players – Virat Kohli, R Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja – that would put them in the same pedestal as Kapil Dev's and MS Dhoni's men.

It is the tournament that India have been building up for the last two years now, fine-tuning until the last moment. Starting Sunday, Rohit & Co have the opportunity to add silverware especially given how everything seems to be falling in place for them. "You heard the great man say that so many times that you know, until he wins the World Cup, he's got a bit of unfinished business. I'm sure you know who I'm talking about. So, it's the same for us as well. You know, you want to win the World Cup, it's the biggest prize that you can have in your career. But again, there's a way to do it. There's a process to it," Rohit said.

While the lot led by Kohli, Rohit, Ashwin and Jadeja played an integral role in winning the Champions Trophy in 2013, it happens to be the last ICC title they won. Since then at every ICC tournament they have failed in crunch moments. With the current team having a good mix of experience and young guns, Rohit felt it is important to stay guarded.

"In desperation, you can do so many things that can lead to so many other things as well. So, it's good to be desperate. It's good to be hungry. But you've got to find that balance, right? Balance to stay desperate and stay hungry for scoring runs, lifting the trophy, winning games, whatever that is. But there is a balance that you need to find. You cannot get way too ahead of yourself because that can lead into something that you don't really wish for," Rohit said.

First up is Australia, a side that they are so used to playing, they know each other inside out. Even conditions wise, thanks to the IPL and the numerous stopovers they make annually, there is no secrecy. The Chepauk pitch, under a blanket cover during the day over the past 48 hours, was exposed to the sweltering hot sun on Saturday afternoon. The black soil pitch, having been exposed to excessive heat, is expected to get dry as the match progresses and with dew unlikely to be a factor here, Rohit said conditions in Chennai opens the door for India to start Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav and R Ashwin in the XI.

"I mean that's the luxury we have where we can afford to play three spinners because I don't really consider Hardik Pandya as just a seamer. He's a proper fast bowler, who can crank up good speed. So that gives us an advantage, that luxury of playing three spinners and three seamers. There's a possibility that we can play three spinners on this pitch with three seamers; it gives us balance, that number eight batting option as well. We have to come here again tomorrow (Sunday) afternoon and see what the pitch looks like," Rohit said.

bounce, even to the slower bowlers, the sweep shot induced a top edge that was swallowed at square-leg.

Rahmat Shah, Afghanistan's highest scorer in the format, fell for a similar bait. Only that his edge landed to the fielder on the offside, at the extra cover. Rahmanullah Gurbaz could barely believe the shot selection. "That's why I didn't play the sweep shot. This wasn't the wicket to play that, even though I could," he'd say in the mixed zone afterwards.

With his twin strikes, had Shakib just decided the fate of the contest? In hindsight, the Afghan opener reckoned so. "Shakib is a really good bowler. One of the best in the world. Whenever he bowls, you need to give him that respect otherwise he'll get the wickets. I think after he took those first two wickets, we came under pressure."

Mehidy Hasan Miraz was twirling the lead all-rounder's baton for Bangladesh on the day. He's been for some time now. But he couldn't shy away from sharing the conversation with "Shakib bhai" that helped him get his head in the game after an ordinary start with the ball. "I gave away nine runs in the first over. I didn't bowl well and was nervous. I was cautious in my mind. During the drinks break, Shakib bhai reminded me that there won't be success if I bowl with a negative mindset. If they hit you, it's okay. But they should charge at you, they have to hit your good balls," said the player of the match who nabbed three scalps and scored a fifty afterwards in a comfortable win.

It's only his second World Cup but backing him was one of the few playing his fifth. **BRIEF SCORES:** Afghanistan 156 all out in 37.2 overs (Rahmanullah Gurbaz 47; Shakib Al Hasan 3/30, Mehidy Hasan Miraz 3/25) lost to Bangladesh 158/4 in 34.4 overs (Mehidy Hasan Miraz 57, Najmul Hossain Shanto 59 not out; Fazalhaq Farooqi 1/19)

Racquets do the talking

Chirag Shetty summons 'Nadal-like' resilience to overcome illness as he and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy win historic badminton doubles gold



EXPRESS AT ASIAN GAMES

MIHIR VASAVDA
HANGZHOU, OCTOBER 7

SATWIKSAIRAJ RANKIREDDY has a new name for Chirag Shetty. "Rafael Nadal," Satwik laughs. "He never gives up. I could see it this week."

They joke about it now, nearly 30 minutes after winning the country's first-ever badminton gold medal at the Asian Games. But when they were on court, Chirag feared he'd collapse if he stood still. Or at least Mathias Boe did.

Between almost every point during the final, the Danish doubles coach of the Indian pair kept reminding and urging Chirag to move around the court. "He was constantly asking me to keep moving and not stay still because I still am not physically 100 per cent," Chirag says. But at least he was fit enough to take the court. Chirag and Satwik won India's first-ever badminton gold medal at the Asian Games, defeating the South Korean duo of Choi Solgyu and Kim Won Ho 21-18, 21-16.

The historic triumph very nearly did not happen.

Chirag, like many other athletes who stayed at the Village, had been down with influenza all week and Satwik feared that they would have to concede the Round of 16 match against Indonesia's Leo Rollycamando and Daniel Marthin.

"I thought it would be a walkover (we would have to) concede because he didn't sleep the whole night," Satwik says. The lack of sleep was one concern; the worsening health was another.

"That night was a really long night. I barely slept; severe back pain, severe headache... I went to the public clinic the next day, got some medicines and just prayed. I had to be back," Chirag says.

A day off between the second round and the Round of 16 match gave Chirag additional time to recover. And though not completely fit, Chirag never really showed how much he was struggling throughout the week; darting across the court, covering flanks and controlling rallies with his back-court thwacks.

There was no indication of his poor health even during Saturday's final as Chirag continued to boss the backcourt and unleashed steep, powerful shots to beat the Korean pair's low defence while Satwik got time to get going.

Kim pounced over anything loose at the net but the Indians - who played most of the match side by side instead of front and back - had the court covered and, barring a few

moments, were never really put under pressure by the Koreans.

Like red clay

Chirag said he got breathless as the rallies progressed but refused to throw in the towel. Satwik's Nadal comparison is curious because Pullela Gopichand, the national coach, compares the Binjiang Gymnasium to Roland Garros.

Like the clay courts, where the conditions give players a chance to go for that one extra return, the slow courts here meant the rallies lasted much longer than they usually would, Gopichand says.

The shuttle that was in play only made the conditions trickier, he adds. "The shuttle they used here was a Yonex F90 which is a monster of a shuttle. It stayed true to its nature which meant the shots really travelled. There was no drift either, which meant the shuttle was always in play and the shots came really hard at you," Gopichand says.

This was evident all through the match as the Koreans kept returning everything Chirag-Satwik threw at them.

The Indians started well but were trailing 14-17 in the first game where Satwik took time to get going. Some frenzied mid-court exchanges drew plenty of 'oohs' and 'aahs' from the capacity crowd but the Koreans kept chipping away at their opponent, with Kim looking particularly sharp at the net.

In control

Chirag did well to change the pace of the game and showed his skills at the net but it was a monstrous smash through the middle to break the Korean defence that gave India the crucial lead at 19-18.

Choi was denied a shuttle change, which irked him and he was warned for indiscipline by the chair umpire as the pair unravelled in the next two points, which the Indians played to near perfection.

A Satwik winner ensured India pocketed the first game and the Andhra boy grew in confidence from there on. The second game was more straightforward as the Indians took complete control to win it 21-16 in just 27 minutes.

As Choi's return floated over the back line, Chirag and Satwik broke into their now trademark celebrations, dancing on the court and even getting the crowd to join them.

Satwik joked about how he couldn't sleep the whole night due to anxiety and 'kept hearing noises from the bathroom' on the other side of the not-so-thick walls of the Village bedrooms.

But nothing on the court and during the post-match celebrations suggested these two men were sleep-deprived, anxious and unwell. "Really great fight from Chirag," Satwik says. "He is not at all fit. I could sense that on the court, but he didn't show that to me. He always pushed himself. Really kudos to him for the fight he showed."



Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty beat South Korean duo of Choi Solgyu and Kim Won Ho 21-18, 21-16. PTI

How Sathwik and Chirag mastered defense-to-offense transition to triumph

SHIVANI NAIK

CHIRAG SHETTY headed straight to Hyderabad after the World Championships and an early exit from China Open, because coach Mathias Boe summoned a boot-camp to thrash out mistakes that had cost Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy precious podiums. Shetty didn't return home to Mumbai then. When he comes back now after winning India's first Asian Games gold in badminton, he will tuck into his mother's special pomfret fry, and Kori Rotti - that sizzling chicken (Kori in Tulu) simmered in coconut milk and red chillies.

Hailing from the hotelier Shetty community with their magical alchemy of flavours, Chirag loves his spicy Kori curry. But soon after he started travelling the world to play tournaments, fellow doubles wizard Ashwini Ponappa nudged him towards Japanese cuisine - his favourite now and Chirag adapted his palate to the subtle sushi. Those three weeks between China Open and China's Asian Games, were devoted to fortifying defense-to-offense transitions, as the saucier of India's doubles' kitchen, Mathias Boe rustled up the duo's skills to prep them for Hangzhou. Known as the world's best attackers and fastest smashers, they were about to turn into a defensive delight these Games, though never far away from snapping for a kill.

Throughout the Asian Games campaign, when Satwik-Chirag beat Chinese World No 2s Liang-Wang in the Team finals, and when they stubbed out Malaysian Aaron Chia-Soh Wooi Yik, before downing Koreans Choi Solgyu and Kim Won-ho for gold, the Indians have played deceptive transitions from defense to offense. Not only has their low defense improved - slow shuttles helped in giving them extra seconds on the return - but their conversion to counterattack has been seamless.

Prepared for flat and fast exchanges, the Indians were tossing higher to the back court.



Throughout the Asian Games Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy played deceptive transitions from defense to offense. PTI

And from close to the net, they blocked in a manner that forced opponents to lift. Defensive bolstering involved recovery after a smash to be ready for the next shot in a rally. And being in the right defensive position - knowing when and where to lift, if needed, in ways that didn't give opponents any elevation. And mostly learning to not lift at all if they could help it.

Satwik's master-skill was playing the parallel game from midcourt and back - relentless power pushes that went deep and into Korean faces, keeping them away from Korean hands. He would crouch out there - always ready to spring up for the attack but prepared to keep hitting flat if that's what the Koreans insisted on.

But doubles is rarely ever decided from the back. Both Satwik and Chirag are competent at playing eyeball at the net. Chirag is Quicksilver at the net, though it's his feet on invisible skates that make him a blur whizzing across. Make no mistake - he's always had the speedy hands.

In juniors, Chirag grew a reputation of sorts for being the fastest receiver of serve. If slapping the shuttle back across the net in a jiffy can be called reception, and not retaliation as it viscerally is. It's a pre-anticipation knack, gifted as he is to take that sharp step across and gain the extra second to kill at the net, and not offer the slightest chance to opponents. But tremendous speed and anticipation at the net were always his hallmark as a junior.

Satwik never beat Chirag in juniors when they played with different partners, and that knowledge is the basis of why Satwik respects Chirag's skillset. Chirag's acceptance in turn that Satwik had the more lethal, stronger smash convinced him to step up and play in the fore-court, learn the bending defense from scratch to bring his tall frame and head eye-level with the net, when both were equally adept at back-court booming duties.

Both are supremely talented and skilled, so Mathias Boe can drill into them the transformations, to overcome the tall man's higher centre of gravity issues. But the Dane, himself tall and playing front court, has trained them fabulously to deal with the flat game that Asians play. In the finals at 15-13 in the second with Koreans threatening to close in, all four players found themselves on one side caught up in the frenzied pace. The Indians could see a yawning open half court to the left, but they also sensed Kim moving there in a flash in the next few seconds and the smash that came in return instead went down the centre of the court, not to the left - a nuanced clever angle.

Not tethered to any specific style, Satwik-Chirag ensured their failures at World Championships turned them around into players who could counter any conditions - any situation - any style. The defensive bolstering - with an attacking kick, makes them even stronger than what they were. Their last three losses though have come to left-right combinations, and Boe will work on that next. Don't fear a slump ahead of Paris, should it happen though, Satwik-Chirag will bounce back even mightier than they already are.

ASIA D CAPSULE

Kabaddi team reclaims Asian Games title

The Indian men's kabaddi team emerged victorious after an hour of arguments to reclaim its Asian Games title, beating defending champions Iran 33-29 in a controversial final, which was temporarily suspended. The women's team survived by the skin of its teeth as it beat Chinese Taipei 26-25 in a dramatic final for the country's 100th medal.

India win cricket gold after rain disrupts final

India were given gold in the men's cricket on Saturday as the rain-hit T20 final against Afghanistan was decided only by their superior global ranking. Afghanistan, ranked 10th in the ICC's T20 rankings versus world number one India, had to settle for silver after rain halted the match when they were 112 for five after 18.2 overs of the first innings.

Indian men and women's chess teams clinch silver

The Indian men's and women's chess teams won silver medals at the Asian Games on Saturday. GM Harika Dronavalli, IM Vaishali Rameshbabu, IM Vantika Agrawal, and WGM Savitha Shri Baskar all won their games to beat South Korea 4-0 in the final round to finish with 15 match points. The Indian men beat Philippines 3.5-0.5 to finish second. **ENS**

WHAT THE CHAMPS SAID

"Really great fight from Chirag. He is not at all fit. I could sense that on the court, but he didn't show that to me. He always pushed himself. Really kudos to him for the fight he showed"

-SATWIKSAIRAJ RANKIREDDY

"That night (when he was down with influenza) was a really long night. I barely slept; severe back pain, headache... I went to the public clinic the next day, got some medicines and just prayed."

-CHIRAG SHETTY

HAT-TRICK OF GOLDS

After years of underachievement, Jyothi is archery's leading light

MIHIR VASAVDA
HANGZHOU, OCTOBER 7

FOR 15 YEARS, Jyothi Vennam did not win much. In the last six months, she's won 'everything everywhere all at once'.

The Oscar-winning movie's reference isn't merely because of the South Korean opponent she overwhelmed on a cold, wet Saturday morning.

Instead, it is also to underline the stupendous rise of the 27-year-old archer. The record-breaking open water swimmer, whose archery career has been punctuated by near-misses and heartbreaks, has achieved almost everything she could - equalling the world record, winning medals at the World Cups, World Championships and now, the Asian Games.

And having won everywhere - from Antalya to Paris - Hangzhou is her moment of crowning glory. The 27-year-old won a hat-trick of gold medals after demolishing South Korea's So Chaewon 149-146, adding to the mixed and women's team titles she'd already won this week.

"For Jyothi, this is a very cathartic moment," says Sergio Pagni, a former Italian compound archer who is now India's coach. "She has lost so many gold medals in the final during her career. Finally taking the gold she has deserved so much."

Jyothi's gold medal came minutes after the country's newest archery sensation, 17-year-

old world champion Aditi Swami, clinched the bronze. A few moments later, teenager Ojas Deotale defeated compatriot, and 2014 Asian Games champion, Abhishek Verma to win the men's gold medal.

The scarcely believable morning ensured a compound gold clean sweep for India. Crucially, it confirmed India's top spot in the archery medal table, while relegating South Korea to second for the first time since 1978, when Japan were the best team. And Jyothi was at the centre of India's path to the top of the podium. For, her success and struggles are intertwined with the country's fortunes in an event that is tipped to make its Olympic debut at the Los Angeles Games in 2028.

In a parallel universe, the Arjuna Award winner would perhaps have been crossing channels and fighting tides in open waters, rather than the bullseye-binging and medal-raking archer she went on to become.

Her parents want her to stand out from the crowd, the Vijayawada native who grew up on the banks of Krishna, swam in the river before she even turned five. The feat enshrined her name in the Limca Book of Records and a young Jyothi racked up a series of eye-popping performances in swimming.

The lack of facilities to pursue a career in aquatics forced her to switch sports and so in 2007, her father, a college-level kabaddi player who is now a farmer, took her to a local archery academy.

This was also the year when India won its



Jyothi Vennam won a hat-trick of gold medals after demolishing South Korea's So Chaewon 149-146 in the final. PTI

first-ever continental title in compound archery, an event that was introduced in the country only in 2004. At the time, Jyothi was oblivious to this fact. But in the years to follow, she became a figurehead of India's compound team. A force at the Asian level, winning the title in 2015, she mysteriously kept on falling short at global events, especially the World Cups - like tennis Grand Slams, archery has four World Cups in a calendar year - and the Asian Games, where an individual title eluded her.

"It was tough," Jyothi said of the wait to win a gold medal. "Now that the good time has come, I just want to live in the moment."

That Jyothi led the medal march along with

INDIA HITS BULL'S EYE

Indian archers finished their campaign with nine medals - but it was the success of compound archery, an event that may be on its way to the Olympic Games in 2028, that has captured how well India has taken to a non-Olympic sport.

COMPOUND GOLD

Men's Individual: Ojas Pravin Deotale

Women's Individual: Jyothi Surekha Vennam

Men's team: Ojas Pravin Deotale, Abhishek Verma, Prathamesh Samadhan Jawkar

Women's team: Aditi Swami, Jyothi Surekha Vennam, Parneet Kaur

Mixed team: Jyothi Surekha Vennam, Ojas Pravin Deotale.

SILVER

Men's individual: Abhishek Verma

BRONZE

Women's individual: Aditi Swami

RECURVE SILVER

Men's team: Atanu Das, Dhiraj Bommadevara, Tushar Shelke

Women's team: Ankita Bhakat, Simranjeet Kaur, Bhajan Kaur

4 MEDALS IN ONE HOUR

Four of India's nine archery medals were won within an hour. First, in the women's individual event, Aditi Swami ensured a bronze, then followed Jyothi's win. Then there was an all-Indian men's individual final to complete India's compound domination.

two teenage archers - Aditi Swami and Ojas Deotale - is not an accident.

Around the time when a young Jyothi was learning to pick up a bow and aim an arrow, seeds of future dominance were being sown in remote towns and villages of Maharashtra, where academies mushroomed and innova-

tive methods were introduced to boost mass participation.

"That's what led to Ojas picking up the sport," says India coach Praveen Sawant.

As a child, Ojas was an amateur skater and a national-level medal-winning gymnast.

He started archery as a 'fun activity' because

eye



SPOTLIGHT, PAGE 2

Between the Lines

On October 5, artist Chintan Upadhyay was convicted of his wife Hema's murder. Looking back at their lives and careers in art



BOOKS, PAGE 3

- Review of *Dalits in the New Millennium*
- Review of Arvind Krishna Mehrotra's *Book of Rahim and Other Poems*
- Remembering Salman Rushdie's *Shame*, 40 years after its publication

Alaka Sahani & Mohamed Thaver

WITH HIS latest film *Khufiya*, filmmaker Vishal Bhardwaj has ventured into the world of espionage, weaving a drama involving double-crossing agents, hard-nosed intelligence officers on a mission and a desperate mother. The film is based on *Escape to Nowhere* (2012), a novel by Amar Bhushan, who worked with the Research and Analysis Wing for over two decades. The novel is said to be "inspired by a real incident" that took place in 2004 when a senior intelligence officer, suspected of being a spy, vanished.

With *Khufiya*, now streaming on Netflix, Bhardwaj has reunited with actor Tabu after *Maqbool* (2003) and *Haider* (2014). The ensemble cast includes Ali Fazal, Wamiqa Gabbi, Ashish Vidyarthi and Bangladeshi actor Azmeri Haque Badhon.

While *Khufiya* marks the music composer-writer-director's return to feature films five years after *Pataakha* (2008), he recently made his web-series debut with *Charlie Chopra and the Mystery of Solang Valley* (SonyLIV), an official adaptation of Agatha Christie's *The Sittaford Mystery* (1931). In a free-wheeling conversation, Bhardwaj talks about his latest works and future plans. Excerpts:

After five years, you are back with a new film, *Khufiya*, an adaptation of Amar Bhushan's novel *Escape to Nowhere*. When did you start working on it?

It isn't by design that I took five years. When *Pataakha* released in 2018, I was working on an adaptation of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981). We worked intensely for over a year on that. Before we could start shooting, the plug was pulled. Then, I was making a series on IC 814 (the hijacking of Indian Airlines Flight 814 in December 1999) for Amazon Prime Video. After the *Tandav* controversy, they developed cold feet.

Though I started working on *Khufiya* in 2016, the first draft was ready in 2018. At that time, it had a male protagonist. I wanted to work with Irrfan (Khan), who was unwell. After he passed away, I thought of changing the gender and making the film with Tabu as the protagonist. The budget I required for this wasn't available for any female star. But Netflix gave me the confidence to make the movie that I wanted to make.

Even though Tabu is widely acknowledged as a powerhouse performer, it was still difficult to raise money?

It's the reality of the market. If I want a budget like a Rohit Shetty movie, then I must deliver a hit like him. This is something we artistes should accept. We all have our limitations, even Rohit Shetty. He can't make a film like Christopher Nolan.

What changed in the script once Tabu came on board? Also, what's your process while working with Tabu?

The personal track of Tabu developed after I changed the gender since that became the script's requirement. Her character is in the closet and that track came out beautifully. Now, *khufiya* (secret) had two meanings — one in her personal life and another in her professional life. As for our process, Tabu and I don't work so hard. We share a deep understanding. She knows what kind of preparation I'm looking for. That's visible in the movie too.

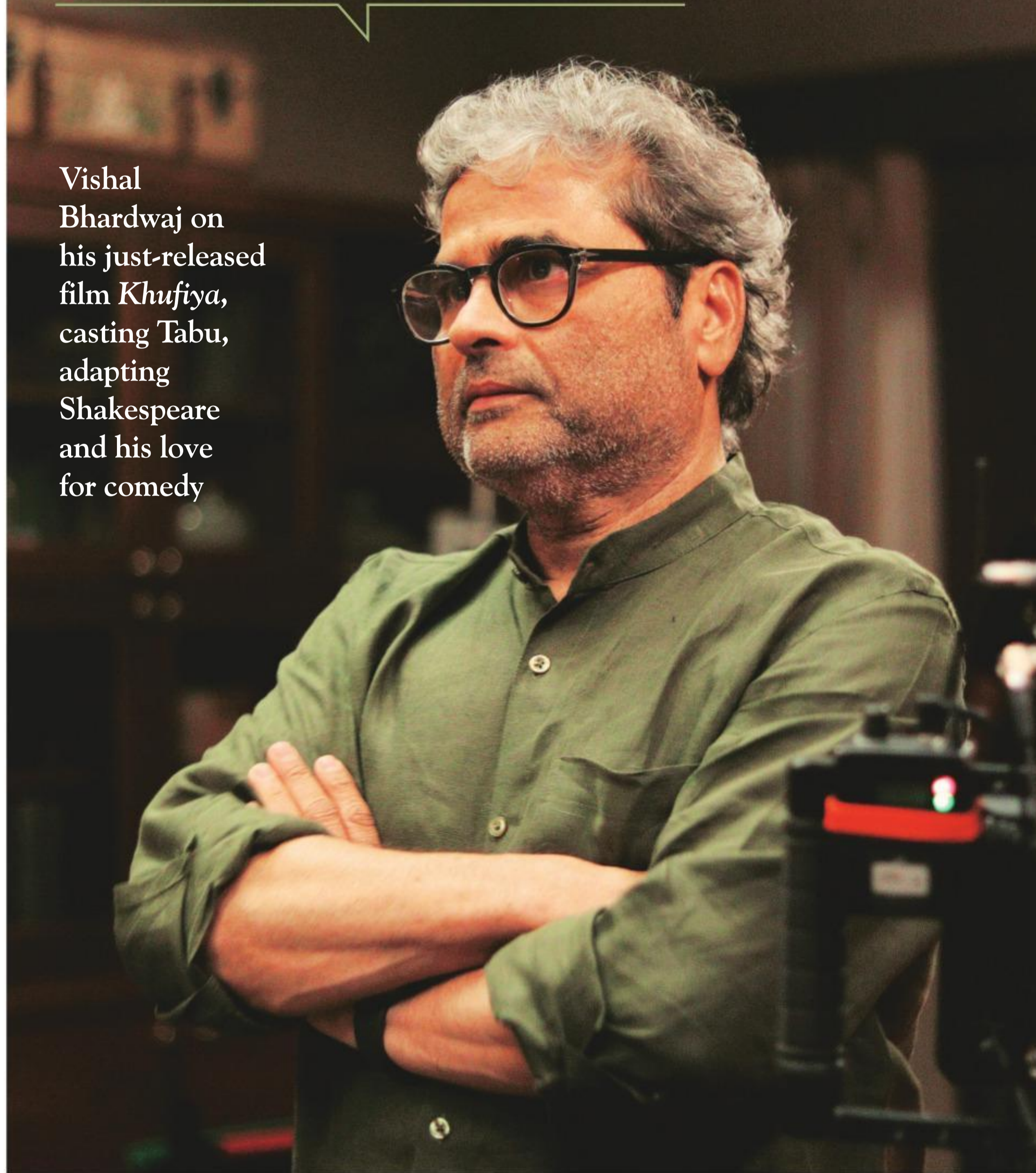
Were the characters played by Azmeri Haque Badhon and Wamiqa Gabbi there in the initial draft too?

They were. The male protagonist was infatuated with the character of Gabbi, who is married to the mole, and has her own secret life when she is alone. One part of the film is set in Dhaka. Bangladesh was one of the primary areas of Amar Bhushan's operation. With Tabu coming in, it opened up so many possibilities for me. Azmeri's character, who is called Octopus in the film, was created after that. Generally, spy stories are treated as slick thrillers with a jingoistic tone in Hindi cinema. We make films about assassins. There is a difference between an intelligence officer and hired assassins. In our movies, we call them RAW officers, but they refer to themselves as Rand AW (Research and Analysis Wing) officers. One thing I came to know when I read the book was that intelligence officers are not trained in using weapons or supposed to carry any. If they have to do any operations, they hire the mafia of that country and they often do not know who they are killing for.

I was finding it difficult to raise money because *Khufiya* was not falling under the genres that the industry here is familiar with. Many people who read the script told me that nothing much happens in the story. It is just surveillance going on. If you have watched Alfred Hitchcock's *Notorious* (1946), *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956) or *North by*

'EVERYONE HAS A DARK SIDE. I WANT TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THE HUMAN PSYCHE'

Vishal Bhardwaj on his just-released film *Khufiya*, casting Tabu, adapting Shakespeare and his love for comedy



Northwest (1959) — these are great movies of this genre.

When Bhushan's novel was published, some were of the opinion that this was his way of absolving himself of the blame he faced over the defection of an Indian intelligence officer to the US...

In the field of intelligence, it's difficult to know the truth, including what goes on in a traitor's mind. While I was doing my research, I came across the assumption that Amar Bhushan had written the book to absolve himself. I am tilted towards him because there was an internal inquiry set up and he was called for it. But they didn't take any action against him. That means he supported the right things.

Your movies continue to explore the complexities of the human mind.

You have to go beyond the surface. I don't take life seriously. Everyone has a dark side. Everyone has childhood trauma or secrets that they do not share with others. When you



The first draft of Khufiya was ready in 2018. At that time, it had a male protagonist. I wanted to work with Irrfan, who was unwell. After he passed away, I thought of changing the gender and making the movie with Tabu as the protagonist

scratch that, you get a lot of material. I want to get to the bottom of the human psyche. Look at Shakespeare's work, he has observed the human psyche so closely. *Macbeth* is about guilt and denial of guilt. When the audience connects with their psyche (of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth) who have killed Duncan because of their greed, you feel for them.

Of all the Shakespearean dramas that you have adapted, which was the most difficult to adapt?

Each one of them had their own set of difficulties. During the making of *Maqbool* (2003), I faced difficulties raising finances. Writing the third act was quite challenging, especially finding the parallel to the witches' prediction to Macbeth that, "You will only be conquered when the Great Birnam Forest walks to Dunsinane Hill".

In choosing to adapt Shakespeare at the beginning of your career you showed great confidence.

It was ignorance. I didn't know *Maqbool*

would be watched so seriously and minutely. I assumed that I was doing an underworld film. Some asked me to remove Shakespeare's name from the script since people may assume that an adaptation of a literary work might not be entertaining. I did not think anyone was going to take me seriously. Also, I didn't carry the burden of adapting Shakespeare's work. That's why I could write such a script. While working on other adaptations (*Omkara* in 2006 and *Haider* in 2014), I followed a similar approach.

The making of which one of these tragedies was most challenging?

Haider. It was very difficult to make that film. Now, it is impossible to make it even in my dreams.

It is also your most political film.

Yes. Things were different back then. Even when a film made the strongest political comment, people were open to it. I didn't fear backlash because I thought I was telling the story of the region (Kashmir). In many ways, filmmakers are like journalists. You have to say what you are experiencing. It is so insensitive of us filmmakers that in the mainstream we had not tried to make a truthful movie about what was happening in Kashmir. We saw Kashmir through the eyes of an army man or journalist. We never saw it inside out.

One thing I accept is that there was not enough representation of Kashmiri Pandits in *Haider*. That was not a conscious thing. The exodus of Pandits was a big tragedy. But I never imagined that my film would be analysed from that lens. Otherwise, it would have been easy for me to have a Pandit character.

Can you give us a peek into your creative process?

Everything comes at a different stage of filmmaking. I became a director because I wanted to survive as a music composer. That's the best way to hire myself, I figured. When I am thinking of the subject for my next, it's the filmmaker in me who is working. When I start writing, the song situations come up organically. During the making of background music, I have a different point of view as a music composer.

What does your reading list look like?

I don't read much. But when I come across a title that I think will affect my filmmaking, then I am relentless. We have read Agatha Christie's books since childhood. I like Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead* (1943) and *Atlas Shrugged* (1957). I love PG Wodehouse and his humour. I also love reading Roald Dahl, especially his short stories. Sahitya Kala Akademi publishes a bi-monthly magazine called *Indian Literature*, which publishes writings of contemporary Indian writers. I read this magazine. That's where I came across the story *Do Behene* (by Charan Singh Pathik), which was made into *Pataakha*.

You love PG Wodehouse's humour. So, will you be taking a shot at comedy?

Everyone thinks I am a serious person, but I am not. That's how I find comedy in the darkest of themes. I want to do a trilogy of Shakespeare's comedy but I am confused about which one to do first. I have in mind *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Twelfth Night* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, which is like a typical Hindi entertainer. I also want to adapt some PG Wodehouse stories.

Your female characters — Nimmi, Indu Tyagi, KM — are not perfect. How do you approach these characters?

When you want someone to shut up, you put that person on a pedestal. That's why we make mothers (so virtuous) who have no right to have grey shades or be imperfect. We have categorised our women as wives and sisters. Maybe this is my rebellion against the oppression of women.

Which is your most underrated movie?

Matru Ki Bijlee Ka Mandola (2013). The audience refused to see beyond Imran Khan's casting in the film. He is not Dilip Kumar but he is okay in the film. There were so many things in the film that were funny.

Which one of Tabu's characters was difficult to write and which is your favourite?

My favourite is Ghazala in *Haider*. Most difficult to write was Nimmi and most difficult to perform was KM in *Khufiya*. This demanded an internal performance by Tabu. She can't express herself because of her profession, yet she has to grab the attention of viewers. Both Nimmi and Ghazala were author-backed roles. KM is an internalised, quiet and subtle character.

Since Irrfan could not be part of this project, Tabu stepped in. Who can take Tabu's place?

No one can take Tabu's place. Or Irrfan's.

DOWN IN JUNGLELAND

RANJIT LAL Author, environmentalist and bird watcher

WHITE NOISE

People have the technology and the means, but no will to make the world better

Sound and Fury

Why Mama Nature is being Miss Trunchbull

DOWN IN Jungleland (Dij) presents an exclusive, first-ever interview with Mother Nature (aka Big Mama), daringly asking her why she appears to be in such a foul temper these days. Alas, we got an earful! Excerpts:

Dij: Big Mama — firstly, is it alright to call you that?

Big Mama: No! Call me Big Boss Mama!

Dij: Er... okay ma'am. Well, ma'am, many people feel that you're beginning to behave a bit like Ms Trunchbull — you know from that Roald Dahl story, *Matilda*. Your response?

BM: I can make Trunchbull look like Mary's Little Lamb!

Dij: Wouldn't dream of calling you that ma'am. But you cannot deny you've been in a pretty foul temper recently.

BM: And whose fault is that? I take 4.5-billion years to evolve life from diddly-squat, to you. I ensure that every life

possible! The rainforests, the oceans, the ice-caps, the mangroves, the savannahs, the rivers, lakes and wetlands, the mountains, the animals. No other life-form goes around behaving like this. And you expect me to remain quiet?

Dij: But ma'am, your temper tantrums have caused untold hardship to millions of people. Even millionaires in swanky California have had to flee your ire (those wildfires) in their private jets.

BM: It's nowhere near the carnage you have let loose on your own species. You go to war, you mess with animals and live dirtily and catch Covid-19 or the plague, and you pump poison into the air and make breathing impossible for children...

Dij: But ma'am we have begun to mend our ways. Climate change and global warming make the headlines nearly every day. The subject is being discussed at the UN even now...

BM: You people talk a lot and do much less. As for the UN meeting now: the three top countries which are the biggest greenhouse gas emitters (the U.S, China and India) who should be giving an account of themselves are not even present.

Dij: But evidently not big enough and that is what infuriates me so much. You have the technology, you have the money, you have the means, yet you will not switch over totally to a better, more sustainable way of life: to think any species could be so brilliant and stupid at the same time!

Dij: We'll try to do better ma'am.

Dij: How much commitment does that show? You say you are all for protecting nature, that it is culturally inherent in your psyche to protect all life, and what do you do? Make it easier for bulldozers to flatten tiger reserves and national parks and for industrialists to put up more cement factories and hack around like madmen for coal. The UK has pushed back the ban on new petrol and diesel vehicles by five years and permitted the drilling of 100 new oil wells in the North Sea. Your own scientists are saying you're already halfway down the hellhole and yet...

Dij: But ma'am, we're going into alternative energy and sustainable ways of living in a big way. We're doing solar, and wind and hydro-power...

BM: That was the biggest mistake I made, to allow you to evolve beyond the level of chimpanzees. You think of yourselves as being at the top of the food chain, the most advanced species on Earth. And you go ahead, gung-ho, destroying all the things that made that

You believe you are at the top of the food chain but you destroy everything that made it possible

form evolved has a specific role to play — a job to perform, a niche to fill — so that life on your beautiful (and now wretched) planet can go on just fine. And what do you do? Have you seen what the Great Barrier Reef, or parts of the Amazon rainforest, or the Poles look like? You gouge out and pillage the Earth, you foul the oceans, you make the air toxic, and you decimate every life form you can... You upset my climate calendar by pumping carbon dioxide and methane and other toxic gases into the air like an obsessive-compulsive chain-smoker on amphetamine.

Dij: But ma'am, we need natural resources and energy in order to live: our economies depend on that. Surely you wouldn't like to see us running around with spears and stones after prey, like shrieking chimpanzees...

BM: That was the biggest mistake I made, to allow you to evolve beyond the level of chimpanzees. You think of yourselves as being at the top of the food chain, the most advanced species on Earth. And you go ahead, gung-ho, destroying all the things that made that



PHOTOS: EXPRESS ARCHIVE

Between the Lines

On October 5, Chintan Upadhyay was convicted of his wife Hema's murder. Looking back at their lives and careers in art

Vandana Kalra

IN ONE of her last works, made weeks before her murder in December 2015, artist Hema Upadhyay had two disengaged lovers struggling to communicate, and ostensibly awaiting their eventual break-up. Titled *Conversation*, by the time the work was exhibited at the Sensorium festival in Goa, it had acquired new sinister meanings.

While her audience wondered if it had autobiographical references, like several of her previous works, 43-year-old Hema was no longer alive to engage with them. Her body had been found along with that of her lawyer Harish Bhamhani, wrapped in plastic and put in boxes in a drain in the northern Mumbai suburb of Kandivali on December 12, 2015. Her estranged husband Chintan Upadhyay, 50, was arrested on charges that the murders had been done at his behest. Nearly eight years later, on October 5, he was held guilty by a Mumbai court for abetting and conspiring to murder Hema and Bhamhani.

At the time of the double murder, Hema and Chintan were embroiled in bitter divorce proceedings that began in 2010. Granted divorce in 2014, the couple was locked in a property dispute and battle for alimony. "We were all so shocked and bereaved when it happened, which only became worse with the arrest of Chintan. Such close friends of ours and loved by everyone," says artist Bose Krishnamachari.

Counted among the most important contemporary artists in India at the time, before their relationship turned bitter, Chintan and Hema had been college sweethearts who had become close as batchmates at the prestigious Faculty of Fine Arts at MS University, Baroda. Hailing from Jaipur, Chintan's father is an abstract expressionist artist; Hema was a Sindh-Gujarati raised in Baroda. After tying the knot in 1998, the two moved to Mumbai to pursue a career in the metropolis known for its art galleries and history of offering opportunities to young artists. "They



END OF THE ROAD

(Top) Hema Upadhyay; Chintan

hosted me for a couple of days in 2004 when I was visiting Mumbai for a research trip, and I remember them from happier times. Having seen them as a power couple, it was heartbreaking to see what happened later to their relationship. They were both outgoing and ambitious; she was a convent-educated city girl and he was simpler, *desi*. Their sensibilities were completely different but they were so much in love," says Bhavna Kakar, director of Latitude 28 gallery in Delhi, who was Hema's junior at Convent of Jesus and Mary High School in Vadodara. Kakar also worked with Chintan and interacted with both artists over the years.

As their individual careers flourished, Chintan came to be associated with more "flamboyant" works, while Hema was often described as more "introspective". In 2002 Chintan's exhibition "Commemorative Stamps" at Ashish Balram Nagpal Gallery in Mumbai won critical acclaim for its depiction of new wealth in India, in 2005, responding to the Gujarat riots, he sat naked as part of the performance *Baar Baar, Har Baar, Kitni Baar?* in Baroda, inviting viewers to apply turmeric on his body as an act of empathy with the victims. The infant leitmotif that became his trademark was born in 2003 and

over the years Chintan presented his babies in different sizes, mediums and patterns, from abstracts to miniatures. They also addressed wide-ranging concerns, from genetic engineering to female infanticide and censorship.

Hema, meanwhile, carved a niche with her intricate paintings, photographs and sculptural installations. Her first solo, "Sweet Sweet Memories" at Gallery Chemould in Mumbai in 2001 saw her drawing from her own experiences as a migrant in Mumbai. In the same year, she had a solo exhibition in Australia. Titled "The Nymph and The Adult", it saw her use 2,000 lifelike hand-sculpted cockroaches to symbolise military action. Presented the Triennale prize at the 10th International Triennale in New Delhi in 2001, the following years saw Hema participate in several celebrated international exhibitions world over, from Grosvenor Vadehra in London to the Singapore Tyler Print Institute and the prestigious Centre Pompidou in Paris.

Krishnamachari, who first met the couple in 1998 at Pundole Art Gallery in Mumbai, says, "Both Hema and Chintan worked very hard to find their way and voice in the South Asian scene. I remember they used to have long studio hours, often run-

ning late into the night." Though their art practices were distinct and shared little in common, there were occasions when the couple collaborated, including the 2003 exhibition "Made in China", featuring Chinese products at Gallery Chemould in Mumbai.

The marital bliss, however, did not last long. A divorce petition was filed in 2010, and granted in 2014. The decree was challenged by Hema, who demanded permanent maintenance from Chintan. The court battle that followed saw Hema accuse Chintan of domestic violence and alcoholism. She also alleged that he drew obscene figures on the walls of their home in Juhu. Chintan, on the other hand, alleged that Hema often insulted him in front of their domestic help and staff.

On the day Hema and Bhamhani's bodies were recovered, Chintan was in Delhi, where he had moved while the divorce proceedings were on. Preparations were underway for his exhibition that was to be held in February 2016 in Baroda. Titled "Gandi Baat", it was to feature caricatures of men, women and children, and address subjects of sexuality, the aggressive male gaze and moral policing, among others.

With him being arrested days after the murder, the Baroda exhibition was cancelled. In Thane Central Prison till he was granted bail by the Supreme Court in 2021, Chintan began practising art in confinement. While jail authorities provided basic material and equipment, he was permitted to arrange for other supplies.

One of his earliest works painted in prison — a deformed elephant hatching from four eggs — was exhibited as part of the "Art from Behind Bars" initiative in Mumbai in 2017, and reportedly sold for Rs 4.5 lakh. The six years in prison also saw him impart lessons in art to other inmates. "Art has an ability to connect and it was while I was in prison that I realised its power," he had said in an interview to *The Indian Express* in July 2022. At the time, he had set up a studio in Navi Mumbai, where he also organised private viewings of his artwork, apart from visiting art events across the country. "He was very positive," says a gallerist.

Staying True to the Note

Khatija Rahman on her debut album, learning the nuances of music from her father AR Rahman and navigating the *niqab* controversy

Suanshu Khurana

KHATIJAH Rahman was about 15 when she first watched K Asif's magnum opus — *Mughal-e-Azam* — after her music teacher asked her to soak in the cinematic experience. While she was awed by composer Naushad's trailblazing tunes, one song — a *naat* (an Islamic hymn) — in the second half of the film particularly moved her. *Bekas pe karam keejiye, sarkaar-e-madina* (Bestow compassion on the sufferer, O Almighty), a piece in the emotive raag Kedar, is sung by Anarkali after she is banished to the dungeons.

Khatija could not forget the suffering, its depiction and how it was sung with so much heart by melody queen Lata Mangeshkar. This song, and not *Pyar kiya toh dama kya*, was also Naushad's most cherished composition from the film.

"I really connected with it. She (Anarkali) is in jail, completely helpless. It felt like a

prayer, where you are weak and need a higher power's help," says Khatija, 27.

Bekas pe is one of the five songs by Mangeshkar that Khatija has presented in her debut album, *Kuhu Kuhu* (Saregama), a collaboration with Dubai-based Firdaus Orchestra — an all-women, 50-piece orchestra mentored by Khatija's father AR Rahman.

Released last week on Mangeshkar's 94th birth anniversary, the album also comprises Khatija's renditions of *Piya tose* (Guide, 1965), *Kuhu kuhu* (Suvarna Sundari, 1957), *Aapki nazron ne samjha* (Anpadh, 1962) and *O saina* (Parakh, 1960). "There are a lot of songs that we chose. But then my dad said that I should pick those that work for me. I selected the ones that are close to my heart," says Khatija.

While some pieces are more confidently sung than the others, there is scope for improvement in terms of tiny nuances that make these pieces brilliant to begin with. Khatija says she chose the title song, known to be one of Mangeshkar's toughest rendi-



IN SYNC

Khatija Rahman in a still from *Piya tose*, with Dubai-based Firdaus Orchestra

tions, as she wanted to challenge herself. "These songs are done with so much perfection by Lataji, that anything you do, it doesn't feel enough. So there was that pressure. But one tries to stay true to the essence of the song and honour the artiste," says Khatija.

Growing up in Kodambakkam — the hub of recording studios in Chennai — with a father whose musical reputation has been extolled internationally, Khatija grew up listening to a lot of opera and qawwalis "or some new voice that dad was exploring for his next song."

She also relished Illayaraja's numbers and old Hindi film songs. While she was always interested in music, initially she wanted to be a doctor, then a teacher, and fi-

nally after a seven-year break for personal reasons, she decided to learn music again, about five years ago.

A commerce graduate, she followed it with a course in music business management from Singapore and decided to sing. She also handles the operations of the Chennai-based AR Rahman Foundation.

While her music teachers taught her technique and how to perfect a nuance, it's her father who taught her things that teachers wouldn't. "His bit was all about connecting with the emotion. You get that kind of teaching from very few people. He'd tell me how to end a line gracefully and the finesse of it all," says Khatija.

She says that she'd always put more pressure on herself due to her privilege, more so in the last few months since she's handling music for director Halitha Shameem's upcoming project, *Minimini*, a film about survivor's guilt. "I have definitely felt the pressure. Later, I realised how short life is and that I shouldn't be carrying around so much weight," says Khatija.

Earlier this year, she had an impressive outing on *Coke Studio Tamil* with *Sagavaasi* (Co-exist), a song that spoke of living in tandem with the environment and how everything and everyone has a right to co-exist. "I stepped out of my comfort zone and for the first time went outside to jam, collaborate and record. It gave me an opportunity to explore a different side of my voice and range," says Khatija, who was dressed in her trademark *niqab* in the song.

Choosing to wear the *niqab* when she was about 13, she has often been trolled for it and was at the centre of a storm after Bangladeshi author Taslima Nasreen called it "suffocating" on social media in 2020. In response, Khatija had posted: "Dear Taslima Nasreen, I'm sorry you feel suffocated by my attire. Please get some fresh air, cause I don't feel suffocated rather I'm proud and empowered for what I stand for."

After the release of one of the videos from *Kuhu Kuhu*, her *niqab* is back in conversation. "The access through social media is so much that people immediately start bashing up the person. It feels like everyone wants to become a celebrity by just commenting on others," says Khatija, who is currently busy with *Minimini* and is open to collaborating with other artistes.

Reimagining Identity

Set against the complexities of the current historical moment and the changing patterns of electoral politics, a new anthology explores the shifts in the Dalit experience

Vidhu Verma

DALIT STUDIES have flourished in recent years, stimulating a vibrant interdisciplinary conversation. Today, Dalit politics is a burgeoning field of academic study that celebrates institutional and extra-institutional aspects along with the ideological underpinnings of Dalit assertion and mobilisation. As part of this growing literature on the great churning in Indian democracy, *Dalits in the New Millennium*, edited by Sudha Pai, D Shyam Babu, and Rahul Verma, draws together 24 contributors who raise an exciting set of provocations concerning identity, discrimination, representation, and culture. Neither simplistic nor dense, there are potent arguments here that will draw attention to the linkages between Dalit mobilisations and their changing identities.

The authors ground their research in the historically unprecedented changes from the early 1990s when India saw the dramatic rise of Dalit leadership in grassroots organisations, political parties, and middle-class activism. They claim to draw the Dalit debate out of stereotypes engendered by the idealism of the earlier Ambedkarite and neo-Buddhist narratives. They also stand apart by not studying a single locale or region but by looking at ways young Dalits look beyond their communities, step into regional and social media, do online matchmaking, and augment their social capital. The volume documents the shift in Dalit experience, given their complexity and multiple uncertainties in the current historical moment and the shifting patterns of electoral politics. Thus, it provides a significant corrective to the standard representation of Dalit politics by showing them as critical agents in their own stories.

One of the volume's central themes is how Dalit groups, mainly from the smaller and poorer sub-castes in the Hindi heartland, have shifted their allegiance dramatically towards the BJP, traditionally identified with opposition to the social justice agenda. If the deep majoritarian state and right-wing hegemony have been a success, was it a result of the pro-poor policies of the government, the able marketing of appropriate public schemes, or the alignment between the BJP's ethno-political majoritarianism and the views of the BJP's Dalit supporters? Finally, what is the effect and legacy of this shift or "drift"?

While the Bahujan Samaj Party's steep decline and ideology are bemoaned, responses to its queries have been troubled by controversies and debates in recent years. Conceding that the right-wing agenda has been appealing enough to incorporate a large majority of the marginalised population, it is reasonable to conclude that most found something tangible to sway their allegiance. Here, the editors argue that globalisation and cultural shifts have inspired this heightened emphasis on being included within the saffron folds of a re-



EXPRESS ARCHIVE

defined subaltern Hindutva. The collapse of political ideologies created a historical moment rife with political possibility and presented Dalits with an occasion for creative negotiation of national identity and cultural belonging with a party espousing Hindutva.

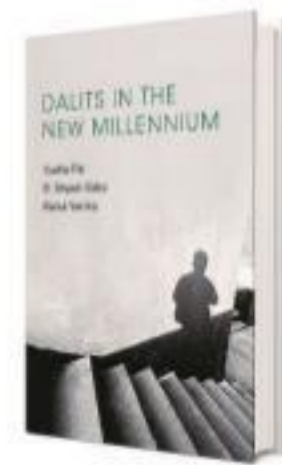
However, despite the success of the BJP, Dalit politics has exhibited both preference and protest, as many chapters argue. Large-scale, violent protests took place after Rohith Vemula's suicide, the flogging of Dalits, the desecration of Dalit symbols and icons, and the dilution of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 by the Supreme Court of India. However, prospects for the emergence of radical Dalit politics or a post-Ambedkar Dalit imagination (in newer outfits like the Bhim Army in Uttar Pradesh, Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi, Una Dalit Atyachar Samiti, etc.) committed to the critique

CARRYING HIS LEGACY FORWARD

A youth in Rajkot with a tattoo of BR Ambedkar on his arm

of upper-caste dominance in a pan-Indian Dalit discourse is difficult to discern at the present juncture. Whether these new Dalit leaders can carry their mobilisation forward and create a strong movement or political parties remains to be seen.

A sizeable component of the chapters in the volume critically looks at the inclusionist perspective that dominated Dalit studies and practices on representation for a long time. The general premise was that the numerical strength of marginalised groups in state institutions could translate into the political arena as a radical formation. However, this rejection of the culture and aesthetics of the upper caste Hindu-dominated social elite did not lead to mounting an alternative cultural, intellectual, and political tradition. For the editors, there was a tendency to perceive caste categories as static and ahistorical rather than fluid and con-



DALITS IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM
EDITED BY SUDHA PAI, D. SHYAM BABU AND RAHUL VERMA
Cambridge University Press
500 pages
₹1,195

stantly being reconfigured. While there was a struggle to uproot caste, they were imprisoned by the language and logic of inverted caste.

Although scholars of Dalit politics have addressed many genres, very few spotlighted the operations of caste in popular culture as this volume does. Music, poetry, fiction, short stories, plays, and films illustrate societal issues, including caste and state-sanctioned violence; this window into Dalit literature returns the caste experience to a larger and enlarging cultural conversation.

Finally, the volume urges us to see the challenges for developing an autonomous Dalit political platform that is premised and dependent on decisions based upon historical understandings of caste. However, it is essential to note that self-imagining and self-perception exist within more significant historical understandings and legacies of caste. In a way, it resonates with post-caste critical writings that emphasize variable, multiple caste identities that willfully re-engage with the history and logic of caste. Although embodying critical trends, this work would have benefited greatly from the distinctive agendas of Dalit feminism and the alternative Dalit groups' religious and cultural formations.

The eloquent introduction by the editors provides orientation through a complex and fractured history of Indian politics. We can only guess at this point how the complicated politics of caste competition and majoritarian politics in coalition building will connect with the equally complicated politics of middle-class Dalit alienation and poor Dalit marginality. Yet, the strength of the volume is that the contributors generally follow their logic, as clearly, any attempt to get the story straight would be an act of epistemic violence. Thus, in telling how Dalit identities have changed, it is essential to note there is no clear trajectory; there are competing theories within and links across, and contradictory possibilities and imaginings of identity.

Although not the first work of Dalit politics in the new millennium, the volume carries greater heft, in part because its publication comes at a critical moment of splintering of political issues and hence, of organisations into arenas that have become disconnected, depoliticised, and narrowly circumscribed.

Vidhu Verma is professor, Centre for Political Studies, JNU

The Roots of Violence

Forty years after its publication, remembering Salman Rushdie's novel *Shame*

Udbhav Seth

IT'S SYMPTOMATIC of not just Pakistan, but the world, that at the moment we have comedians in-charge," Salman Rushdie said in an interview to writer Tariq Ali shortly after the publication of *Shame*, his 1983 novel that came out in the quiet interregnum between the Booker-winning, career-making success of *Midnight's Children* (1981), and the fatwa-earning, exile-begging novel that was *The Satanic Verses* (1988). Basing the book on the relationship between then-active Pakistani politicians Zia ul-Haq and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Rushdie wanted to write a novel about how Pakistan was "insufficiently imagined," with "goons, comedians, gangsters, clowns" causing military coups, provincial uprisings, border conflicts, and economic instability.

But the work's political critiques are not exclusive to 1980s Pakistan. Today, 40 years after publication, its stance on freedom of speech, women's role in politics, and jingoistic nationalism, continue to resonate.

Partly narrated from the perspective of a doctor called Omar Khayyam Shakil, who has grown up seeing Pakistan rocked by political mismanagement and military ego, *Shame* is the story of his observation of power when he marries into a demagogue's family. "History was old and rusted, it was a machine nobody had plugged in for thousands of years, and here all of a sudden it was being asked for maximum output. Nobody was surprised that there were accidents."

For writer Amitava Kumar, the novel's advocacy for its own existence, within the text, was specially impactful when he first read it. "Rushdie [in the narrative] anticipates attacks by people who viewed him as a foreigner: 'Outsider! Trespasser! You have no right to this subject.' There are many riffs on realism... making me conscious of the risks that Rushdie was taking. He wrote that if he had presented a realistic novel to the world, there would have been bans and book burnings," says Kumar, adding, "*Shame* provided a model for writing a political novel. That really is the heart of it."

But Western reviewers of the time weren't completely convinced about the novel's political force. According to a *New York Times* review, "The book's political allegory may prove a stumbling block to those readers who prefer... to take their fiction pure, without recourse to recent history. It is sufficiently entertaining to stand pretty much on its own — though whether one can usefully regard it as a novel is another matter." A *New York Review* piece accuses Rushdie of "selling his adopted language short". It cites narratorial intrusions which declare the English word "shame" a "paltry" substitute for the Urdu word "sharam", with its "dialects of emotion for which English has no counterparts."

In one such intrusion, however, *Shame*'s narrator props up another pugnacious plank: "I had thought that what I had on my hands was an almost excessively masculine tale, a saga of sexual rivalry, ambition, power, patronage, betrayal, death, revenge. But the women seem to have taken over." That takeover — led by Shakil's mothers (three sisters who vow to share Shakil and raise him away from public scrutiny) — strikes poet Jeet Thayil as the novel's "most prescient quality." "[Women are] the leaders of insurrection and the instruments of political change. From the three sisters who open the book with a shared pregnancy, to their collaborative murder of the dictator towards the end, to an unloved daughter's explosions of rage, beheadings and dismemberment, this is a novel that rewrites a violent slice of South Asian history by putting women at its centre," he says.

Baran Farooqi, professor at Jamia Millia Islamia University, adds that in the novel, the maternal trio avails a privilege unavailable to women in public life today. "A top Bollywood actress is trolled badly, abused and sidelined by the public if she chooses to show up at a protest in a prominent Indian university. She must keep her preferences, her choices and concerns private... A dumbwaiter won't do it for her, her profession is all about visibility, about image," she says.

According to writer Nilanjana Roy, the novel's thesis of "the promise with which countries are created" splintering into "broken and bloodied fragments" rings sadly for many nations today, who belong to an "expanding family of semi-autocracies and slick dictatorships." "Today's populists and autocrats, wielding the blunt axe of repression and brushing aside *Shame*'s rusted histories, are closer to its 'clowns' and 'burlesque buffoons.' The stage is theirs, and the audience is captive and spell-bound," she says.

day must be archived before it is erased, renamed, rewritten: the weighing-scale man outside the General Post Office, the mustard-oil grocer in Bengali lane, the watch-repairer in Beni Bazar. From Rahim's epigrams to this fevered litany of particulars — we travel an arc from the age of the adage to an epoch of haunted echoes.

And yet, the weather is not altogether bleak. For when grief grows more full-throated, it also becomes an implicit affirmation. Here it is an affirmation of a world where the insider-outsider walls that separate nations, faiths and cultures are irrelevant. "There's one song to sing," Mehrotra's Ghalib says, "though we all sing it differently. There's one life to live, whose/unreceding end we don't see."

In his diaries, AK Ramanujan ruefully writes, "[Someone]... said... that nothing to me is valid unless I can find a great writer to have said it earlier." Mehrotra navigates that by reminding us that the finest writers have never said it "earlier." When you live among their words, they are saying it (as they always have) now.

Arundhati Subramaniam is a poet and writer

SHELF LIFE

Reading Fosse

An essential primer on the works of Jon Fosse, this year's literature Nobel laureate

MELANCHOLY (1995)

It is about the real-life Norwegian painter Lars Hertzberg who was anguished by doubt in his art and relationships, eventually losing control of his mental health. The book has a sequel too: *Melancholy II*, told from the perspective of Hertzberg's fictional sister.

MORNING AND EVENING (2015)

This novel is written, as most Fosse's works are, in the Norwegian dialect of Nynorsk. It tells the story of Johannes, from before he was born, to the day he realises that he has now turned old. The



narrative also dips into life after his death, in a muddled and obfuscated style. The old man draws comfort from habits which bring him peace without pleasure, but, one day, realises that something in that stabilising routine is off.

SCENES FROM A CHILDHOOD (2018)

A short story collection that spans two decades of Fosse's career, it explores childhood, anxieties about adulthood, the pains of growing into a sexuality, and how illness returns to haunt us on our best days. Multiple stories tackle grief and violence as perceived by a child, al-



NIKLAS ELMHEED © NOBEL PRIZE OUTREACH



lowing Fosse to dip into monologues which say more with brevity, and with a child's sense of language — in short, terse sentences.

SEPTOLOGY (2019-2021)

This is a seven-volume trilogy about a painter trying to paint a cross resembling the cross of Saint Andrew. The painter meditates on his art and its relationship



to life and religion, always in dialogue with another painter on the other side of town — with the same name. The books are written in a single sentence, loosely plotted, and full of half-complete thoughts a la stream-of-consciousness.

ALISS AT THE FIRE (2003)

The book opens on a visit to the beach for Signe, an old widow, but a glance at the waters sparks a flashback from decades ago, when her husband went boating into the sea and never came back. That memory leads to a love story in retrospect — about how generational accidents culminate in cherished moments of love — told in a lyrical style, translated by long-time collaborator Damian Searls.

UDBHAV SETH

Acts of Ventriloquism

A new volume of poems, translations and essays offers a more composite view of Arvind Krishna Mehrotra as a litterateur

Arundhati Subramaniam

IN AN essay on AK Ramanujan (in a soon-to-be-published volume), Arvind Krishna Mehrotra writes, "When someone like Ramanujan translates, it is often his own poem he's composing by other means."

One might say the same of Mehrotra. Reading his latest book is a bit like watching literary snakeskins being sloughed off only to reveal a brighter, more vivid picture of the real animal. As poems, translations and essays segue into each other, we are offered a more composite view of Mehrotra as litterateur, making it arguably his most interesting work till date.

I have always seen Mehrotra's transla-

tions more as acts of ventriloquism than séance. If Ramanujan's work yearns to be "possessed" by the mystic poets he translated, Mehrotra's translations have always been more about "possessing". Or, perhaps, at arriving at a dynamic state of mutuality. If Mehrotra's Kabir speaks of Faber poets and Rastafarians, it is because Mehrotra is not claiming a faux purity as conduit. Instead, Kabir and Mehrotra are both equal partners in this tango of translation.

In the new book, we see Mehrotra as conductor, harmonising a musical score in many voices. One is the voice of Rahim (1556-1627), a man who combined a love of metre and multilingualism with military prowess. The other is Ghalib, surveying the ravages of Delhi in 1857, in his diary, the *Dastanbuy*. (Ghalib's

translator, Ahmed Faruqi and the British poet, Basil Bunting, are also voices acknowledged by Mehrotra in this swirling polyphony.) There are two more sections: the 'Book of Lahore', that includes a fine autobiographical essay on the Partition, and 'Laugh Club of Gandhi Park', poems that document the minutiae of a fast-morphing city with unblinking attention.

A high point is the aphoristically elegant Rahim section. There is a sure-footedness here, a quiet clarity and confidence: "If the rosary's broken, you thread the beads again, / and you thread them a hundred times, / You do the same, Rahim says, / with the one you love." Or: "Seeing greatness / don't think yourself / small, / A needle does / what a sword / cannot."

That tonal assurance crumbles in the next section, a dramatic monologue, where the

voice grows unsteadier, more halting, the line lengths more ragged. In this heartbroken view of Delhi as a wasteland, we hear bewilderment, a loss of direction. Ghalib's diary speaks of a complicated truth (he sounds sympathetic of the British, even though his letters are ostensibly equally critical of both rebel and ruler). But the lament for a lost city is what comes through, powerfully and unequivocally. While Rahim is described in adulatory tones as 'a man of the sword as well as the pen', Mehrotra's Ghalib speaks of decidedly unheroic times: "You can run out of nib pens and ink, / not weapons." In this poetry, glory can only be bygone: "There was once a city called Delhi..."

Interestingly, Mehrotra's characteristically laconic poetic voice acquires a new timbre here. If the poets he translates can sound like him, there also appears to be a reverse osmosis at work. The leanness of line is now accompanied by a ca-



BOOK OF RAHIM AND OTHER POEMS
BY ARVIND KRISHNA MEHROTRA
Westland Publications
72 pages; ₹399

well as implicitly civilisational. The final section, set in the present, presumably in the poet's city, documents the unremarkable, as if keenly aware that the every-

CAPSULES

[0-13 YEARS]

Smoker moms risk premature birth

UNIVERSITY OF Cambridge researchers have found that women who smoke during pregnancy are 2.6 times more likely to give birth prematurely compared to non-smokers — more than double the previous estimate. The study also found that smoking meant that the baby was four times more likely to be small for its gestational age, putting it at risk of potentially serious complications like breathing difficulties and infections. But the team found no evidence that caffeine intake was linked to adverse outcomes. Smoking during pregnancy is associated with an increased risk of foetal growth restriction, premature birth and low birthweight.

[13-18 YEARS]

More girls visited ER for mental health

A STUDY has found that adolescent emergency room visits and hospitalisation for suicidal thoughts, self-harm and self-poisoning increased across Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially among adolescent girls. The study, published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, found that emergency department visits for suicidal ideation, self-poisoning and self-harm rose during the pandemic (April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2022) compared to the average from the previous five years, while hospital admissions for these conditions increased significantly, rising to 11 per cent, particularly among 10 to 14-year-old girls.

[18-50 YEARS]

One vaccine for all superbugs

WHAT IF a vaccine, given to patients just before or after arriving at the hospital, could protect them against lethal superbugs that lurk in healthcare settings? That's the premise behind an experimental vaccine invented by a University of Southern California-led team and patented by the university. Researchers designed the formula to prevent serious infections from drug-resistant pathogens. A new study shows that a single dose, administered in mouse models, put immune cells into the "Incredible Hulk" mode, providing rapid protection against eight different bacteria and fungi species.

[50+ YEARS]

Link between ADHD and car crashes

IN A study on the prevalence of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and its association with crash risk among older adult drivers, researchers at Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health, US, found that older adult drivers with ADHD are at a significantly elevated crash risk compared with their counterparts without ADHD. Outcomes included hard-braking events, self-reported traffic ticket events and vehicular crashes. Until now, research on ADHD and driving safety was largely limited to children and young adults, and few studies assessed the association of ADHD with crash risk among older adults.

Battling lows, he got high on life

After 25 years of alcoholism and liver cirrhosis, this 44-year-old lives without a transplant

Sohini Ghosh

DRINK, HARDLY eat, drink some more, munch, sleep, repeat. For 25 years, this was the routine of 44-year-old Nitesh Shah (name changed) as he slipped deeper and deeper into alcoholism. Now the businessman, who was staring at certain death with a severe kind of liver cirrhosis, is taking a break at his native village in Gujarat's Anand district with friends and family. He has been clean for six months, keeps to a diet, sleeps and wakes up on time, does his gym routines and meditates. But most importantly, the bottle doesn't tempt him anymore. "I have now realised that I wasn't addicted to alcohol per se but was using it to subdue my mental health issues and run away from reality instead of addressing them. Now with therapy and with the root cause dealt with, I do not need to get high on spirits," says Nitesh, who, ironically enough, runs a licensed liquor shop at a hotel in Anand town.

He was working as a salesman in Boston, US, when he lost his father. Succession tussle in the family business meant Nitesh had to return to Anand, deal with warring heirs and shuttle between India and the US. Neither could he process his grief, nor could he verbalise his new anxieties and the pressure of expectation. He distressed with an occasional drink or two and soon found himself finishing a bottle in a day. "I skipped breakfast, never felt hungry enough and would go on drinking till the afternoon in between work. In the evening, I would drink again on the pretext of socialising with my friends," says Nitesh.

His lows worsened in 2019 when his wife was diagnosed with second-stage breast cancer. With life spinning out of control, he would drink in the car while waiting for his wife's chemotherapy sessions. Soon he was diagnosed with liver cirrhosis after he visited a Boston clinic complaining of weakness. He was advised counselling, rehabilitation and a regime of multivitamins. "I attended a few Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings in the US but could not relate to the struggles of others. Also rehab in the US requires you to stay at a facility for days or weeks and I did not want to do that," says Nitesh. His alcoholism worsened when he contracted COVID-19 in 2021. "I had isolated myself in the basement, felt utterly lonely and would continue drinking through the shooting pain in my stomach," he says. He could never give up drinking and by April 2023, he could barely walk without a walking stick. That's when, during his visit to Anand, he met hepatologist and liver transplant physician, Dr Pathik Parikh, at Apollo Hospitals in Ahmedabad.

His liver cirrhosis had become life-threatening



SUVAJIT DEY

LIFE POSITIVE



FACT OF THE MATTER

Liver cirrhosis is irreversible but even if 70-80 per cent of the liver is damaged, one can buy time if 20-30 per cent is functional

ening by then. "He was jaundiced, had negligible muscle mass with his skin hanging loose, had swollen legs owing to fluid accumulation while his upper (systolic) blood pressure hovered around 85-90 mmHg," says Dr Parikh. Liver cirrhosis is irreversible but even if 70-80 per cent of the liver is damaged, one can buy some time with the 20-30 per cent that is functional. A liver transplant is the last resort. "However, this 20-30 per cent functional part of the liver is unable to cope with stress if the patient continues to drink. Once the liquor stops, the liver parenchyma starts compensating for the organ's overall dysfunction. We maximise the functionality of this healthy part of the liver by supplying it with proteins and multivitamins. Some patients survive several years without a transplant while others develop

complications requiring an immediate donor organ. Additionally, diabetes, obesity, unnecessary pain killers and unlicensed herbal products can further exacerbate liver injury," adds Dr Parikh.

He told Nitesh that he would need a liver transplant in less than four weeks if he wanted a fighting chance at life and needed to stop drinking immediately. Nitesh was put through an exhaustive pre-transplant protocol, which includes psychological counselling, diet regimes and medication to elevate his blood pressure. He was advised steroids to improve his appetite. The worst part was battling withdrawal symptoms for five days in the ICU. "I don't know

what came over me in those five days but I was told I had turned violent, had probably scared the nurses and assaulted a friend. They had to tie me to a bed," says Nitesh.

Dr Parikh, however, saw hope through this bleakness. "Within 48 hours of his admission, we realised he was going to respond. His blood pressure got better, bilirubin started decreasing, and most importantly, his appetite began improving," he recalls. Suspecting that his alcoholism was a cover for his deep-rooted mental health issues, he assigned a psychiatrist to work with Nitesh. Besides, liver transplant norms demand that the patient undergoes psychiatric evaluation.

That's when he was diagnosed with anxiety and depression and was prescribed pills. "Between April and September, I was on a regimen of 11 pills a day. This has now reduced to two pills a day with only a multivitamin. Talking things through helped too," says Nitesh, who has held good since and has managed to keep his transplant at bay. What worked for him, according to Dr Parikh, was the support of his family and friends, who didn't want to lose him. "Counselling and rehabilitation don't work until the patient themselves realise the gravity of the situation. Although many manage to abstain from alcohol in rehab clinics, they may relapse when they go back to their social environment and life poses similar challenges. Our experience shows that the fear of death works for older patients, specially in their 40s, or those with children. Younger patients, say in their 20s or 30s, are however less likely to change their habits," he says.

Nitesh has been given the greenlight to travel back to the US now and his follow-up interval has been staggered to once in three months. His medical reports continue to show significant improvement. Dr Parikh estimates that he may not need a transplant for at least two years provided he strictly stays off alcohol. "Every time he comes to the clinic, he has his family and friends accompanying him. It shows the social support he has. His sister has been a pillar of his recovery," says Dr Parikh.

Nitesh now weighs 70 kg, up from the 54 kg he was during admission. His appetite is back and he is excited to see his children back in the US. Apart from lifestyle corrections, he has divested his business responsibilities. His remarkable recovery has brought the once-warring family together. His near-death situation has wised him. "I don't even touch a non-alcoholic drink these days as that can revive my cravings for any kind of spirited drink. This is what had happened the last time I tried to quit drinking. I now tell my children that anybody can become an alcoholic. We just need to take a hard look at life and decide for ourselves," says Nitesh, leaving his family with sobering thoughts.



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A rare condition brings tragedy and some learnings

SSPE, a neurological disorder in children, is bypassing the vaccination shield and baffling doctors

Ankita Upadhyay

TWO YEARS ago, Archita, then four years old, was playing with her father at her maternal grandparent's home in Ambedkar Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, when she collapsed suddenly. Her body shook uncontrollably as she seemed to snap her neck, her head lolling to the side. And then her limbs froze. Fearing a seizure, her father Avadesh rushed her to Lucknow but diagnosis eluded him. It was only after a few more such bouts that she was diagnosed with Subacute Sclerosing Panencephalitis (SSPE), a progressive neurological disorder in children and young adults that affects their central nervous system and causes brain inflammation. It results from a measles virus infection acquired earlier in life, which can be either a reactivation of the virus or an abnormal immune reaction to it.

It is a slow, persistent and a devastating complication, which alters a child's immune system and pushes them towards mortality. Although measles is preventable with vaccination, a number of these allied cases have been reported given the re-emergence of measles in many countries over the last few years. Doctors are worried about the triggers and whether the existing vaccination is enough, considering all the children were vaccinated. They are wondering if they got the measles virus before the vaccination was administered or completed and it lay latent in the body.

Avadesh, a resident of Delhi's Kirari village, finally got doctors at GB Pant Hospital to diagnose his daughter's condition. Insisting she had been vaccinated on time, he says, "We had got all her vaccinations done. She was going to an anganwadi school and everything was fine till this episode." He's devastated now as there's no cure for this disease that paralyses and stuns Archita's motor responses from time to time. Besides, doctors have told him



that the girl can live for three more years at the most.

Dr Shefali Gulati, professor and faculty-in-charge, child neurology division, department of paediatrics, at AIIMS, Delhi, says she sees almost two to three new cases of SSPE every month, with the numbers climbing steadily post-COVID. "May be this is because of reactivation and immunity loss," she adds. Dr Manjari Tripathi, professor of neurology at the same institute, confirms that she, too, sees at least two SSPE cases every month. "This is a rare kind of encephalitis which is not sudden or acute and presents very slowly and gradually but is incessantly progressive. It leads to a stage-wise decrease of the child's performance. There are changes in cognition — in understanding, remembering, calculating and so on. It's a kind of dead-end disease where a patient eventually dies," she explains.

Measles is a definite risk factor. Those who are not vaccinated or incompletely vaccinated can develop SSPE at later stages too. Patients have a reduced cellular immune response and a highly increased humoral immune response, which prevent the body from completely eradicating the virus. It then becomes latent and stays in the brain. "Once it enters

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Mild cognitive decline (such as memory loss)
- Changes in behaviour
- Imbalance in motor functions, including uncontrollable movements of the head, trunk and limbs. These are called myoclonic jerks
- Seizures
- Blindness and vision problems

the brain, it mutates and evades the immune mechanism of the body. Hence mutation is responsible for its persistence. It usually affects children between 8 and 10 years of age but we have seen the disorder even among 20-25 year-olds," says Dr Tripathi.

At NIMHANS, Dr Viswanathan L.G., Assistant Professor, Department of Neurology, is the principal investigator of a study on the immunology aspect of the disease. This is be-



ANKITA UPADHYAY

ing funded by the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB). "Given the high population of the country, patients are in significant numbers," he says. He also gets an average of two patients per month. As a tertiary care centre, NIMHANS gets patients from the southern, northern and eastern states of India and helps Dr Vishwanath investigate why certain children develop SSPE and some do not. "It is still not known why it happens and whether it is related to the factors related to the virus or to the host immunology. And it persists in the brain. The study is trying to focus on a particular immunology pathway, which deals with clearing viruses from the body. We are investigating if that particular pathway is abnormal in these children affected by SSPE," he adds.

There has not been a numerical documentation of cases because of a lack of registry for neurological disorders so far. "But we are trying to develop a registry of all neurological conditions with comorbidities," says Dr Gulati. She has even drawn up a ketogenic diet therapy for some patients that is being administered to them for a month.

Officially, SSPE has not been categorised as a rare disease in India under which patients

get to avail compensation. So treatment is an expensive proposition for families. "I have tried ayurveda and homoeopathy too but those medications have not brought her relief," says Avadesh, tears welling up as he sees his daughter's life fade away bit by bit. He has already sold his land worth Rs 3 lakh, two of his vehicles worth Rs 5 lakh and closed his transport business to cover therapy costs. Now he works as a driver. "Archita is now six years old, is bedridden for the last two months and has to be fed through a drip," he adds.

There are thousands of children going through the same predicament. Pradeep Kumar Rathore, 33, who owns a bangle godown in Firozabad, has spent almost Rs 20 lakh in treating his 13-year-old son Umang at Firozabad, Agra, Jaipur and Pune. "I sold my land. More than half of the money was spent in Firozabad and Agra where the doctors could not even identify the disease. It was at SMS Hospital in Jaipur where my son was diagnosed. He had just turned nine. He got the disease despite getting the measles vaccine," says Pradeep.

Almost 1,500 families have now created a Whatsapp group to share insights on SSPE. On October 3, around 100 of them gathered at Jantar Mantar to demand a cure for the disease and understand why it is happening despite the children getting their measles vaccine on time.

Dharamendra Singh, a resident of Jaipur whose eight-year-old son is also suffering from the same disease, says that affected parents have submitted an application to the health ministry and the PMO, requesting them to look into the matter. "We developed a vaccine for coronavirus in such a short span of time, so why can't we develop a cure for SSPE?" asks Dharamendra, who is abreast of research in the area and is tracking a current study in Japan.

His son Dev Pratap Singh was diagnosed with the disease in 2019 at AIIMS Delhi when he was four, just after he had got his measles vaccine. Dev is currently undergoing supportive treatment at SMS hospital and homoeopathic medicines. "Every night I wake up wondering if he is alive or not and keep checking whether he is breathing," adds Dharamendra, hoping to give him the long life he deserves.