

SISODIA BAIL PLEA HEARING

May make AAP accused in excise policy case: ED

Contemplating invoking PMLA to probe vicarious liability: ED to SC

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate (ED) told the Supreme Court on Monday that it is "contemplating" adding the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) as an accused in its money laundering probe linked to the Delhi government's now-scrapped excise policy.

"We are contemplating making the Aam Aadmi Party an accused and invoking Section 70 (of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act) to probe it additionally with respect to vicarious liability," Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, who appeared for the ED, told a bench presided by Justice Sanjeev Khanna.

The bench, which included



Manish Sisodia was arrested in February

Justice S V N Bhatti, was hearing the bail plea of former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who has been arrested in the case.

While Sisodia was arrested in February and AAP's communication in-charge, Vijay Nair, was arrested in September last year, the party's Rajya Sabha MP **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

EXPLAINED
PAGE 16

Uncharted area, poll panel faces limited options if AAP named

RITIKA CHOPRA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate's proposal in the Supreme Court to name the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) as an accused in the Delhi excise policy case will place the Election Commission (EC) in uncharted territory as there's no prescription in the electoral rules and laws on what should be done when a political party is accused of any illegality.

According to former officers **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**



Palestinians with dual citizenship gather outside Rafah border crossing with Egypt in the hope of getting permission to leave Gaza on Monday. Reuters

Near Gaza, in ghost Israeli town, a few remain: 'This is home, how to leave?'



EXPRESS IN ISRAEL
SHUBHAJIT ROY
SDEROT, OCTOBER 16

THE AFTERNOON sun shimmers over the pastoral land in southern Israel, where green expanses,

round hills and trees dot the landscape, its warm light painting a picture of serenity.

Except, it is too close to the Israel-Gaza border.

This is the small town of Sderot, less than 2 km from the Gaza strip at its nearest point. It was among the worst-hit in the Hamas attack on October 7. More than a week later, it wears the look of a ghost town, with most of its 30,000-strong population

having fled to safer areas.

About 73 km south of Tel Aviv, the elegantly laid out streets of Sderot, with palm trees and pink and white flower beds lining the roads, look abandoned. Silence drapes the city punctuated only by air raid sirens and rocket attacks.

It will be 10 days tomorrow but the brutal reminders are still very visible.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



SC rejects plea to end 26-week pregnancy

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

THE SUPREME Court on Monday declined permission to a married woman to terminate her over 26-week pregnancy, saying the AIIMS medical board had found "no substantial foetal abnormalities" and a pre-term delivery carried the risk of being born with physical and mental deformities.

The bench, headed by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud, pointed out that the pregnancy had crossed 24 weeks — the upper limit for allowing Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP).

"(The foetus) having crossed the statutory limit of 24 weeks, the requirements either in Section 3(2)(b) or Section 5 must be met," it said. As per these provisions, MTP in case of a foetus exceeding 24 weeks can only be allowed if it is necessary for saving the life of the mother or if the foetus suffers from physical or mental abnormalities. The bench said the medical reports don't "indicate that a termination is immediately necessary".

The woman, a mother of two, had approached the court stating that she was suffering from lactational amenorrhea and **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

2006 Nithari killings: HC acquits Koli, Pandher

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, OCTOBER 16

SETTING ASIDE their death sentences, Allahabad High Court on Monday acquitted Nithari killings prime accused Surendra Koli, 40, and his former employer Moninder Singh Pandher, 65, saying the prosecution failed to prove their guilt.

While Koli was acquitted in 12 cases relating to the 2006 killings, Pandher was acquitted



Koli (left) was acquitted in 12 cases, Pandher in two

in two cases, said Pandher's lawyer Manisha Bhandari. Both had been awarded the death **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

BUSINESS AS USUAL



IIPS director's resignation accepted, wheels for exit set in motion months ago

SHYAMLAL YADAV & KAUNAIN SHERIFF M
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

A SET OF unusual complaints — from bribing a fruit seller to purchase of mobiles to a staff member writing for a Beijing think tank — against the functioning of



Prof K S James was suspended on July 28

the International Institute of Population Sciences (IIPS) set off **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

DECISION 2023

UNEMPLOYMENT HIGH IN TELANGANA, RAJASTHAN AND MIZORAM: DATA

WHY CONGRESS LIST FOR RAJASTHAN IS NOT OUT YET **PAGE 6**

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MANIPUR VIDEO: CBI FILES CHARGESHEET **PAGE 10**

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EXPRESS AUDIO A request to abort 'viable' foetus, hospital deaths & Operation Ajay Questions regarding a woman's rights over her body after 20 weeks of pregnancy, concerns the quality of patient care in Maharashtra's state-run hospitals and an operation to safely evacuate Indians from Israel.

FROM PAGE ONE May make AAP an accused, ED tells SC

Sanjay Singh was arrested earlier this month. As the bench asked if the AAP would be made an accused in the same offence or a separate one, the ASG said it would be the same offence but a separate charge.

SC rejects plea to end pregnancy

depression and was, therefore, unwilling to continue with the pregnancy. On October 9, a two-judge all-woman bench had allowed her to terminate the pregnancy.

Near Gaza, in ghost Israeli town, a few remain

On one of the streets, called Aarav David Buzaglo, is a grey house with bullet marks on the walls and shattered glass windows.



Israeli Defence Forces have taken over the main road in the border area. Shubhajit Roy

Poll panel faces limited options if AAP named

of the poll panel, in terms of punitive action against a party, the options available to the Commission are rather limited.

2006 Nithari killings: HC acquits Koli, Pandher

penalty in these cases relating to rape, murder, destruction of evidence among other charges by a CBI court in Ghaziabad.

IIPS director's resignation accepted but departure was set in motion months ago

an inquiry by the government and led to the suspension of its director and noted demographer KS James in July this year.

of serious concern about national security, separate investigation in the matter recommended." When contacted, Goli declined to comment.

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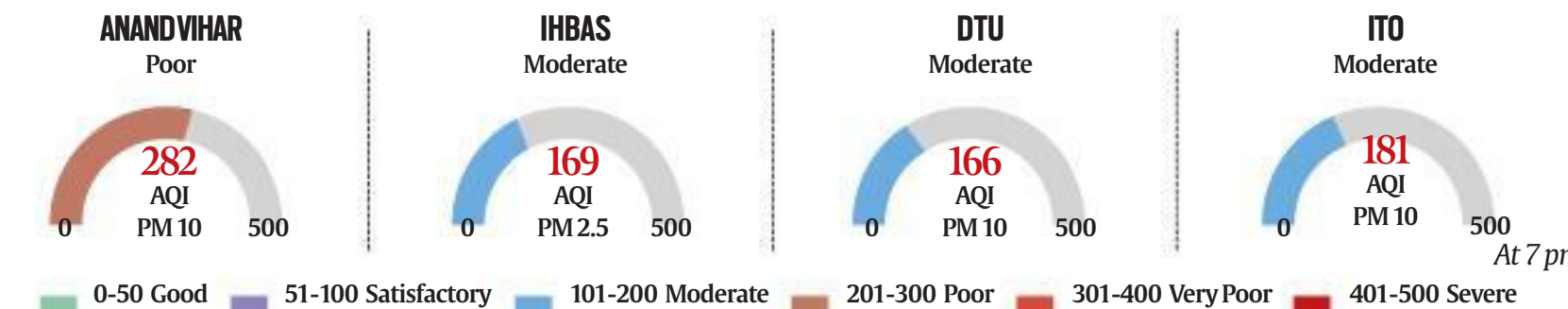
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KIN OF NITHARI VICTIMS QUESTION ACQUITTAL

'Destroyed lives of many families... how can this be?'

DHEERAJ MISHRA
NOIDA, OCTOBER 16

"EVERY DAY when we sit together for dinner, I still miss keeping aside a plate for my daughter. I imagine she is here with us, but I cannot change the hard reality," said a 60-year-old woman as she ironed clothes in front of house number D5 at Noida's Sector 31, near Nithari village.

Around 2005-06, it was at this very house where her 10-year-old daughter and many other children were allegedly raped and murdered. Two culprits had been arrested then—house owner Moninder Singh Pandher and his domestic help Surinder Koli. Seventeen years later, the families were in for another shock as the Allahabad High Court Monday acquitted Pandher in two cases and Koli in 12 over lack of evidence.

Breaking down, the woman said this was a clear injustice to the victims and their families. "She was my fifth child... she wanted to become a doctor. That day, I had sent her to a tailor shop... just on the other side of Pandher's house. When she did not come back after two-three hours, I started looking for her. I searched every possible place... On my way back, Pandher and Koli were standing at the gate, talking to each other. When I asked them if they had seen my daughter, they replied rudely 'hume nahi pata, humne nahi dekha hai'," said the woman, who originally hails from Unnao district and has been living in Nithari for around 35 years.

"I used to iron clothes at this



The now-abandoned house in Noida's Sector 31 where the crimes took place. Abhinav Saha

location back then as well. Koli used to bring Pandher's clothes to me... and one day, I spotted blood-like stains on his Pathani suit. When I asked Koli about it, he said that Saheb had gone to the Sector 37 market to buy chicken, and stained his suit... When children started going missing, police did not file a case and just said they would help find them... One of the policemen was honest and he said 'diya tale hi andhera hai' (a phrase that means the problem is around here). After one year and seven months, I got to know what happened to my daughter..." she added.

Her husband said they spent all their money fighting the case: "From the media, I got to know about the judgment. But how can this be? I saw the skull and clothes recovered from the drain and gali behind his (Pandher's) house. I have been living in pain for years and now, it has increased. The way those

men murdered my daughter, they must be brought to justice. They destroyed the lives of many families, how can they walk free from jail?"

For a 40-year-old woman, who runs an electronics shop, the loss of her five-year-old son still weighs heavily. "He was my eldest, he would have been around 23 years now. That day, he had asked for money to buy sugarcane juice from a stall around 200 metres from our house... he never returned. We searched the whole area, but couldn't find him."

She added, "We had filed a missing person's complaint, but police didn't do anything. One day, a few children, while playing, crossed over the boundary (of D5) to get their ball (that had fallen there). That's when they spotted something unusual—clothes and a skull. That was the first time I got to know someone named Moninder Singh Pandher lived in that kothi..."

DECEMBER 2006
The murders first came to light when human remains were found in a drain near the house, D5, owned by Moninder Singh Pandher in Noida's Nithari

- DEC 29:** The two were arrested after police recovered skeletons and other belongings of some missing girls from the drain. Koli had allegedly killed several girls, chopping their bodies to pieces before throwing them in the backyard outside their house
- 2009 FEB 13:** Koli and Pandher were convicted and sentenced to death by a special CBI court for the rape & murder of a 14-yr-old, one of many victims and the very first case
- 2011-14:** In an appeal to Allahabad HC in this case, Koli's death sentence was affirmed while Pandher was acquitted. After this Koli filed an appeal in the Supreme Court, which was dismissed in 2011
- 2017:** CBI special court in Ghaziabad awarded death sentence to Pandher and Koli in connection with the case of rape and murder of a 25-year-old help
- 2015 JANUARY:** Allahabad HC commuted Koli's sentence to life imprisonment in this case, citing "inordinate delay in the disposal of the mercy petition"
- 2015:** Several CBI teams visited the Nithari house and interrogated the accused. Police filed 19 FIRs against Pandher and Koli relating to crimes against 19 different girls, and the CBI filed chargesheets in 16 of them
- LATER:** a review petition by Koli was also dismissed by the Supreme Court in 2014
- 2023 OCT 16:** Allahabad HC Monday acquitted the duo for lack of evidence

2023: The court acquitted Pandher in two cases and Koli in 12; the latter is convicted in one case and will remain in jail. The father of the 14-yr-old victim (2009 case) has challenged the HC order that commuted Koli's death sentence in SC. It is pending

They had accepted they killed my son and now they are deemed innocent. Do the poor not have the right to get justice?"

After seeing the news on TV, a man, who lost his three-year-old son, came out and angrily

threw a brick at Pandher's house. When asked about the judgment, he said, "I can't speak currently sir, the pain is very heavy."

Trust the law of the land: Pandher's son



Koli and Pandher were arrested on Dec 29, 2006. Abhinav Saha

SAURABH PARASHAR
CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 16

MOMENTS AFTER the acquittal of Moninder Singh Pandher in the Nithari killings cases by the Allahabad High Court Monday, his Chandigarh-based son Karan Singh Pandher said the family welcomed the judgment.

The court acquitted Pandher, along with his domestic help Surinder Koli, in the cases over lack of evidence. Pandher was acquitted in two cases and Koli in 12 of them. The two were arrested on December 29, 2006.

Speaking to *The Indian Express* over the phone, Karan Pandher, who is in his late thirties, said, "We have trust in the law of the land. We did not criticise anyone. We went through legal channels and the decision came in our favour. We welcome this judgment."

He said they are yet to get a copy of the court decision. "I wish I had gone to Allahabad to-

day but couldn't due to certain important work in Chandigarh." He added, "A plea of my father pertaining to his transfer to Chandigarh Model Jail is pending in the Supreme Court. However, as the High Court has acquitted him, I believe that plea is now immaterial."

Family members, including Pandher's wife, Devender Kaur, were at the single-storey sprawling house in Sector 27, Chandigarh, when the HC announced its decision. A domestic help of the family said, "I joined work just three years ago. I don't know much about the cases". Residents declined to comment.

The Pandher family belongs to Ludhiana.

Meanwhile, speaking about the one case in which Koli has been convicted and is serving a life term, his lawyer, Payoshi Roy, said, "... We will approach the SC in the light of this judgment. He has been acquitted on the basis of same evidence in the 12 cases."

BRIEFLY
West Delhi factory closed after calls over 'toxic fumes'

New Delhi: A factory in West Delhi's Naraina Vihar was shut down after workers and locals complained of toxic fumes and a foul smell coming from it. As per police, a call was received around 1-2 am from the factory, which has chemicals stored in drums and containers. DCP (West) Vichitra Veer said, "Agencies concerned were sent to the factory to take required precautionary measures. Nobody fell sick or was hospitalised. We are talking to workers." Police said they are conducting an investigation and the owner and manager of the factory have been called to join the probe. Police said legal action will be taken as per the enquiry.

Complaints against me false: Bhushan

New Delhi: Terming complaints against him "cosmetic", BJP MP and outgoing Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan, during arguments on charge in a city court, said allegations of molestation against him were false. "Before April 21, there was no complaint of molestation," said senior advocate Rajiv Mohan, representing Bhushan. "There is a difference between molestation and sexual harassment," he added. ENS

1,300 kg of firecrackers seized, 3 held

New Delhi: Police seized around 1,300 kg of firecrackers and arrested three people in South Delhi. Police received a tip that a huge stock of firecrackers was kept in two locations in Kotta Mubarakpur, said DCP (South) Chandan Chowdhary. PTI

48 complaints, transaction of Rs 2 crore in a single day: Latest WFH scam busted

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

PEOPLE PROMISED money for liking and commenting on YouTube videos, only to find out they had been duped — yet another elaborate work-from-home scam was unearthed by the Delhi Police, who have arrested a man and bound down another in the case.

The accused are Sandeep Dalal (31) and Chanchal Singh (43). While Dalal's antecedents are being verified, police said Singh has been bound down.

Police have unearthed a bank account to which the cheated money was sent; the account, now frozen, had seen a transaction of Rs 2 crore on a single day. "On further investigation, it was revealed that 48 complaints registered on the National Cybercrime Registration Portal (NCRP) are linked with the recovered bank account," said DCP (North) Manoj Kumar Meena.

According to police, the case came to light following a complaint on the NCRP by Sadar Bazar resident Deepak Kumar. The complainant alleged that on August 29, he received a WhatsApp message offering a work-from-home job.

"When he expressed interest, he received some YouTube videos and was told to like and comment on them. He completed these tasks and, within a few minutes, received Rs 450 in



The accused, Sandeep Dalal

his bank account. The next day, the complainant was asked to do a similar task. This time, however, he was asked to deposit Rs 800 so he could get more lucrative tasks," said a police officer.

DCP Meena said that accordingly, the complainant deposited the amount and after liking and commenting on more videos, he received Rs 10,400. "(This) made the complainant gullible and by the time he realised he had fallen into the trap of cyber fraudsters, he lost Rs 4,25,000," said the DCP.

After a case was lodged, police analysed call detail records and the money trail; surveillance was mounted on suspected mobile numbers.

"We traced the money trail of beneficiary accounts and found one... the bank account holder of this account was N Singh, a resident of Sagarpur. During ques-

tioning, she revealed that her account was being operated by her husband, Chanchal Singh," added the DCP.

Thereafter, Chanchal was questioned. Police said he disclosed that while he was in AIIMS Jhajjar for his daughter's treatment, he received a message on WhatsApp offering a WFH job of liking the YouTube videos.

"He accepted as he was in need of money. Initially, he received Rs 1,600. Later, he was asked to deposit money to earn more, but he couldn't. After a few days, he was again contacted on WhatsApp and asked to provide details of bank accounts — this, the message said, would earn him Rs 25,000 in no time. Chanchal then sent his wife's bank account details to a person, Dhruv Mor. The latter sent Sandeep Dalal to Chanchal to collect SIM cards linked with this bank account so that he had complete control of its activities," added DCP Meena.

Police said a team conducted raids at various places in Rohtak and finally nabbed Dalal on October 11. On questioning, police said he revealed he had been working for Dhruv. "He further disclosed that on Dhruv's directions, he operated different accounts and SIM cards on his mobile phone and would provide OTPs," said the officer.

Police said efforts are on to trace Dhruv and to ascertain the role of other associates in the racket.



OLD & NEW

A Durga Puja pandal in CR Park takes inspiration from the New Parliament building. Pallavi TO

Woman seeks to terminate 22-week pregnancy as she wants divorce, HC seeks medical report

MALAVIKA PRASAD
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

THE DELHI High Court Monday directed AIIMS to immediately constitute a medical board to examine a woman who sought medical termination of her 22-week pregnancy after she decided to divorce her husband.

A single-judge bench of Justice Subramonium Prasad observed that a medical board's opinion would be necessary to consider if it would be safe for the woman to undergo the procedure by a registered medical prac-

itioner and to ascertain the condition of the foetus. Issuing notice to the Centre and Delhi government, the court directed that the board's report be sent to the court within 48 hours from Monday.

The 31-year-old petitioner got married on May 11. On June 21, she found out she was five weeks and six days pregnant. The woman said right from the start of her marriage, she was being "tortured, abused verbally, physically, mentally and emotionally by her husband at her matrimonial home". She said she left for her parents' home after her husband physically assaulted her on

August 10, when she was three months pregnant. The woman said she had decided to separate from her husband and get a divorce and, therefore, did not want to continue with her pregnancy.

The court noted that the woman had filed neither an FIR against her husband nor a petition for divorce or judicial separation. She has not approached any court under the Domestic Violence Act, it further said.

Justice Prasad, however, said the apex court last year ruled in X v. Principal Secretary, Health and Family Welfare Department, Govt. of NCT of Delhi and

How a modest water sports club in Delhi is giving wings to dreams

UPASIKA SINGHAL
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

TEN YEARS AGO, when Chandan Kumar (now 25) was in Class X, he spotted his friend Anil Rathi in an Army uniform. Dazzled by the uniform, he asked his friend how he managed to get into the force. That's when Rathi took him to Soniya Vihar Water Sports Club, the place where the former learned canoeing and kayaking which eventually paved the way for him to join the Army through sports quota.

"That was the first time I saw people canoeing and kayaking. I'd always been interested in sports and immediately wanted

to master this too," he said. Now a sepoy at the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), Kumar credits his selection wholly to his love for canoeing.

For Kumar, like many others who come to the club, the sports club is not just an outlet for recreation but also a route to get the coveted government job, particularly in the defence forces, and a way out of their middle-class life.

Said Manjeet Shekhawat, the club's head coach, "Our aim is to not only train students in different water sports but to also enable them to get government jobs through the sports quota."

Perhaps, his students securing defence jobs is a way for Shekhawat to realise his own



At the Soniya Vihar Water Sports Club. Tashi Tobgyal

dreams. Shekhawat earlier wanted to get into the Border Security Force (BSF) but couldn't due to its rigid height require-

ments. Since then, he has been training children and athletes at the Soniya Vihar club, which was established six years ago.

Not just jobs, the sport is also helping students secure scholarships to support their education. One example of this is Vishal,

20, who has been kayaking for four years now. Having won at least 18 medals at the national level and several others at the university level, Vishal, who goes by only one name, secured a scholarship at Chandigarh University. He too wants to get into the BSF.

However, despite his wins winning around 400 medals, Shekhawat rues the fact that his club has not received any aid from any government yet. "Equipment for water sports is expensive. One boat costs around Rs 15 to 16 lakh, paddles cost around Rs 55,000 to 60,000," he added.

With the Delhi Chief Minister mentioning his club in a post recently, after meeting a group of

para-athletes who made a mark at a championship in Thailand, Shekhawat is hopeful his club might get a boost.

A few weeks back, CM Arvind Kejriwal wrote on X: "Met all the para-athletes of India who won gold medals in the World Dragon water sports championship and live in Delhi. These players practice at Soniya Vihar Water Sports Club. I have given orders to the minister concerned that the government will provide all facilities that these players need to prepare for the future..."

Shekhawat said the meeting with the CM has opened doors for the athletes and expressed hope that a grant would follow.

FOUNTAINS LEFT DYSFUNCTIONAL, NOZZLES STOLEN FROM RAJGHAT FOUNTAINS TOO

Wiring to fountain nozzles: Month after G20, sheen off, thieves hit Pragati Maidan stretch

GAYATHRI MANI
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

AFTER MAKING off with flower-pots, thieves seem to have set their sight on another fixture that beautified Delhi for the G20 Summit: Water fountains.

Over 90 nozzles, besides a large quantity of wire, have been stolen from outside Bharat Mandapam, the venue of the September 9-10 Summit, leaving the water fountains dysfunctional. The water works and the bright lights had become an attraction of sorts, drawing many selfie-loving visitors, even after the Summit ended.

"In the last few weeks, about 69 nozzles have been stolen from the three major fountains installed outside Bharat Mandapam. These are situated outside Gates 1, 4, and 5, and fall along the Bhairon Marg. Two of these fountains... are big... their nozzles were very costly as they were made of brass and copper," said a PWD official.

Three different e-FIRs filed by the PWD state, "Lost report of above said fountain nozzles installed at Bhairon Marg Delhi, Quantity of nozzles are 24 numbers and material gun metal."

The Bharat Mandapam is surrounded by three key roads



A before (top) and after view of fountains outside Bharat Mandapam. Amit Mehra/Gajendra Yadav

— Ring Road, Bhairon Marg and Mathura Road. The fountains were installed on the latter two. Besides the big ones, nozzles of other smaller fountains outside Bharat Mandapam too have been stolen.

On this stretch, small-sized volcanic jet fountains and four crown statues with jet fountains in the centre were installed. Several nozzles from these have also been stolen.

"The nozzles were stolen on different days. We are compiling the list of items stolen. Overall, a total of 90 nozzles have been stolen from the fountains installed around the Bharat Mandapam. Of these, 21 were between Gate 6 and 7 (main gate), 24 from Gate number 4, and 45 nozzles along with cables from the giant fountain outside Gate number 1. We have filed FIR against the theft of 69 nozzles. The remaining ones are also being filed," said an official.

According to officials, the nozzles installed in the big fountains cost around Rs 8,000-9,000, while those of the smaller ones are priced at Rs 6,000-7,000.

According to the PWD, it will take around 15-20 days to fix all the fountains, which are multi-layered and have different types of nozzles for different effects.

"Over all, there are about 14

fountains installed between the main gate of Bharat Mandapam and Gate 7, and most of them have stopped working due to missing nozzles and damaged wiring," an official said.

A PWD official said the theft occurred despite iron grilles installed around the fountains and the green areas.

The department had also, earlier, filed an online FIR after some nozzles and wires were found missing from a fountain at Rajghat. "A total of 30 nozzles were stolen from Rajghat fountains. These were stolen a week after the G20 Summit got over," said an official.

The latest theft took place on Friday. Said the official, "Between 4am and 6 am, four persons, including women, came and stole the wiring along with the nozzles (outside Bharat Mandapam)... due to the theft of wirings, the motors, which are very costly and made in Germany, could also get damaged."

"The only solution is to raise the size of the railings and increase patrolling, but despite written complaints and verbal requests, nothing has happened on ground," said another official.

The Delhi government did not respond to queries on the matter.

Deaths of two SC students at IIT-D: HC asks cops to file report

VIDHEESHA KUNTAMALLA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

THE DELHI High Court issued an order to the Delhi Police to file a status report on action taken by them in the death by suicide of two IIT-Delhi students from the SC/ST community.

On September 1, Anil Kumar (21), a B.Tech student and resident of UP's Banda district, was found dead in his hostel room at the institute. Kumar joined IIT in 2019. Officials at the institute said he did not meet the credits required to graduate which may have put him under pressure. He had been given an extension. Earlier in July, B.Tech student Ayush Ashna was found hanging in his hostel room.

The HC's October 9 order said the petitioners (Amit and Ayush's families) "seek... to issue an appropriate writ, order or direction, including a writ in the nature of mandamus, thereby directing police authorities... to register appropriate FIRs in the cases involving the deaths of the sons of Petitioner no. 2 and Petitioner no. 3..."

The court has asked that the report be filed before the next date of hearing, October 19.

It further asked the police "to conduct a thorough, impartial investigation into the caste-based atrocities being committed in the premises of Respondent no. 5" and the respondents "to ensure strict

compliance and implementation of provisions of SC/ST (POA) Act, 1989".

The Indian Express reached out to IIT Delhi's Public Relations Office and received no comment on this matter. IIT-Delhi officials had earlier said since it was set up in March, the SC/ST cell had not received any complaints from students.

A senior Delhi Police officer said that the viscera reports in the cases are awaited after which a final call will be taken. The process is part of the inquest proceedings.

Speaking to The Indian Express, advocate Mehmoob Pracha, the legal representative of the families of both students, said, "A reputed institution like IIT-Delhi, in a short span of less than two months... there are two deaths... and they have done nothing. Under the Scheduled Castes Act... (an FIR) has to be immediately registered without an enquiry (and) a copy has to be given to the complainant immediately..."

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CM gives nod to proposal to dismiss CWC chairperson

New Delhi: Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has approved a proposal to dismiss the chairperson of Child Welfare Committee-IX following allegations of "negligence" and "misuse of powers".

According to a statement issued by the Delhi government, the proposal was moved by Women and Child Welfare Development (WCD) Minister Atishi; it alleged that several complaints were received against the CWC-IX Chairperson, including delays in decision-making in critical cases involving children in need, improper conduct towards staff and committee members, misuse of powers and issuing orders without the consent of committee members.

Officials said the CM stated that the government will not compromise on the care and betterment of children, and those who show negligence will not be forgiven. "The role of CWC chairperson in the care and safety of children is crucial, and irresponsible behavior by relevant individuals could have serious consequences," he said.

"Children's welfare is non-negotiable, and the Delhi government will continue to ensure that those in positions of authority uphold their duties with the utmost sincerity and dedication. Any laxity or misuse of power will not be tolerated," said Atishi. ENS

Why is marital status a criteria for woman to avail surrogacy under law: HC to Centre

MALAVIKA PRASAD
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

THE DELHI High Court Monday asked the Centre why marital status is a criteria for a woman to avail surrogacy under the law.

A division bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Sanjeev Narula asked the Centre's counsel why the marital

status of a woman is associated with her eligibility to undergo the procedure.

The Centre's counsel said that she would seek instructions on this point. The matter is next listed on October 31.

The court was hearing a plea by a 44-year-old single, unmarried woman challenging section 2(1)(s) of the Surrogacy Regulation Act, which excludes women like her

from availing the surrogacy procedure while only allowing an Indian widow or female divorcee to take the benefit of the same. The plea also challenges the regulation that forces a "single woman (widow or divorcee)" to use her own eggs to avail the surrogacy procedure.

The woman's counsel argued that because of her age, it is medically not advisable for her client to use her own gametes for the procedure and thus, she wants donor female gametes for it.

The counsel said while the woman's brother has consented to donate his gamete, she is seeking a donor for the female gamete. The plea submits that embargo coming in the woman's way are the provisions of the Act, adding that the reproduction of a female gamete has no connection with a woman's marital status.

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Schneider Electric India Private Limited ("SEIPL") invites the fourth round of Expression of Interest ("EOI") from LV switchgear manufacturers in India for availing white labelling product manufacturing services from SEIPL, in compliance with the modifications provided in the order of the Competition Commission of India ("CCI"), dated 18 April 2019 ("CCI Order"), approving the acquisition of the electrical and automation ("E&A") business of Larsen & Toubro ("L&T") by SEIPL and MacRitchie Investments Pte. Ltd. The CCI Order is available at: <https://www.cci.gov.in/images/caseorders/cn/1652509382.pdf>
The white labelling product manufacturing services being offered by SEIPL is subject to the terms and conditions as set out in the CCI Order including the following:
1. The white labelling product manufacturing service is being offered by SEIPL only for the existing product range, owned and manufactured at L&T Plants, of the five products of L&T (Air Circuit Breakers ("ACB"), Moulded Case Circuit Breakers ("MCCB"), Overload Relays, Contactors and Switch Disconnector Fuse ("SDF"), collectively "Five Products").
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4. At the end of the white labelling period, as specified in the CCI Order, a single LV switchgear manufacturer shall have the option to enter into a non-transferable, non-sub licensable, non-exclusive technology license solely for manufacture and sale in India with SEIPL for all or any of the Five Products of L&T, for which it has availed of white labelling, subject to the following requirements at a reasonable commercial royalty rate for a period of 5 years from the expiry of the white labelling remedy period:
"111.1 Has white label offtake for at least 3 continuous years of the product for which it seeks the technology license; and
111.2. Has an average annual offtake of at least 10% of the installed capacity of such individual product for white labelling for the period of the white labelling remedy."
Such technology license to the third-party LV switchgear manufacturer shall be in accordance with the terms and conditions of the CCI Order. As such, the quantities, i.e., range wise installed capacity, 10% of the installed capacity and quantities available for off-take under white labelling will be disclosed, under the supervision of the Monitoring Agency appointed by the Hon'ble CCI, once the confidentiality undertakings, i.e., clean team agreements are signed between SEIPL and the interested party (being an eligible applicant for white labelling).
Interested LV switchgear manufacturers are requested to respond to fully and finally to this fourth round of invitation for EOI by submitting their details at: <https://www.se.com/in/cn/about-us/whitelabelling/whitelabelling-registration.jsp> by 17th December 2023 i.e., 2 months from date of publication of this EOI.
SEIPL will also conduct a pre-bid meeting on 20th November 2023, to provide clarifications in relation to this EOI. Interested parties to contact us whitelabel.support@se.com, for further details on the pre-bid meeting.
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DATA ON POLL-BOUND STATES

Telangana youth joblessness highest; Rajasthan, Mizoram over national avg

PLFS numbers show MP fares best among the five states headed for elections

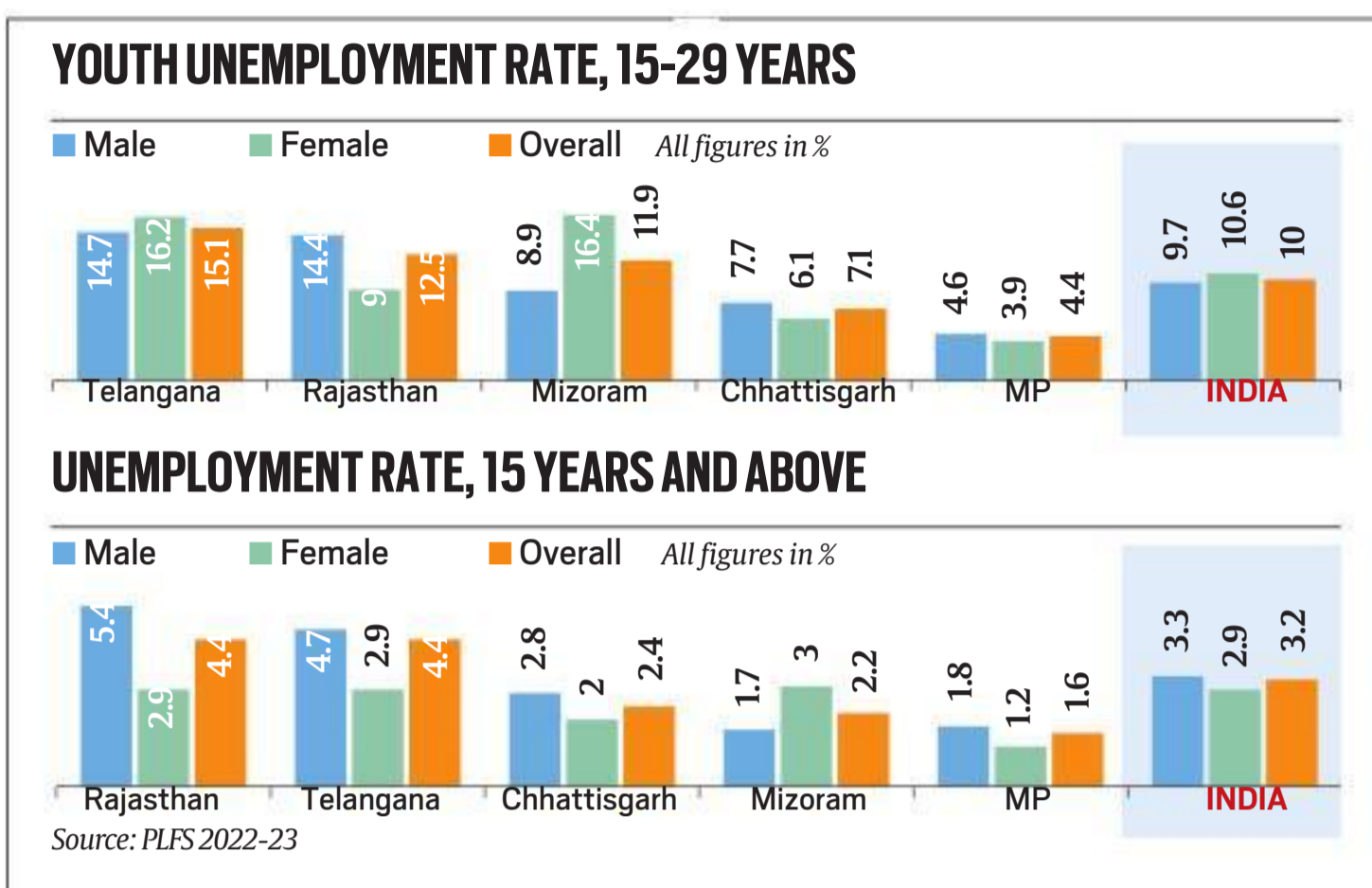
ANCHAL MAGAZINE NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

EVEN AS the unemployment rate among the youth aged 15-29 years across the country eased to 10% in 2022-23 from 12.4% in 2021-22, around 24 states and UTs recorded a rate higher than the national average, as per the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS).

In the five election-bound states, barring Chhattisgarh at 7.1% and Madhya Pradesh at 4.4%, the youth unemployment rate was higher than the national average in 2022-23 - 12.5% in Rajasthan, 15.1% in Telangana, and 11.9% in Mizoram.

In the case of Chhattisgarh and Telangana, the youth unemployment saw a rise, being 6.7% and 14.2%, respectively, in 2021-22. Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Mizoram, on the other hand, saw their youth jobless rates decline, from 6%, 13% and 21.5%, respectively in 2021-22.

A closer look at the gender split of the data for 2022-23



shows that youth unemployment in Telangana and Mizoram was higher than overall unemployment, at 16.2% and 16.4%, respectively.

For Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, the women unemployment rate was 9%, 6.1% and 3.9%, respectively, and hence lower than the overall rate.

There is a sharp divergence in the youth unemployment rates across the country. While a dozen states and UTs, including Chhattisgarh, recorded single-digit increases in youth unemployment between 2021-22 and 2022-23, the remaining 24

states and Union Territories posted double-digit increases, higher than the national average of 10% based on the usual status approach, which measures unemployment rate over a 365-day period.

A similar pattern was also seen in the overall unemployment rate for those aged 15 years and above, with around 22 states/UTs, including poll-bound Rajasthan and Telangana, recording a higher unemployment rate than the national average of 3.2% in 2022-23 (July-June).

In terms of overall unemployment for women (15 years

and above), only Mizoram had a marginally higher rate than the national average, with the remaining four states at or below the national average. For men, however, Rajasthan and Telangana exceeded the national average in 2022-23.

As per the latest PLFS bulletin for April-June 2023, the overall unemployment rate in urban areas slid to 6.6%, the lowest level since the launch of the PLFS bulletin in 2018. Nearly 14 states, however, recorded a higher urban unemployment rate than the national average, including Rajasthan (11.7%) and Chhattisgarh (11.2%).

Protests sparked by hostel inmate's suicide underline unemployment concerns

RAHUL V PISHARODY HYDERABAD, OCTOBER 16

AS THE countdown begins to the Assembly elections, the sudden protest on Friday night in Hyderabad that saw hundreds hit the streets over the alleged suicide of a young woman at a hostel in the city is being seen as indicative of the dissatisfaction over the lack of jobs in the state.

While the police have said the woman who killed herself did so for personal reasons, the protesters claimed she was upset over the cancellation of the government recruitment exams for which she had been preparing for more than two years.

Congress state chief A Revanth Reddy was among the first to blame the government for her death, with AICC chief Mallikarjun Kharge and former chief Rahul Gandhi targeting the BRS government over the issue.

The incident also feeds into the anger over the series of paper leaks in exams conducted by the Telangana State Public Service Commission (TPSC), and the subsequent postponement and cancellation of exams, etc.

The ruling BRS has tried to

counter this calling rising unemployment a universal problem, not limited to Telangana.

BRS leader and Hyderabad in-charge Dasoju Sravan said states ruled by the Congress as well as the BJP were grappling with unemployment as well.

The BJP is going to voters with the message that the BRS has not done anything for the people in the last decade, said BJP state vice-president N V S Prabhakar. "Police officials and representatives of the ruling party are trying to cheat unemployed youths again and again. All the coaching centres are here in Hyderabad, so are the unemployed youth. How can unemployment not be an issue?" Prabhakar said.

Besides unemployment, the BJP is flagging issues around law and order, crime against women, narcotics, encroachment of water bodies, civic infrastructures specific to Hyderabad.

Sravan said the BRS was ready to counter these allegations, with its leaders taking charge in 54 constituencies already. The party is setting up a "war room" in each constituency to connect with voters, he said.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

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KEY PLAYERS

THE TOP 5 BJP FACES TO WATCH OUT FOR IN MADHYA PRADESH

WHAT LIES BENEATH IN TELANGANA, WHERE BJP STALLED, CONG UPBEAT

As Cong unveils its candidate lists for other states, the big absence: Rajasthan



Mallikarjun Kharge at the party's ERCP rally in Baran district on Monday. Sachin Pilot skipped the event. X/@kharge

First list expected on Oct 18, divided state unit ground for speculation

HAMZA KHAN JAIPUR, OCTOBER 16

IN JUNE, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot had said that going into elections this time, the Congress was trying that the tickets be decided two months before polls.

However, a week into the declaration of poll dates, even as the party has announced candidates for the four other states headed for elections, the Rajasthan list is awaited. With the first names expected only on October 18, for around 100 seats of the total 200, the vacuum is echoing with talk again of divisions within the fraught state Congress unit.

Congress leaders justify the delay saying that the CM himself has been quite busy lately, announcing a spree of schemes and benefits ahead of the model code of conduct.

Monday saw the big rally for the Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project (ERCP), which the Congress has accused the BJP government at the Centre of delaying. It was a showcase meeting, attended by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, preparations for which have been on for a while.

However, few buy this argument given that at least some names have been announced for Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Mizoram. Chhattisgarh, the other state where the Congress is in power, has also been riven

with divisions. On Sunday, Gehlot's car was "surrounded" by slogan-shouting party workers in Delhi; the CM was there for talks to select the candidate list.

Congress state president Govind Singh Dotasra suggests that the choice of names has been tough as the party received over "3,000 names" for the 200 seats, or an average of 15 applications per constituency.

The Congress says they are taking into account Vidhan Sabha and Lok Sabha wise surveys by the AICC, a report by the Pradesh Election Committee (PEC) headed by Dotasra, as well as a survey of possible candidates by a private agency. Dotasra says PEC members went to districts and sought a panel of possible candidates from local leaders, from which names were picked.

All this data and the reports were then sent to the Screening Committee, headed by Gaurav Gogoi, with Ganesh Godial and Abhishek Dutt as members. Its ex-officio members include Dotasra, Gehlot, AICC Rajasthan in-charge Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, former deputy CM Sachin Pilot, Assembly Speaker C P Joshi and AICC secretaries in-charge of the state.

Incidentally, what may not help the Congress cause in eastern Rajasthan is the fact that Pilot skipped Monday's rally in a region that has 13 districts, including the former deputy CM's strongholds.

Dissent brews in MP Cong, some ask why pit actor against Shivraj

ANAND MOHAN J BHOPAL, OCTOBER 16

FROM RELEASING the list at 9.09 am, considered an auspicious number on the first day of Navratri, to fielding an actor who essayed the role of Hindu deity Hanuman to take on Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, the Congress spared no effort in playing the Hindutva card as it released its first list of candidates on Sunday.

Vikram Mastal, the 40-year-old actor who played Hanuman in the 2008 Ramayan reboot, did not shy away from showing his loyalty to former CM Kamal Nath as he shared his photo with Nath imposed on a clipping from the show in which Mastal as Hanuman tears open his chest to reveal Hindu deities Ram and Sita.

But under the surface there is simmering discontent in Budhni as local leadership is unhappy with the party for fielding the inexperienced Mastal. The actor, however, said he would give Chouhan a close fight. "I joined the Congress four months ago. I am a young leader, I am a sevak. I will bow down in front of my seniors and ask for their guidance. My guru Kamal Nath



Vikram Mastal who played Hanuman in TV show joined the party four months ago

chose me to take on the CM, I am from Budhni, this is my home," he told *The Indian Express*.

But taking on the CM is easier said than done as Chouhan has won Budhni since 2006.

He was born in Sehore district's Itarsi village to martial artist Vinod Sharma, who was also in the Congress. Mastal's elder brother Arjun Sharma is also a member of the party and tried to get a ticket from Budhni in 2018 but lost out to former state Congress president Arun Yadav. Mastal completed his schooling and college from Budhni and left for Mumbai in 2008. Apart from playing Hanuman in the Anand Sagar reboot, he has acted in other shows and films. He was also in the news recently for criticising the language of the dia-

logues of Hanuman in the film *Adipurush*, which he claimed had hurt the sentiments of people.

Congress insiders said several senior leaders had refused to contest from Budhni as they "did not want to be the sacrificial lamb in this election". Said a Congress functionary, "Last time, Arun Yadav contested and he was the Congress president. He had the full machinery with him and all the resources but still lost. This time, he refused to contest along with other senior leaders. Kamal Nath decidedly fielded Mastal as a symbolic gesture and to play the Hanuman card."

Mastal said there was anger in Budhni as in "the name of development, there had been frauds".

In Sehore, the local leadership asked why a novice like Mastal had been fielded. "There will be a big loss because of this. He is not connected to the public. He joined a few months ago. There is no energy in the district. No senior leader congratulated him. People will be angry over this decision," said Sehore Congress vice-president Manjeet Rajput. He said, "A delegation of local leaders visited Bhopal and expressed their anger. We had three leaders who wanted to contest."



Rahul Gandhi in Aizawl Monday. Congress released its full list of candidates during the day.

Rahul brings up Manipur to attack BJP during Mizoram visit, targets MNF govt

SUKRITA BARUAH GUWAHATI, OCTOBER 16

CONGRESS LEADER Rahul Gandhi brought up the ongoing conflict in Manipur during his three-day visit to poll-bound Mizoram that began Monday.

Gandhi, who participated in a march in the capital city of Aizawl, targeted both the BJP, blaming it for the violence in

Manipur, and the Mizo National Front (MNF) for being a part of the BJP-led NDA.

"The idea of Manipur has been destroyed by the BJP. It is no longer a state, it is now two states. But the PM doesn't find it important to travel there."

Rahul also took aim at the MNF. "And while the BJP attacks your culture, your religion, your tradition, the MNF supports them in Delhi... Over the last five years,

the MNF government has created only 2,000 jobs. Your infrastructure here, your roads here are in shambles and they are destroying the economic future of the state."

The Congress, meanwhile, released a list of all 40 candidates for the November 7 polls. The party is looking to bounce back from 2018 when it won only five seats. State Congress president Lalsawta will contest from the Aizawl West III constituency.

ROAD TO 2024

Gold, school stipends: Cong refines its welfarism pitch from Nyay to now

Some Congress leaders not convinced about promises party's state units are making, others believe social justice, welfarism required to counter BJP's Hindutva plank

MANOJ CG NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

RAHUL GANDHI sprang a surprise in January 2019, announcing months before the Lok Sabha elections that his party would guarantee every poor person in India a minimum income if it came to power. Two months later, Rahul, then the Congress president, came up with Nyay, the party's main promise for the elections. Under the Nyuntam Aay Yojana, Nyay in short, the poorest 20% of all families were promised an annual cash transfer of Rs. 72,000.

Though the Congress felt at the time that Nyay was going to

be a game-changer, it failed to enthrone voters. But the fact remains that it conceptualised inputs from economists of repute such as former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Raghuram Rajan and Nobel laureate Abhijit Banerjee. Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was consulted before it was given a final shape by in-house economists such as P Chidambaram and Praveen Chakravarty.

Five years down the line, the Congress's state units are promising sops and cash doles in each Assembly election, the latest being the promise of stipends for schoolchildren in Madhya Pradesh. The Telangana unit is reportedly set to promise 10 gms

of gold to eligible women at the time of marriage besides Rs 1 lakh cash, and free internet to students. The party is encouraged by the electoral response its promises received in Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka.

Congress leaders in Delhi say there has not been much discussion on various aspects of these promises in a structured manner as was done in the case of Nyay. They say state units are coming up with promises depending on the local situation and are getting central leaders, the likes of Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, to announce them. On their previous visits to Madhya Pradesh, Rahul and Priyanka read out the prom-



In Karnataka, the Congress staggered the rollout of its poll promises to ensure their maximum impact. Jithendra M

ises — the latter with some amount of prompting. While Rahul promised that a Congress-led government would give Rs 1,500 per month to every woman, give gas cylinders for Rs 500, provide 100 units of free electricity, and increase the rate of tendu patta to Rs 4,000 per

sack, Priyanka announced that under the *Padho aur Padhao Yojana* children in classes 1 to 8 would receive Rs 500 every month, those in classes 9 and 10 will receive Rs 1,000 per month, and students in classes 11 and 12 will receive Rs 1,500 each month. Last month, Sonia Gandhi an-

nounced a similar set of promises for Telangana — among them, financial assistance of Rs 2,500 per month to women, LPG cylinders for Rs 500, free bus travel for women across the state, Rs 5 lakh grant to the homeless under Indira Housing scheme, 250 square yards of residential plots for all those who participated in the Telangana movement, Rs 15,000 per acre to every farmer each season, Rs 12,000 each to every tenant farmer and farm labourer, and Rs 10 lakh medical insurance to all.

The party followed similar tactics in Karnataka. And now it has become some sort of a template. The party felt announcements made in manifestos closer to the voting day never really percolated down to voters at the ground level.

In Karnataka, it rolled out the promises in a staggered manner. Priyanka announced the Gruha Lakshmi scheme promising Rs

2,000 per month to women-led households months before elections; Siddaramaiah and D K Shivakumar unveiled the second promise of 200 units of free electricity a few days later; two months before the elections, Rahul unveiled the promise of 3,000 every month to unemployed youth with graduation degree and followed it up with free bus ride scheme for women in the middle of the campaign.

While a section of the party's central leaders are not convinced about the ambitious electoral promises being made by the state units — as they believe it will drain the exchequer — the overwhelming view in the party is that it has to strike a clear "left of the centre" path, leaning on both social justice and welfarism to counter the BJP's Hindutva push and the freebie blitz of some of the regional parties. It is apparent that the party's manifesto for the

Lok Sabha elections will be packed with such promises.

Interestingly, around the same time last year, the Election Commission (EC) wrote to political parties asking them to spell out ways and means of raising additional resources to finance their poll promises and the impact it will have on the fiscal sustainability of the state or the Central government. Floating a consultation paper, the EC, in a letter to all recognised national and state parties, prescribed a standardised disclosure proforma for them to declare the quantification of the physical coverage of the schemes promised, financial implications of the promises, and availability of financial resources.

The Congress opposed it tooth and nail. In its reply to the EC, the Congress said freebies were "part of the dialectics of a vibrant democratic system".

SC verdict on petitions seeking legal sanctity to same-sex marriage today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

THE SUPREME Court will pronounce on Tuesday its decision on petitions seeking legal recognition to same-sex marriages.

A five-judge Constitution bench presided by CJI D Y Chandrachud had reserved its verdict in matter on May 11, after a hearing that lasted 10 days.

While the petitioners have sought legal recognition by rewording The Special Marriage Act (SMA), 1954, the Centre has maintained that the matter is sensitive and is best left to the legislature.

The court also said that "between (the SC's ruling in) Navtej Johar (wherein Section 377 was held unconstitutional) and today, our society has found much greater acceptance of same-sex couples. That's very positive because you find that there is greater acceptance in our Universities".

visions like divorce, alimony, etc.] by the competent legislature by way of an Act under Article 246 of the Constitution of India".

As the hearing proceeded, the bench also comprising Justices SK Kaul, Ravindra Bhat, Hima Kohli, and P S Narasimha, was of the view that it's better to proceed incrementally than to try deal with all questions arising together.

"Sometimes incremental changes in issues of societal ramifications are better. There is time for everything. Therefore what was being suggested, can we for the time being confine only to limited issue, and not step into personal law issues," said the bench.

The court also said that "between (the SC's ruling in) Navtej Johar (wherein Section 377 was held unconstitutional) and today, our society has found much greater acceptance of same-sex couples. That's very positive because you find that there is greater acceptance in our Universities".

also playing a dialogical role to create that consensus and move towards an equal future" and added that once Section 377 had been decriminalised, perhaps the stage had been set to acknowledge a more "stable emotional relationship" like same-sex marriage.

The petitioners argued that marriage is not only a question of dignity but also carried with it a bouquet of rights that LGBTQ community is denied post-Navtej Johar, e.g. bank account, life insurance, medical insurance. They contended that implied exclusion of entire LGBTQ class from Special Marriage Act (SMA) is based on a sole marker of identity, sex and sexual orientation and said that any relief short of full marriage would mean that LGBTQ community will have to keep coming back to court to litigate individual issues of discrimination.

But the court reminded that even in the Puttaswamy case wherein privacy was held as a fundamental right, "we found that there were nuances that came up

later. It may require more visits to court. We can't say. But we cannot say that it will be possible to work out all possible nuances now".

Batting for concomitant changes in other laws, petitioners said that the language of law should be modified and wherever husband and wife is used, it should be made gender-neutral by using "spouse" and where man and woman is used, it should be made gender-neutral by saying "person." The bench said that everything can't change at once and other will take some time.

The hearing also saw the SC quizzing the government on what it was willing to do to ensure conditions for the security and social welfare of same-sex couples and save them from ostracisation even if it was unwilling to grant legal recognition to such marriages.

In response, Centre assured it will form a committee headed by cabinet secretary to address "human concerns" of same-sex couples without legally recognising their relationship as a marriage.

PM invites Google to 'contribute' to AI summit

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday interacted with CEO of Google and Alphabet Inc Sundar Pichai and invited Google to "contribute" to upcoming Global Partnership on AI Summit, which will be hosted by India in December in New Delhi.

The interaction was held in virtual mode.

In a statement, the Prime Minister's Office said, "During the interaction, Prime Minister and Mr. Pichai discussed Google's plan to participate in expanding the electronics manufacturing



Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually interacts with Google CEO Sundar Pichai, on Monday. PTI

ecosystem in India. Prime Minister appreciated Google's partnership with HP to manufacture Chromebooks in India."

"Prime Minister acknowledged Google's 100 languages initiative and encouraged efforts to make AI tools available in Indian Languages. He also encouraged Google to work on AI tools for good governance," statement said.

According to the statement, "Prime Minister welcomed Google's plans to open its global fintech operations centre at the Gujarat International Finance Tec-

City (GIFT) in Gandhinagar."

"Mr Pichai informed the Prime Minister regarding Google's plans to improve financial inclusion in India by leveraging the strength and reach of GPay and UPI. He also emphasized Google's commitment to contribute to the development trajectory of India," the statement said.

"Prime Minister also invited Google to contribute to the upcoming Global Partnership on AI Summit, which will be hosted by India in December 2023 in New Delhi," it said. ENS

Gaganyaan mission: First test vehicle flight on Oct 21

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

GAGANYAAN'S FIRST test vehicle mission that will see the crew module being carried to a height of 17 km to test mid-flight crew escape system will take place on October 21 between 7 am and 9 am, according to Indian Space Research Organisation.

The mission will see a single-stage liquid propellant-based rocket carrying an unpressurised version of the crew module simulating the size and mass of the actual module carrying the Indian astronauts.



Preparations underway for Gaganyaan mission's Flight Test Vehicle Abort Mission-1 (TV-D1). PTI

"A second test vehicle mission will be scheduled only after studying the data generated by the first. If everything goes as per plan, we will proceed with the second. If not, we have to address the problems before going ahead with the next one," said an official.

This test is essential in the development of Gaganyaan mission - it will see the crew module go to a height that can't be achieved with helicopters or flights that can go up to only about 10 km.

The first unmaneuvered flight, where a similar unpressurised crew module will be carried to space, will take place after two successful test missions. For the final mission, the crew module will be pressurised to simulate the atmospheric conditions on

Earth. Two similar test vehicle missions will be undertaken to test all systems before second unmaneuvered flight. Astronauts will be sent under Gaganyaan only after two successful unmaneuvered flights.

The crew module for the next test vehicle mission has been fabricated and under testing, officials said. The first test vehicle mission will simulate a scenario where the astronauts have to abort while moving up to space at 1.2 times the speed of sound.

Akhilesh meets victims' kin in Deoria, warns govt: 'Don't instil bulldozer fear'

Lucknow: A fortnight after six people, including five members of a family, were killed over a land dispute in Deoria district, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Monday reached the village where the killings took place to meet the two families involved in the clash and warned the state government against instilling fear among people with "bulldozer".

Seeking help for both the families, Yadavs and Dubays, the former chief minister warned the BJP government in the state against instilling fear with the use of bulldozer (to demolish houses).

However, a surviving family member of Satya Prakash Dubey, who along with his wife, two daughters and a son was killed in the incident, refused to meet Akhilesh, saying that encroachment over their land was done during the Samajwadi Party government in the state.

The SP chief offered tributes to the victims from the Dubey family from outside the house and went to visit the family of Prem Prakash Yadav, who was initially killed. ENS

'I am original JD(S)': Karnataka chief vows to back INDIA bloc

Bengaluru: Rejecting the BJP-JD(S) alliance for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls in Karnataka, JD(S) state president CM Ibrahim on Monday declared himself the 'original JD(S)'. He announced that the party would back INDIA bloc in the 2024 elections.

Ibrahim's stand is in contrast with the official stand of the party. The announcement from Ibrahim came almost a month after JD(S) leader H D Kumaraswamy met Union Minister Amit Shah and BJP national president J P Nadda in Delhi for alliance between two parties for next Lok Sabha polls.

At a public meeting held in Bengaluru, Ibrahim also targeted Deve Gowda and Kumaraswamy for blaming Muslims for the JD(S)'s poor show in the May polls. "Your base voters, Vokkaligas, deserted you. Why are you not talking about it?" he said.

"We are the original JD(S). I am its president. Nobody can remove me... JD(S) will not align with the BJP-led NDA," he said. ENS

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8 GOVT & POLITICS



CASH-FOR-QUERIES ALLEGATIONS

Dubey urges IT Minister to probe if outsiders used Mahua's LS log-in

Adani Group, IT MoS Chandrasekhar target TMC MP; she says lies by 'jilted ex'

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

THE SLUGFEST over BJP MP Nishikant Dubey's allegations that TMC MP Mahua Moitra took bribes to raise questions in Parliament intensified Monday with the former writing to IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, urging him to investigate the IP addresses of Moitra's log-in credentials for Lok Sabha to check if they were accessed by someone else. In response, Moitra asked the government to release location and log-in details of all MPs along with their call detail records.

This came a day after Dubey in a complaint to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said that there are allegations that the TMC MP took bribes to protect the interest of a business group. He claimed that a Supreme Court lawyer, Jai Anant Dehadrai, had "shared irrefutable evidence of bribes exchanged" between Moitra and businessman Darshan Hiranandani.

On Monday, as the row escalated, the Adani Group latched on to Dubey's complaint to target Moitra, who has been a critic of the business conglomerate over the Hindenburg allegations, saying groups and individuals have been working overtime to harm its name. In a statement, it said Dehadrai has "filed a complaint



BJP MP Nishikant Dubey, TMC MP Mahua Moitra

with the CBI in the form of a sworn affidavit bringing on record the commission of an elaborate criminal conspiracy by Mahua Moitra and Darshan Hiranandani, CEO of Hiranandani Group for specifically targeting Gautam Adani and his group of companies through parliamentary questions."

"He has further stated that, as a quid pro quo, Ms Moitra received bribes and undue favours from Hiranandani," it said.

In response, the Hiranandani Group said there was "no merit" in the allegations. "We have always been in the business of business and not in the business of politics. Our group has always worked with the government in the interest of the nation and will continue doing so," a spokesperson for the group said.

Tagging Adani Group's statement, Moitra posted on X: "Mr A - this lame statement your best efforts? Falling back on Fake Degree MP & a jilted ex's lies? I

won't rest till @dir_ed, @CBITweets investigate & freeze ₹13000 cr coal scam you have stolen from Indians."

Dehadrai, apparently Moitra's estranged partner, had a bitter feud running with her. A senior police officer said in September they received a complaint from Moitra, accusing Dehadrai of trespass and stealing her pet. After receiving the complaint at Barakhamba Road police station, the officers intervened and the pet was returned to Moitra. She then withdrew her complaint.

Dehadrai was unavailable for comments.

Earlier, with his complaint awaiting a decision from the Speaker, BJP MP Dubey wrote a letter to IT Minister Vaishnaw and Minister of State for IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar, demanding an inquiry against Moitra. "These allegations include that she committed a criminal breach of trust, violated parliamentary ethics, and acted in a manner that was detrimental to India's national security," he wrote.

He wrote that the charge that Moitra gave Darshan Hiranandani and the Hiranandani conglomerate access to her log-in credentials for the Lok Sabha website so that they could utilise it for their own gain was "possibly the most damning".

"The alleged sharing of

Moitra's Lok Sabha credentials with an external entity poses a direct threat to national security," Dubey wrote, urging the IT ministry to initiate a probe and determine whether there were instances in which her Lok Sabha account was accessed at a location where she was not present.

In response, Moitra said "all parliamentary work of MPs is done by PAs, assistants, interns and large teams", and urged Vaishnaw to release details of the locations and log-in credentials of all MPs with call data records.

Later, MoS Chandrasekhar also waded into the controversy. Citing a question Moitra asked in March 2022, he posted on X: "I have learnt from news reports that this Parliamentary Question was likely asked by a MP at the behest of a data center company. If true this is indeed shocking and shameful. It is true that this company was actively and aggressively lobbying for Data Localization." The question he referred to was about banning of apps in the country. In response, Moitra posted: "Sir, I am a member of IT Communication and JPC on Data Protection. This is a valid question for all Indians. If a hostile nation can steal data from apps - can't they steal India user data stored overseas? Don't insult my intelligence by alleging I'm fronting others..."

SC refers petitions against electoral bonds scheme to five-judge bench

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

THE SUPREME COURT on Monday referred the petitions challenging the 2018 Electoral Bonds Scheme to a five-judge Constitution Bench.

"In view of the importance of the issue raised, and with regard to Article 145(3) of the Constitution of India, the matter be placed before a bench of at least five judges," Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud while presiding over a three-judge bench.

Article 145(3) of the Constitution says that there should be at least five judges to hear cases that involve a substantial question of law as to the interpretation of Constitution.

The top court had earlier shown no inclination to refer the petitions to a Constitution Bench though the petitioners had raised a demand for it. Taking up the matter on October 10, the CJ-led three-judge bench had fixed October 31 for its hearing.

The CJ's announcement Monday came during mentioning hours, when matters requiring urgent attention are brought to the court's notice.

The top court is seized of a clutch of petitions challenging the scheme including those filed by NGOs Common Cause and the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), and Congress leader Jaya Thakur and the CPI(M).

Announced in the 2017 Union Budget, the scheme allows use of electoral bonds for donating money anonymously



Decision by CJ-led bench of 3 judges

to political parties. The Centre has termed the scheme "a big step towards electoral reform" which "will ensure transparency" and "accountability".

The petitioners have contended that the scheme affects transparency in political funding, pointing out that it allows political parties not to disclose their annual contribution reports to the Election Commission of India (ECI), or the identity of those who have donated using electoral bonds.

In April 2019, a three-judge SC bench, in an interim order, directed political parties which received donations through electoral bonds to "forthwith" submit the details of the bonds to the ECI.

Subsequently, while dismissing a prayer to stay the sale of fresh bonds in March 2021, the SC disputed the petitioners' contention regarding the "complete anonymity" of bond purchasers.

It pointed out that bonds had been issued in the past - in 2018, 2019 and 2020 - "without any impediment" and that it had already ordered "certain safeguards" by way of its April 2019 interim order.

"It is not as though the operations under the scheme are behind iron curtains incapable of being pierced," the Supreme Court had said.

HEALTHY INITIATIVE

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Monday praised the health ministry's initiative of organ donation pledge that was started on his birthday last month. The initiative has resulted in more than 80,000 pledges so far, including that of Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya who has registered to donate all organs and tissues. "I do hope more people join this noble initiative in the future," the PM tweeted. When Modi had earlier urged the people to join the organ donation initiative during his monthly radio address Mann ki Baat in March this year, there had been a marked increase in the number of people who took the pledge.

GARBA FEVER

UTTAR PRADESH minister Asim Arun and some bureaucrats performed garba at the Raj Bhavan in Lucknow on Sunday night on a song penned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Such was the response to the song that the participants, including the guests invited by Governor Anandiben Patel and the employees of the Raj Bhavan, demanded a replay and danced on it again. Governor Patel inaugurated the Garba Mahotsav on Sunday evening and it will be celebrated till the end of Navratri on October 23. Some more ministers and guests are likely to participate in the garba festival.

BACK TO ROOTS

AFTER 53 YEARS, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh held its regular congregation in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua on Sunday evening. The congregation was led by RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat, who was accompanied by two other RSS office-bearers on stage as he delivered his speech on the importance of India globally to a crowd of nearly 5,000 followers. Among the audience was a surprise guest - Union MoS Jitendra Singh - who comes from Jammu. Singh attended the event not as a minister but an RSS follower, wearing black cap, white shirt and khaki pants. Sitting in the front row, he eagerly participated in all the exercises and prayers.

ROW OVER RAGHAV CHADHA'S SUSPENSION

SC seeks Rajya Sabha secretariat reply on AAP MP's petition

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

THE SUPREME COURT on Monday sought a response from the Rajya Sabha Secretariat on a petition filed by AAP leader and lawmaker Raghav Chadha challenging his indefinite suspension from the Upper House, and sought the assistance of the attorney general in adjudicating the issue.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra took note of the submissions of senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi and lawyer Shadan Farasat, representing Chadha, that the suspension cannot extend beyond the particular session during which the suspension decision was taken.

The top court issued the notice to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat only on the plea which will be heard on October 30, and asked Attorney General R Venkataramani to assist it in dealing with legal issues related to suspension of a lawmaker from the Upper House.

Besides the Rajya Sabha Secretariat, Chadha had made

the chairperson of the House and the Privileges Committee parities to his petition.

Dwivedi said he was not seeking any interim relief in the petition at the moment.

During the hearing, the bench took note of the submissions of Dwivedi that the case raised an "important national issue" and framed as many as seven questions for adjudication.

"Whether there is any justification to suspend a Member of Parliament pending enquiry?" read one of the questions framed by the bench. "Whether such an order could be passed after the matter is referred to the privilege committee based on the same grounds for the purpose of examination, investigation and report," read another question.

In his plea filed through advocate Shadan Farasat, the AAP leader has said the power to suspend indefinitely is dangerously open to excesses and abuse.

It has noted that suspension beyond the remaining period of an ongoing session would not only be a grossly irrational measure, but also be violative of basic democratic values.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah with former Chhattisgarh chief minister Raman Singh and other BJP leaders in Rajnandgaon on Monday. *Express*

Shah in Chhattisgarh: Vote in Modi's name for 'golden state'

JAYPRAKASH S NAIDU
RAIPUR, OCTOBER 16

IN HIS first election rally in Chhattisgarh's Rajnandgaon district after the election dates were announced, Union Home Minister Amit Shah appealed to people to vote in the name of Prime Minister Narendra Modi instead of party candidates for a "Golden Chhattisgarh".

Shah visited Rajnandgaon in a show of support for former three-time chief minister Raman Singh, who filed his nomination from Rajnandgaon district, his backyard.

Addressing the gathering, Shah mentioned the killing of Ishwar Sahu's son, Bhuneshwar Sahu, in a communal incident August this in Chhattisgarh's Bemetara district. Sharing the stage with Sahu and other BJP

candidates, he said, "Bhupesh government's appeasement and vote bank politics led to Chhattisgarh's son Bhuneshwar's lynching. BJP will ensure that the culprits are brought to justice and so his father (Ishwar) has been given a ticket."

Listing the works done under Singh's leadership over the last 15 years, Shah said, "This time, do not vote to elect a government or an MLA, but vote for PM Modiji to make a Golden Chhattisgarh. Every vote should be cast in Modi's name."

Launching a tirade against Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, Shah alleged "his government takes 30% commission" and "supplies to Congress party in Delhi."

"Baghel has made Chhattisgarh an ATM of the Congress. The chain of corruption runs from a small revenue official up to the chief minister.

The liquor scam involving Rs 2,000 crore, coal scam of Rs 540 crore, PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojna scam of Rs 5,000 crore, Gauthan yojna of Rs 1,300 crore, PDS fraud of Rs 600 crore, Mahadev app of Rs 5,000 crore, and even in PSC where candidates are denied jobs for being unable to pay a commission."

Drawing a comparison, he said during the UPA regime from 2004-2014, Congress gave Rs 77,000 crore to Chhattisgarh while Rs 3.01 lakh crore has been given by Modi-led Centre.

Chhattisgarh Congress media cell chief, Sushil Anand Shukla, said Shah's speech was planned to instigate communal tension in Rajnandgaon. "We expect the Election Commission to take cognizance on its own and punish Amit Shah. Congress will also file a complaint with the Election Commission," Shukla said.

SREENIVAS JANAYALA
HYDERABAD, OCTOBER 16

DEFENCE MINISTER Rajnath Singh on Monday appealed to the people of Telangana to give the BJP a chance to rid the state of "ongoing corruption" under the rule of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao.

Addressing a public meeting at Jammikunta in Huzurabad constituency of sitting BJP MLA Etela Rajender, who quit the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (now Bharat Rashtra Samithi) in 2021, Singh said if the BJP comes to power, there will be all round development in the state.

"After seeing the number of people attending this meeting, I am sure the BJP will come to power here. Telangana is the land with fighting spirit and skills. Maa Bhadrakali and Ramappa temples are here. Rani Rudrama and Koumaram Bheem are famous across the nation for their valour," he said.

The minister said the Congress party failed to address the problems of Telangana while forming the state in 2014.

"I want to ask KCR why there is no development elsewhere in Telangana. The state has become a private limited company; everyone (in power here) is abusing power and there is a lot of corruption. For people, it's state first, but for KCR it's family first. The discussions on your (KCR's) corruption has reached New Delhi..." said Singh.



BJP Gujarat chief C R Paatil (right) inaugurates a party office in Surendranagar district on Monday. *Express*

Those made RS MPs by BJP should be able to contribute ₹21 lakh for party infra: Paatil

Says workers failing to get majority votes in poll booth won't be promoted

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
RAJKOT, OCTOBER 16

EACH OF the 41 district-level units of the BJP in Gujarat will have their own office buildings in the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections next year. CR Paatil, the party's state chief, said on Monday. He also acknowledged financial contributions by party leaders for building infrastructure, while emphasising that "Rajya Sabha MPs should be able to contribute up to Rs 21 lakh".

Stressing that the BJP will provide all possible facilities to workers, he added in the same breath that those who fail to get majority votes for the party in an election booth will not be promoted.

He made the remarks while addressing a meeting of BJP workers and leaders in Surendranagar after inaugurating NaMo Kamalam, the newly constructed office for the party's district unit. "Constructing this office is the idea of our respectable Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He had called for a BJP office, spread across one to two acres, in each of the 700 districts of the country with all the facilities even if it is constructed away from cities. Amit Shah, who was the national president (of the BJP) at the time, re-

sponded to this call and started constructing offices across the country. I am happy to inform you that the BJP's Gujarat unit has made arrangements to inaugurate 41 offices in all districts and major cities by March-April or latest by May (next year)," said Paatil.

Addressing the meeting, the Gujarat BJP chief further said, "I have been telling this from the beginning that the BJP will not be able to entrust any responsibility to those whose booth (count) remains in the negative... those who fail to win the party's candidate in their respective booths despite living in that booth (area), because they are unable to win the booths. The voters of that booth know him well and they think that they should not vote for the party whose booth leader is such a person."

Referring to an earlier event, where he said party workers pledged Rs 10.5 crore to build a party office, Paatil said: "(Former BJP RS MP) Shankarbai (Vegad) was a little hesitant but eventually, he (also) pledged Rs 11 lakh. People clapped but said it was too little. So, eventually, how much did you give Shankarbai?... Rs 5,000? Do deposit the remaining sum, dear! Those sent to the Rajya Sabha by the BJP should be able to contribute not 11 but 21 (lakh)."

To build on caste survey gains, JD(U) plans mega rally for Dalits

Nitish flags off 'raths' to generate support for meeting on November 5; party says a meeting for EBCs may follow

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, OCTOBER 16

THE RULING JD(U) is following up the Bihar caste survey with a mega meeting of Scheduled Castes in Patna on November 5 called the 'Bhim Sansad'. As part of this, JD(U) supremo and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar flagged off several 'Bhim Sansad Raths' in Patna on October 10, which will travel to different parts of Bihar to mobilise crowds for the November meeting.

Key leaders who have hit the road include ministers and important Dalit leaders Ashok Kumar Choudhary, Sunil Kumar and Ranesh Sada. Choudhary, who is the

Building Construction Minister, said: "The idea behind the Bhim Sansad is to work towards equality in society, which our government has been doing with its slogan 'development with justice'. In our pre-Bhim Sansad interactions, we are meeting people across the state to tell them to join hands with us. We want to make our November meeting a big success."

Choudhary said that they would tell people how Nitish as CM had carved out a separate SC/ST Welfare Department from the Social Welfare Department in 2007.

"While the Social Welfare Department had a budget of Rs 40.48 crore in 2005-06, the SC/ST Welfare Department alone

had a budget of Rs 2,215.30 crore in 2022-23. Among sundry benefits being given to SC/ST people are Rs 50,000 each to those who qualify prelims of the Bihar Public Services Examination and Rs 1 lakh to those clearing Union Public Service Examination prelims. The government also gives scholarships to SC/ST students of Classes 1 to 10."

Sunil Kumar, the Prohibition and Excise Minister, and Ratnesht Sada, the SC/ST Welfare Minister, have been deployed in Siwan/Gopalganj and Kosi/Seemanchal (Saharsa, Madhepura, Purnia and Katihar) areas, respectively, to generate crowds for the Bhim Sansad.

A senior JD(U) leader said: "SCs and EBCs have always been

EXPLAINED What draws Nitish to SCs, EBCs

THE RECENTLY released Bihar caste survey reports puts the state's Scheduled Caste population at 19.65% of the total, against the previous estimate of about 16%. Soon after the report was released, CM Nitish Kumar had specifically mentioned this fact, apart from the fact that the Economically Backward Classes formed the biggest social group, at 36.1%.

our areas of focus. Now that the caste survey report shows them as big social groups, we have started by reaching out to the SCs first. A devoted meeting for EBCs could be also on the cards. There are many takeaways from the survey. We have to start capitalising on them before the BJP offers any counter strategy."

After Nitish took over as the Chief Minister in November 2005, he had clubbed together 21 SCs as "Mahadalits", leaving out only the Paswans (a constituency of Dalit leader Ram Vilas Paswan). This helped him rally support among these Dalit groups, and build up his political capital, despite belonging to a caste group (Kurmis), which has minuscule presence in Bihar.

Making Jitan Ram Manjhi the CM in 2014 when he stepped down briefly was part of Nitish's strategy to show his support for Dalit welfare.

BJP national spokesperson Guru Prakash Paswan said: "Bhim Sansad is nothing more than political symbolism. JD(U) and Nitish Kumar have expertise in these symbols. One still remembers how Manjhi was made CM as only a placeholder, and later removed unceremoniously. Nitish also divided the SCs by creating a Mahadalit category. But the JD(U) does not have any SC leader of substance in its ranks."

Dismissing the BJP's criticism, Choudhary said: "They are the ones who talk about review of reservation."



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Women paraded naked in Manipur: CBI chargesheet against 6, juvenile

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

THE CENTRAL Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Monday filed the charge sheet before a special court in Guwahati, against six people and a juvenile in connection with a May incident wherein two women from Manipur's Kuki-Zomi community were paraded naked and assaulted sexually.

A video, which became viral in July and triggered a nationwide outrage, showed the two women, one in her 20s and the other in her 40s, being made to walk naked down a road and towards a field by a mob of men. Some of the men can be seen dragging the two women towards a field and groping them.

In a police complaint filed on May 18, the victims had also alleged that the younger woman was "brutally gangraped in the broad daylight".

The CBI had registered a case on the request of the Manipur government and further notification from the Centre.

The accused have been charged under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, including those pertaining to gangrape, murder, outraging the modesty of a woman and criminal conspiracy, the CBI said.

"It was alleged that on May 4, a mob of approximately 900-1,000 individuals, armed with sophisticated weapons, entered B Phainom village in the Kangpokpi district of Manipur, vandalised and set houses ablaze, looted properties, assaulted villagers, committed murders, sexually assaulted women. It was further alleged that two family members of one of the victims were also killed in the incident," a spokesperson of the central agency said.

"The public is reminded that the above findings are based on the investigation done by CBI and evidence collected by it. Under the Indian Law, the accused are presumed to be innocent till their guilt is finally established after a fair trial," a CBI spokesperson said.

Expressing "deep concern" over the video of two women being paraded naked in Manipur and calling it "simply unacceptable" and "the grossest of constitutional and human rights violations", a Supreme Court bench led by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud had told the government to act, and warned "otherwise, we will take action if nothing is happening on the ground".

Justice Siddharth Mridul is new CJ of Manipur HC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE DELHI, OCTOBER 16

JUSTICE SIDDHARTH Mridul was on Monday appointed as the chief justice of Manipur High Court three months after the Supreme Court Collegium recommendation.

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Law and Justice, Arjun Ram Meghwal, said on X, "In exercise of the power conferred by the Constitution, President of India after consultation with Chief Justice of India is pleased to appoint Sh Justice Siddharth Mridul, judge of the Delhi High Court as Chief Justice of Manipur High Court. I convey best wishes to him".

On October 9, the Centre had notified the Supreme Court that the appointment of a new chief justice of Manipur High Court will be issued 'shortly', stating that the file has been cleared and the rest of the process will follow soon.

The top court collegium headed by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud had on July 5 recommended the appointment of Delhi High Court judge Justice Siddharth Mridul as the chief justice of the Manipur High Court, amid the ethnic turmoil in the border state.

The SC was hearing two petitions filed by the Advocates Association, Bengaluru, and another by an NGO seeking contempt of court proceedings against the Centre for alleged delay in deciding on the recommendations of the Supreme Court Collegium in the matter of appointment and transfer of judges.

Hearing the matter on September 26, the apex court had flagged its concerns over pendency of the recommendations, including the one pertaining to Justice Mridul, *The Indian Express* had reported.

Justice Siddharth Mridul will take charge amid ethnic turmoil in Manipur



Justice Siddharth Mridul will take charge amid ethnic turmoil in Manipur

Mason held in Manipur IED blast case

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

THE NATIONAL Investigation Agency (NIA) arrested a 41-year-old mason in connection with a suspected IED blast case on June 21 in Manipur's Bishnupur district, which left three persons, including two minor boys, injured.

According to the NIA, the accused, Md. Noor Hussain, was arrested in Assam's Silchar, Cachar district, Monday in a joint operation of the Assam Police and intelligence agencies.

Earlier, NIA had arrested a 51-year-old, Seiminlun Gangte, a private school teacher, from Chura Chandpur district in connection with the IED blast case. NIA investigation revealed Gangte was Hussain's close associate. "Probe also revealed Hussain was the last person present at crime scene before the blast," a source said.

On June 21, an IED-laden stolen Mahindra Scorpio car exploded, wrecking a part of the western side of a bridge adjoining Phougakchao Ikhai Awang Leikai and Kwakta area along Tiddim road in Bishnupur district. An FIR was filed on June 23 based on a complaint by Rajeev Kumar, Under Secretary, MHA.

The MHA then handed over the case to NIA, who tracked down the car's owner, who had filed a complaint of stolen vehicle a month before the blast.

CBI nabs 4 more in fake passport case, suspects trafficking of women to Nepal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, OCTOBER 16

THE CENTRAL Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Monday arrested four more persons in connection with the fake passport case in West Bengal and Sikkim.

With this, the total number of arrests in the case is now six.

In the investigations following the arrest, the role of several individuals, including employees of the Regional Passport Office in Kolkata, has surfaced, officials said. The central agency is also probing alleged international links of those arrested as those involved in the nexus are likely involved in the trafficking of women to the neighbouring countries, especially Nepal, it is learnt.

The CBI has seized a large number of incriminating documents such as fake documents and material used in producing forged documents such as Aadhaar cards and government stamps during raids.

The agency had first arrested the Gangatok Passport Seva Laghu Kendra Senior Superintendent Goutam Kumar Saha, who

was allegedly caught red-handed accepting a bribe of Rs 1.9 lakh from an agent identified as Dipu Chettri who too was taken in custody.

Later, they arrested one Varun Singh Rathore from Naxalbari in Siliguri sub-division of Darjeeling district in West Bengal and got some specific clues about a women trafficking racket being run by those involved in the fake passport scam.

CBI sources said it was found that women were being trafficked to Nepal using Sikkim route. Most of the seized passports were of women from northern parts of West Bengal, officials said. Searches were conducted in 50 places in Kolkata, Gangtok, Siliguri, Darjeeling, and Alipurduar.

A case was filed against 24 persons, including Deputy Passport Officer, Kolkata, Senior Superintendent, Passport Seva Laghu Kendra, Gangtok, and other officials. It was alleged that employees of Kolkata Regional Passport Office, Kolkata and Passport Seva Laghu Kendra in Gangtok entered a criminal conspiracy with others, including passport agents, middlemen to issue passports on the basis of forged documents.

Russian national molested by her business partner

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE PANAJI, OCTOBER 16

A 44-year-old Russian national was allegedly molested by her Delhi-based business associate at a resort in North Goa last week, said Goa police on Monday. According to the police, the woman and the accused had come to Goa for a business meeting and the man had booked two rooms at the resort.

A police official said the woman had come from Mumbai, while the accused was from Delhi. The incident took place on October 12 in a resort room, the police said.

"Both run a business of importing computers. In her complaint, the woman alleged the accused had pushed her on the bed and forcibly kissed her. He tried to undress her before she ran out of the room to the resort lobby and sought help. She lodged a police complaint later, the police added.

Nidhin Valsan, SP North, said a case was filed under section 354 (assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty) of the Indian Penal Code. "The woman's statement is yet to be recorded before a magistrate," said an officer. "A notice has been issued to the accused under section 41A of the CrPC," the SP said.

योजना एवं विकास विभाग
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स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन, कार्य प्रमंडल-02, रोसड्डा।
निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या -01(SBD)/2023-24
(केवल ई-टेंडर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)

बिहार के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से बिहार राज्य के किसी भी कार्य विभाग/निगम/अन्य राज्य सरकार/केन्द्र सरकार/सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के उपक्रम या राष्ट्रीय या अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्थापित के किसी भी एजेंसी में समुचित श्रेणी में निम्नलिखित संवेदकों से प्रतियोगिता दर निविदा दो बीड प्रणाली (तकनीकी एवं वित्तीय) अन्तर्गत आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं। यदि संवेदक बिहार राज्य के किसी कार्य विभाग/निगम में पूर्व से निम्नलिखित नहीं है, तब एकरचनामा के पूर्व निम्नलिखित कार्य का स्वीकार पत्र (लेटर ऑफ एक्सेप्टेन्स) प्राप्त होने के बाद बिहार राज्य के किसी भी कार्य विभाग/निगम (जिसमें निबंधन की प्रक्रिया लागू हो) में निबंधन कराना अनिवार्य होगा।

युप संख्या	कार्य का नाम	परिमाण विवरण की राशि (लाख रु में)	अवधि की राशि (ऑन लाईन मोड या ऑफ लाईन मोड में केवल B.G. के रूप में) (लाख रु में)	परिमाण-विवरण का मूल्य (अप्रकार्य) केवल ऑनलाइन मोड में मूल्यांकन (रुपये में)	बीड प्रारंभिक मूल्य (अप्रकार्य) केवल ऑनलाइन मोड में मूल्यांकन (रुपये में)	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि (माह में)
01	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत दलसिंहसराय प्रखंड के दरि संकपुर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	300.550	6.011	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
02	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत दलसिंहसराय प्रखंड के नरगाम पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	300.614	6.013	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
03	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत दलसिंहसराय प्रखंड के अजनीत पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	302.376	6.048	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
04	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत दलसिंहसराय प्रखंड के बुनकपुर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	300.232	6.005	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
05	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत उजियपुर प्रखंड के भवनापुरदेसुड़ा पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	299.769	5.996	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
06	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत हसनपुर प्रखंड के परियरा पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	303.235	6.065	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
07	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत हसनपुर प्रखंड के देवा पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	303.151	6.064	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
08	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत सिताधीनगर प्रखंड के राजीवली पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	302.728	6.055	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
09	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत सिताधीनगर प्रखंड के जालंधर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	302.779	6.056	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
10	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत सिताधीनगर प्रखंड के सहियार दलीवी पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	303.438	6.069	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
11	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत सिताधीनगर प्रखंड के सहियार रमा पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	303.286	6.066	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
12	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत खानपुर प्रखंड के मोरवाहन पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	301.105	6.023	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
13	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत बारिसनगर प्रखंड के धुलस पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	301.730	6.035	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
14	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत विष्णुपुर प्रखंड के भुलस पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	302.369	6.048	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
15	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत विष्णुपुर प्रखंड के महिसि पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	303.386	6.068	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
16	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत विष्णुपुर प्रखंड के सुरती पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	301.404	6.029	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
17	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत विष्णुपुर प्रखंड के देवरी कंथ पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	302.668	6.054	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
18	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत विष्णुपुर प्रखंड के खास टनका उत्तर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	302.331	6.047	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
19	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत विष्णुपुर प्रखंड के बाबिकपुर कन्थ पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	301.827	6.037	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
20	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत सिपिया प्रखंड के बिसुपुर डिहा पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	305.940	6.119	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
21	समस्तीपुर जिला अंतर्गत सिपिया प्रखंड के सखवा पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	308.037	6.161	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह

- विज्ञापन निर्गत करने की तिथि : दिनांक -12.10.2023
- निविदा कागजात अपलोड करने की प्रारंभिक तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 10.11.2023 को 10.00 बजे पूर्वाह्न से। (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
- प्री-बीड मीटिंग का समय, स्थान एवं तिथि : दिनांक 27.10.2023 समय 3:30 बजे, मुख्य अभियंता का कार्यालय, स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन, विद्येवर्यवा मदन, चतुर्थ तल, कमरा नं-423, बेली रोड, पटना-800015
- निविदा अपलोड की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 21.11.2023 समय 3.00 बजे अपराह्न (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर)
- तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 24.11.2023 समय 3.30 बजे अपराह्न से। (कॉडिका 5 में उल्लेखित अंतिम तिथि से दो कार्य दिवस के पश्चात की तिथि)। (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर)
- वित्तीय बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 25.11.2023 समय 3.30 बजे अपराह्न। (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर
- निविदा खोलने का स्थान : www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर
- निविदा की कैसात अवधि : 120 दिन (निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि के बाद)
- विज्ञापनदाता का पदनाम एवं पता : www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर
- कार्यालय अभियंता, स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन प्रमण्डल, कार्य प्रमंडल-02, रोसड्डा

विरस्तु जानकारी state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन, कार्य प्रमंडल-02, रोसड्डा

PR-010267 (Planning) 2023-24

नरो से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार

बिहार सरकार

योजना एवं विकास विभाग
कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय

स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन, कार्य प्रमंडल-01, सीवान

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या -11(SBD)/2023-24
(केवल ई-टेंडर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)

बिहार के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से बिहार राज्य के किसी भी कार्य विभाग/निगम/अन्य राज्य सरकार/केन्द्र सरकार/सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के उपक्रम या राष्ट्रीय या अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्थापित के किसी भी एजेंसी में समुचित श्रेणी में निम्नलिखित संवेदकों से प्रतियोगिता दर निविदा दो बीड प्रणाली (तकनीकी एवं वित्तीय) अन्तर्गत आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं। यदि संवेदक बिहार राज्य के किसी कार्य विभाग/निगम में पूर्व से निम्नलिखित नहीं है, तब एकरचनामा के पूर्व निम्नलिखित कार्य का स्वीकार पत्र (लेटर ऑफ एक्सेप्टेन्स) प्राप्त होने के बाद बिहार राज्य के किसी भी कार्य विभाग/निगम (जिसमें निबंधन की प्रक्रिया लागू हो) में निबंधन कराना अनिवार्य होगा।

युप संख्या	कार्य का नाम	परिमाण विवरण की राशि (लाख रु में)	अवधि की राशि (ऑन लाईन मोड या ऑफ लाईन मोड में केवल B.G. के रूप में) (लाख रु में)	परिमाण-विवरण का मूल्य (अप्रकार्य) केवल ऑनलाइन मोड में मूल्यांकन (रुपये में)	बीड प्रारंभिक मूल्य (अप्रकार्य) केवल ऑनलाइन मोड में मूल्यांकन (रुपये में)	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि (माह में)
01	सीवान सदर प्रखंड अन्तर्गत करणपुरा पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	252.587	5.052	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
02	सीवान सदर प्रखंड अन्तर्गत बरहन पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	252.913	5.059	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
03	सीवान सदर प्रखंड अन्तर्गत मकरियार पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	254.409	5.089	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
04	सीवान सदर प्रखंड अन्तर्गत सीधारी पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	254.082	5.082	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
05	बसंतपुर प्रखंड अन्तर्गत मोलानपुर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	297.488	5.950	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
06	बसंतपुर प्रखंड अन्तर्गत सरेया श्रीकांत पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	297.651	5.954	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
07	बसंतपुर प्रखंड अन्तर्गत बैजूकरगोहा (हरायपुर) पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	299.032	5.981	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
08	गोरयाकोटी प्रखंड अन्तर्गत दक्षिण सरारी पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	296.356	5.928	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
09	लकड़ौ नदीगंज प्रखंड अन्तर्गत जगलपुर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	300.008	6.001	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
10	पारसखी प्रखंड अन्तर्गत गोपालपुर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	251.463	5.030	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
11	पारसखी प्रखंड अन्तर्गत शम्भोपुर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	252.940	5.059	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
12	महाराजगंज प्रखंड अन्तर्गत देवरिया पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	296.446	5.929	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
13	महाराजगंज प्रखंड अन्तर्गत जिगर्ती पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	297.855	5.958	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
14	भगवानपुर हॉट प्रखंड अन्तर्गत बलहा पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	297.165	5.944	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
15	भगवानपुर हॉट प्रखंड अन्तर्गत खेंदवा पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	298.235	5.965	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
16	भगवानपुर हॉट प्रखंड अन्तर्गत बड़कागंज पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	297.725	5.955	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह
17	भगवानपुर हॉट प्रखंड अन्तर्गत सहस्रांज पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	297.496	5.955	10000.00	e-proc2 के वेब पेज के अनुसार	18 माह

- विज्ञापन निर्गत करने की तिथि : दिनांक -11.10.2023
- निविदा कागजात अपलोड करने की प्रारंभिक तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 06.11.2023 को 10.00 बजे पूर्वाह्न से। (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
- प्री-बीड मीटिंग का समय, स्थान एवं तिथि : दिनांक 01.11.2023 समय 3.30 बजे, मुख्य अभियंता का कार्यालय, स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन, विद्येवर्यवा मदन, चतुर्थ तल, कमरा नं-423, बेली रोड, पटना-800015
- निविदा अपलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 13.11.2023 समय 3.00 बजे अपराह्न तक। (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर)
- तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 16.11.2023 समय 3.30 बजे अपराह्न से। (कॉडिका 5 में उल्लेखित अंतिम तिथि से दो कार्य दिवस के पश्चात की तिथि)। (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर)
- वित्तीय बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 17.11.2023 समय 3.30 बजे अपराह्न। (सिर्फ वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर)
- निविदा खोलने का स्थान : www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर
- निविदा की कैसात अवधि : 120 दिन (निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि के बाद)
- विज्ञापनदाता का पदनाम एवं पता : कार्यपालक अभियंता, स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन प्रमण्डल, कार्य प्रमंडल-01 सीवान
- विरस्तु जानकारी state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar पर देखी जा सकती है

कार्यपालक अभियंता स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन, कार्य प्रमंडल-01, सीवान

PR. No.010289 (Planning) 2023-24

नरामुक्त हो जाए बिहार, सुरक्षित रहे घर परिवार।

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, "e"-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
WORKS DEPARTMENT
B-1091 E-mail: ceworldbankprojects@gmail.com
Bid Identification No. CE-W.B.P. (O) 29/ 2023-24

1. The Chief Engineer (World Bank Project), Odisha on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bid in double cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for construction of Road & Bridge work as detailed below:

- Nature of Work : Bridge works
- No. of work : 02 nos.
- Tender cost : Rs.10,000.00 (on-line)
- Class of Contractor : Special/Super Class Contractor
- Available of bid document in the website : From 10.00 A.M. of 17.10.2023 to 5.00 PM of 14.11.2023
- Pre-Bid meeting : Dt. 25.10.2023
- Date of opening of Bid : Dt. 15.11.2023 at 11.00 AM
- The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the Website: <https://tenderodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum/Corrigendum/ Cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.

Sd/- **Chief Engineer, World Bank Project, Odisha (OIPR-34003/11/0045/2324)**

Prohibition, Excise & Registration Department
Vikas Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna, Bihar
Pin-800015, Mobile: 9110036305
Website: <http://excise.bih.nic.in> / e-Mail: excise-bih@nic.in

Tender / NIT No: Scanning/Registration/03
Short e-Tender Corrigendum (old PR_009118/23-24)

Proposal for "Empanelment of agencies for Scanning, Digitization, Indexing and Uploading of Registration records" for the Prohibition, Excise & Registration Department, Government of Bihar.

NB: Any Addendum/ corrigendum relating to the tender shall be notified on the website of Prohibition, Excise and Registration Department.

Corrigendum for "Selection of Vendor for Scanning, Digitization, Indexing and Uploading of Registration records"

S.No	Description	Page	Response
1	Eligibility Criteria No. 7 states that the bidder must have offices and work premises in Bihar. The document to be submitted is a Shop and Establishment. We wanted to know if a newly acquired Shop and Establishment certificate would qualify.	Section 16: Eligibility criteria	The bidder shall submit Bihar Shop and Establishment certificate as mentioned in the tender document.
1	Please specify Total No of pages per image (one side of a page is one image)	Section 4: Scope of work	The total no of pages to be digitized shall be minimum 20 crore. However, this number is indicative,

EXPRESS NETWORK

BRIEFLY

UTTAR PRADESH
Woman ends life in Agra, search on for 2 'stalkers'

Meerut: A 19-year-old woman died by suicide on Saturday in an Agra village after allegedly being blackmailed by two men who "made a video" while she was bathing at her residence, police said on Monday. She left a suicide note naming her stalkers for forcing her to take the extreme step, police said. The woman's father registered a complaint claiming that two men were threatening to share the video online if she did not get intimate with them, ACP Mahesh Kumar said.

KARNATAKA
Man throws scissors at son in rage, boy dies

Bengaluru: Angered by his two children fighting for television remote, a father threw scissors at them turned tragic after his 16 year old son died after it stuck to his neck on Saturday night. The incident took place in Molakalmuru town in Chitradurga district, 256km away from Bengaluru. The deceased has been identified as Chandrashekar, a 9th class student and son of Lakshmi and Lakshmana Babu. Molakalmuru police have booked a murder case against Babu.

BIHAR
Two die in suspected hooch tragedy

Darbhanga: In yet another suspected hooch tragedy in dry Bihar, two villagers died in Darbhanga district on Monday while as many were undergoing treatment after taking ill, a police officer said. According to Darbhanga SSP Avakash Kumar, all the affected were residents of Rustampur village and investigations were "on into family members' allegation that they had consumed spurious liquor on Sunday."

TELANGANA
India's partition was historical mistake: Owaisi

Hyderabad: AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi on Monday said the partition of India should never have happened and called it a 'historical mistake'. The Hyderabad Lok Sabha MP said, "It should not have happened...I will tell you who is responsible for the division of this country...I can not give a one line answer for a mistake that was committed at that time," he said.

Cash, jewellery worth Rs 102 crore seized in searches on civil contractors: I-T dept

BJP claims funds meant for Cong's poll expenses; DKS denies charge, asks why no raids in BJP-ruled states

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, OCTOBER 16

A TOTAL of Rs 94 crore cash and jewellery worth over Rs 8 crore were seized in the Income Tax Department searches, which started on October 12 at 55 premises in Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Delhi, in connection with alleged illegal wealth generated by civil contractors and real estate players, the department disclosed on Monday.

The I-T searches obtained a political colour when the Opposition BJP and JD(S) in Karnataka claimed that the large amounts of cash — Rs 42 crore and Rs 52 crore seized from two premises in Bengaluru — were linked to the ruling Congress party in the state and were meant to finance the elections in five states next month.

Dismissing the Opposition's claims, Karnataka's Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, who is the minister in-charge of Bengaluru development, said the searches and the allegations were "politically motivated", and questioned why no I-T searches were carried out in BJP-ruled states.

"The searches have resulted in seizure of approximately Rs 94 crore unaccounted cash and gold and diamond jewellery worth over Rs 8 crore, aggregating to more than Rs 102 crore. Further, about 30 luxury wrist watches of foreign make have been seized from the premises of a private salaried employee not engaged in the business of wrist watches," the I-T department said on Monday through the Central Board of Direct Taxes.

"The modus operandi of tax evasion detected indicates that

these contractors were involved in inflating expenses by booking bogus purchases, non-genuine claim of expenses with sub-contractors and claiming ineligible expenses," the I-T department said. "The irregularities detected in utilisation of contract receipts have resulted in generation of huge unaccounted cash and creation of undisclosed assets," the department said.

Among the persons searched were Bengaluru civil contractor R Ambikapathy, his wife Ashwathamma R, who is a former Congress councillor, their son Pradeep A, Bengaluru-based real estate businessman Santhosh Krishnappa, and at least four other contractors from Bengaluru who are linked to civil work in the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP).

According to state sources, the

Rs 42 crore cash was found at the home of Pradeep A and Rs 52 crore at the home of Krishnappa.

On Monday, the BJP staged protests linking the seizures to the Congress and alleged that the cash was meant to fund the polls. The BJP leaders called the Congress government the "Karnataka Pradesh Collection Centre".

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge held a meeting in Bengaluru on Monday with AICC general secretary K C Venugopal and KPCC chief Shivakumar to discuss the BJP's allegations against the party.

"Let the BJP stage protests, only then will we be able to expose the extent of corruption that occurred in their tenure," Shivakumar said after coming out of the meeting at Kharge's residence.

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who was in

Mysuru on Monday, said the BJP's allegations were "politically motivated". "People won't trust the BJP no matter what protests it undertakes... BJP is protesting with a political purpose and with the Lok Sabha elections in mind," he said.

Former Karnataka CM B S Yediyurappa called for a probe by the Enforcement Directorate into the I-T department seizures. "The Congress government (in Karnataka) has been busy collecting election funds and has ignored development issues," he said.

JD(S) leader and former CM H D Kumaraswamy claimed that the Rs 42 crore cash seized in the first phase of the searches was part of the "SST tax" (a veiled reference to the DKS brothers) and the Rs 52 crore cash found in the second phase was part of the "YST tax" (a veiled reference to Siddaramaiah and his son Yathindra).

Akal Takht bans priests who solemnised same-sex marriage at gurdwara

KAMALDEEP SINGH BRAR
AMRITSAR, OCTOBER 16

A MONTH after a same-sex marriage was solemnised at a gurdwara in Punjab's Bathinda, the Akal Takht Monday "blacklisted" for five years the Sikh priests and ragis (gurbani exponents) who helped carry out the Anand Karaj (wedding ceremony). The Akal Takht — the highest temporal seat for Sikhs — also barred all the members of Gurdwara Kalgidhar Sahib's management committee from holding any post in any other gurdwara or Sikh religious body.

The decision was announced by Akal Takht Jathedar Giani Raghibir Singh after a meeting of the 'Panj Singh Sahibans' (five Sikh clergymen) at Amritsar.

Dimple (27) and Manisha (21) got married at Gurdwara Kalgidhar Sahib on September 18 as per the rituals performed under Anand Karaj. The families of both the women were present and the marriage was solemnised after their consent. The women, ahead of the wedding,

had submitted Aadhaar cards, mentioning their genders as female. A marriage certificate issued under the letterhead of the gurdwara allegedly described one of the partners as male. Dimple had arrived at the gurdwara dressed as a traditional Sikh groom, wearing turban.

As a controversy erupted over the same-sex marriage in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib with Sikh clergy terming it as "sheer violation of religious code of conduct and general ethics" following which Akal Takht Jathedar suspended head granthi Harchand Singh, granthi Ajayab Singh, ragi Sikandar Singh, tabla player Satnam Singh, and the management committee of the gurdwara.

The Jathedar has also constituted a sub-committee to probe the entire matter, and the latest action follows a report that it had submitted. The Akal Takht decision comes at a time when Supreme Court is scheduled to deliver its much anticipated judgment on Tuesday on pleas seeking legal validation for same-sex marriage.

Woman assaulted, garlanded with footwear in Karnataka

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, OCTOBER 16

SUSPECTED TO be accused of honey trapping, a 38 year old woman in Karnataka was reportedly assaulted and was paraded with garland of footwear by an angry mob in Belagavi district. Following the incident, the police have arrested 13 persons.

The incident took place in Ghataprabha village of Belagavi district on Friday night but came to light after videos went viral.

The villagers accused the woman of extorting multiple men through honey trapping. Some of the villagers who barged into her house initially picked up a verbal fight and later

dragged her out of the house. She was physically assaulted, and the mob subjected her to the demeaning garland display.

The police received a call on the emergency helpline number and they rescued the woman and took her to a hospital. She has sustained injuries.

Initially hesitant to involve law enforcement, the woman refrained from filing an official complaint, considering it an internal matter.

However, when a video of the incident circulated widely on social media platforms, she was convinced to report the crime. Belagavi SP, Bhimashankar Guled, confirmed that a case had been registered under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code based on her complaint.

16 Opposition leaders meet Palestinian Ambassador in Delhi, express solidarity

LALMANI VERMA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

AMID THE Israel-Hamas war, a delegation of 16 opposition leaders, including parliamentarians and politicians, met the Palestinian Ambassador in New Delhi and expressed solidarity with the Palestinians. The delegation emphasised the need to step up efforts by the international community to arrive at a peaceful resolution.

"The international community must exert pressure on Israel to abide by international laws and respect the rights and dignity of the Palestinian people," the delegation's resolution read. "We strongly condemn the indiscriminate bombing of Palestinians in Gaza by Israel, which we believe amounts to an

attempt to genocide. We urge an immediate cessation of all hostilities to prevent further loss of innocent lives and the destruction of homes and infrastructure," the resolution added.

The delegation also urged the international community to recognize the establishment of an independent Palestine state along the 1967 borders in accordance with the UN resolution. "Such recognition is a crucial step towards ensuring a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestine conflict," the delega-



RONALDINHO MANIA
Brazilian football icon Ronaldinho with aspiring footballers during the inauguration of 'R 10' academy at Rajarhat on the outskirts of Kolkata on Monday. The footballer, who is on a two-day visit to Kolkata, met CM Mamata Banerjee and inaugurated Puja pandals in the city.

Will pray for end of corruption, atrocities in Bengal: Amit Shah

ENS & PTI
KOLKATA, OCTOBER 16

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shah on Monday inaugurated a Ram Mandir-themed Durga Puja in Kolkata and said he would pray to the goddess that corruption, injustice and atrocities end soon in West Bengal. Shah left the city shortly after inaugurating the puja mandap at Santosh Mitra Square in central Kolkata.

Addressing the gathering before inaugurating the mandap, Shah said he wouldn't talk about politics on the occasion but at the same time pledged to continue his fight in the state until a change of government takes place.

"Today's occasion is not ideal



Home Minister Amit Shah at inauguration of Ram Temple themed Durga Puja pandal in Kolkata on Monday.

to discuss politics, but I will keep coming to Bengal and continue my fight until we see a change in the state's (political) landscape. I would pray to goddess Durga for an end to corruption, crime, injustice and atrocities in the state

at the earliest," said the Union Home Minister.

Shah also commended the puja organisers for the pandal design, which resembles the upcoming Ram temple in Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh.

IIM-Mumbai fee at Rs 21 lakh, highest in new-gen institutes

PALLAVI SMART
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 16

THE NEWEST Indian Institute of Management (IIM) of India — IIM Mumbai that received its IIM status only in August this year, has fixed its fee-structure at Rs 21 lakh for two-year courses commencing from the academic year 2024-25. The fee-structure is only less than IIMs Ahmedabad (31.5), Calcutta (31) and Bangalore (24.5); whereas among the highest in new generation IIMs.

Earlier this year, the city's National Institute of Industrial Engineering (NIIE) was given the status of IIM, following approval to the Indian Institutes of Management (Amendment) Bill 2023. After having acquired the new title of IIM Mumbai, the institute held its first board meeting on Monday which included fixing of the fee-structure among other details, as the institute plans to admit students for the new MBA courses from the upcoming academic year.

The meeting was attended by Chairman Board of Governors, Shashi Kiran Shetty, other Board Members and Director of IIM Mumbai, Prof. Manoj Kumar Tiwari. The IIM Mumbai will offer three courses

— MBA (general), MBA in Sustainability and Management and MBA in Operations and Supply chain Management. The fee-structure will be the same for all three and admission will be via Common Admission Test (CAT), as per other IIMs.

While students coming from all backgrounds will be eligible to take admission to the first two courses, for MBA in operations and Management, candidates are required to have engineering degree. Students coming from statistics and mathematics backgrounds too will be considered for the course, as per the changes in the eligibility criteria implemented last year.

A senior official from the IIM Mumbai, said, "Apart from fee-structure for the courses the board meeting also finalised on syllabus and curriculum along with infrastructural development plan. The infrastructure augmentation will be a phase-wise project focusing on different areas of the campus and requirements. Apart from setting-up of classrooms, hostels and staff-quarters, it will also include the formation of research centres, fintech study models among all."

In August this year, NIIE was officially named as IIM Mumbai and became the 21st IIM of India.

Punjab will accord martyr status to Agniveer: Mann

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 16

CHIEF MINISTER Bhagwant Mann Monday said the Punjab government will accord the status of a martyr to Agniveer Amritpal Singh, who died allegedly by suicide in Jammu and Kashmir last week, amid a row over the Army not according a military funeral to the soldier.

Mann, who visited Amritpal Singh's house in Kotli Kalan village in Mansa, also handed over a cheque of Rs 1 crore as compensation to his family.

Amritpal Singh, who was serving with a battalion of J&K Rifles in Poonch sector, died on October 11. He was cremated on Friday.

The Army has said that he died by suicide while on sentry

duty and that military honours were not extended to his funeral as deaths arising out of self-inflicted injuries are not given such honours.

The Army also asserted that it does not differentiate among soldiers based on whether they joined the force prior to or after the implementation of the Agnipath scheme.

Mann said that the state government recognises the "irreparable loss" to the nation and particularly to Amritpal's family and a "statue in the memory of the martyr" will be installed at his native village.

Expressing displeasure over the Army not giving a guard of honour to Amritpal Singh, the CM said, "Such kind of discrimination will prove to be dangerous...it will hurt the morale of the Army personnel".

Cop shot dead in Bihar, two assailants gunned down

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
HAJIPUR, OCTOBER 16

TWO ARMED motorcyclists shot dead a constable during a vehicle checking drive in Bihar's Vaishali district on Monday, while both miscreants were later gunned down by the police, an official said.

Superintendent of Police Ravi Ranjan said the 35-year-old constable was fired upon by the two assailants at Ekra, close to the highway connecting Hajipur, the district headquarters, to Muzaffarpur, the divisional headquarters.

He was rushed to a hospital

where he breathed his last while other police officials at the spot, where checking of vehicles was underway, caught hold of the bikers and drove them towards the nearby Sarai police station.

The SP said the attackers, identified as Bittu Kumar and Upendra Kumar, tried to flee on the way to the police station by jumping out of the vehicle.

They continued to run even after being hit by bullets fired by the police to stop them.

Local villagers, who heard the gunshots, caught the two criminals and handed them over to the police. Both the attackers succumbed to injuries at a hospital, added the SP.

Man arrested in Karnataka for pro-Palestine video

BENGALURU: A 58-year-old man in Karnataka's Mangaluru has been arrested for allegedly posting a video in support of Hamas terrorist group.

The arrested has been identified as Zakir who works in a burial ground and is a member of Vishwa Khabarastan Sangha. His arrest came when he circulated a 30 seconds video on social media where he appealed to the public to pray for Hamas by calling them patriots. He also appealed to VKS members to offer their prayers for the victory of Palestine, Gaza and Hamas.

Pradeep, a Vishwa Hindu Parishad member had lodged a complaint with Bunder police demanding Zakir's arrest where he claimed that the statement was "threat" to national security and instigating hate.

The police have booked him under section 153 (a) (promot-

ing enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc.). He is presently in judicial custody. Zakir also faces seven cases against him which includes assault on public servant, house tress-pass, kidnapping and many more.

In another instance last week, 20-year-old Alam Basha was detained by Vijayanagar district police for posing a WhatsApp status with a picture supporting Palestine. Basha, a resident of Hospet who worked as a contract employee with district minority office as attender was taken by the police while he was at work. Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Basha said the police deleted all the WhatsApp status and other messages linked to Israel and Palestine. "I was taken to the Tehsil office and given an apology letter."



The Indian EXPRESS

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RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

OLYMPIC DREAMS

For India, 2036 is a magnificent challenge and milestone. The time to prepare for it starts now

A MONTH AFTER the successful G20 meet in New Delhi, a week after the country's record 100-plus medal haul at Asian Games, Prime Minister Narendra Modi scaled up the country's sporting and organisational ambitions. In a strong pitch to the top International Olympic Committee's (IOC) member in Mumbai, he made a formal declaration of India's interest in hosting the 2036 Olympics. This, he said, was the country's "age-old dream" and the "aspiration of 140 crore Indians". Early indicators say that Ahmedabad, the city with the world's biggest cricket stadium, in the state with the world's tallest statue, could be in the running for hosting the greatest show on earth. But the Olympics is not just about affirming India's new confidence on the global stage, or even putting in place sprawling sporting arenas with jaw-dropping design. Hosting a successful Olympics is a marathon with hurdles lining the way. Win the bid, put up a good show, manage a respectable medal's tally — all three boxes need to be ticked. None of them is easy. But of course, each one is worth the effort.

The Olympics isn't just an opportunity to give the venue a facelift, it can also help a city surmount long-standing predicaments and constraints and nudge residents to turn their face to the world. The Games come to cities that are cosmopolitan and that offer ease of movement and, in turn, they contribute to making them more open-minded — by loosening up dietary restrictions, for instance, as international travellers need to be catered to. Holding back visas, as has been the case for Pakistan cricket for the ongoing World Cup, too, won't get any points from the IOC. Clean air and sustainability are the new Olympics buzzwords. London, Rio and Paris played it smart and used the Olympics funds to beautify the city's underdeveloped areas and de-ghettoise its fringes. Hosting the Olympics also gives a chance to clean up sports administrations and implement long-pending reforms — national sports federations and the Indian Olympics Association (IOA) need a professional make-over and a self-sustaining model. Hosting the Games also puts the host country under a microscope in many more ways than just those that have to do with sports — all too often thin-skinned to international criticism, India will have to learn to be more tolerant.

A big medal haul can lift the spirits of a host nation and for that India will need to do better than ranking 48th on the medals tally at Tokyo in 2022. While streamlined government funding and planning has seen a significant upward shift in medal counts, much more needs to be done. India can't depend on just a handful of disciplines to get medals, there is need to start investing in heavy-medal sports like swimming, gymnastics and athletics. Making its presence felt at the grandest sporting show on earth won't be easy, and for India, the time to prepare for the magnificent challenge starts now.

FINETUNE THE BALANCE

In asking WhatsApp to divulge details of first originator, government touches off concerns and questions

A NEW FRONT is opening up in the battle between Big Tech and the state. According to a report in this paper, the central government is looking to send an order to Meta's WhatsApp under Section 4(2) of the Information Technology Rules, 2021, to divulge the identities of those who first shared certain videos on the social messaging platform. The videos under the scanner are deepfakes of politicians, not limited to those belonging to the ruling dispensation, but from political parties across the spectrum. While this is the first time that the central government will be directly sending an order to WhatsApp under this rule, it is not the first instance of WhatsApp being asked to provide such details. A few weeks ago, the Tripura High Court had, in fact, stayed an order by a trial court which had asked WhatsApp to reveal the originator of a chat that contained a fake resignation of Chief Minister Manik Saha.

Under Section 4(2) of the IT Rules, social media intermediaries that provide messaging services are required to identify the first originator of a message on their platform. However, this can be done only for the "purposes of prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution or punishment of an offence" that involves issues of sovereignty and integrity of India, security of the state, friendly relations with foreign states, and public order, among others. These caveats that have been drawn up can serve as checks on state action. For instance, in the case involving the Tripura Chief Minister, the High Court had held that "the extent of the threat to public order" was not specifically addressed by the trial court.

In times when misinformation campaigns are rampant, deepfakes can indeed be used to serve political ends. They can also be used to disturb peace between communities. This does pose a genuine problem and an argument can be made for lifting the veil of encryption in exceptional circumstances. However, it must be kept in mind that this is also a slippery slope. Ordering WhatsApp to divulge the identity of the first originator would involve breaking the platform's end-to-end encryption, which undermines the privacy of users. There is a legitimate concern that this provision could be weaponised by the government to silence its critics. Considering that state arbitrariness needs to be guarded against, a careful balance must be struck, leaning towards protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens, with the courts stepping in to reinforce the guardrails. A less careful and more heavy-handed approach could also have implications for the larger innovation system that the government is keen to promote.

A FAMOUS WIN

Comprehensively outplaying the cricket world champions, Afghanistan announce their arrival, own the moment

THE AFGHANISTAN CRICKET story is the quintessential underdog narrative — a team without a home, a side that barely existed at the stroke of the century, playing their second World Cup on a 14-run winless streak, comprehensively upending the world champions, outplaying them in every facet of the game. It's a moving human story — of war and displacement, sportsmen learning the game in refugee camps in Pakistan, using it as both a tool of escape and a path to a better life. It's a tale of revenge — the colonised beating the coloniser, of the still-deep wounds of Anglo-Afghan Wars and their destabilising effects. Most of all, it is a stirring story of sporting triumph, a symbolic moment in which Afghanistan announced their arrival on the grandest stage.

Afghanistan are not a rag-tag team of amateurs and semi-professionals, who after the World Cup, return to teaching in schools, or delivering posts, or fixing pipes. Most of them are full-time cricketers who globe-trot round the year, featuring in leagues, from West Indies to India, Bangladesh to the US. Take, for instance, off-spinner Mohammed Nabi — he has played for 32 T20 franchises in the world. Or their talisman, Rashid Khan, who has offered his services to 22. Add the countries they have travelled for ODI tournaments, and their passports would be thicker than those of their counterparts in more established teams. Rashid is without argument the superstar of Afghanistan cricket, the one who could stroll into any all-time T20 eleven.

Life is unpredictable in the country, but interest for the game has shot up. There is early exposure to big tournaments, access to foreign leagues and heroes like Nabi, Rashid, Najeeb and Rahmanullah Gurbaz. New ones are rising, like Fazalhaq Farooqi, Ikram Alikhil and Naveen-ul-Haq. There is a fearless brand of cricket, owing as much to the hardships they endured as their exposure to highly competitive leagues. The defeat of England, thus, is a deeply symbolic moment with the potential for far-reaching consequences.



SHREYA SHREE

IN 2021, INDIA revised the upper gestational limit for legal abortion to 24 weeks for specific categories of "vulnerable women", removing them altogether in case of substantial foetal abnormalities diagnosed by a medical board. This amendment came in the backdrop of several writ petitions seeking judicial authorisation for termination of pregnancy filed before the Supreme Court and High Courts. Earlier, the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act 1971 allowed registered medical practitioners (RMP) to terminate pregnancies on the permitted grounds up to 20 weeks of gestation.

Even after the 2021 amendment, women continue to approach the courts in case of breach of the new gestational limits or denial of abortion care by providers. On Monday, the SC rejected a petition for termination of pregnancy at 26 weeks filed by a married woman, whose pregnancy went undetected due to lactational amenorrhoea. The petitioner's last pregnancy was a year ago and she is undergoing treatment for postpartum psychosis. A bench comprising Justices Hima Kohli and BV Nagarathna had earlier allowed her petition, directing AIIMS to carry out the procedure.

Studies prior to the 2021 amendment, indicate that in most cases women approached the courts upon crossing the 20-week gestational barrier. In its report analysing MTP cases decided by HCs between May 2019 and August 2020, Pratigya Campaign notes that 74 per cent of the 243 cases studied were filed post-20 weeks (42 between 25-28 weeks, 8 after 28 weeks).

In an overwhelming majority of these cases (96 per cent), abortion was sought on grounds of foetal abnormalities or rape. A possible reason for this is "pre-screening" of the petition by stakeholders assisting the woman (such as doctors/lawyers), to assess its chances of obtaining a favourable opinion from the medical board or judges. In our field work, we learnt that since courts are more likely to grant permission to minor rape victims or in case of certain foetal abnormalities, such petitions were readily filed, whereas "borderline cases" were not sent to courts to avoid "adverse precedents" and "corruption of jurisprudence".

But women may need a late-term abortion in several other circumstances, including structural barriers to accessing abortion at early stages; vulnerable situations (domestic violence, sexual assault, prisons); changes in

circumstances post-pregnancy (including partner support, financial situation, education and employment); physical and mental health conditions; and late detection of pregnancy due to lactational amenorrhoea or menopause, among others. The 2021 amendment secures abortion access for only some women who qualify under the prescribed categories (or can be interpreted as such) subject to the gestational limit.

While an RMP can terminate a woman's pregnancy at any time if it is immediately necessary to save her life, fear of criminal prosecution often deters from providing abortion care, leading women to approach the courts as a "last resort" for lawful abortion. Women who do not wish to or are unable to approach the courts end up carrying the pregnancy to term or avail unlawful and unsafe abortion.

For those who can cross the initial hurdles to accessing courts and file a petition, the journey through the legal and medical systems is often arduous, frustrating and dehumanising. Women must undergo medical examination by a panel of doctors even when multiple medical reports are appended to the petition. Repeated medical examinations (including psychiatric/psychological evaluations) are not uncommon when the medical opinion is vague or becomes dated during the proceedings. In the courtroom, lawyers often resort to graphic descriptions to help the judges visualise the seriousness of their client's situation. Last week's conversations in the SC circling around the petitioner's mental illness claims and repeated suggestions for counselling exemplify this. Despite putting themselves up for public scrutiny, fear and apprehensions about uncertainties of the outcome remain.

While it is true that Indian law is more liberal in comparison to other countries, it does not reflect the international human rights standards and recent best practices on abortion. Last year, in the landmark decision of *X vs Principal Secretary, Health and Family Welfare Department, Government of NCT*, the SC acknowledged that the MTP Act is a provider-centric legislation, where the opinion of the RMP on whether the grounds specified under the Act are satisfied is "decisive" and in case of denial of abortion services, women are "compelled to approach courts or seek abortion in unsafe conditions".

In its latest guidelines on abortion care, the WHO recommends that States fully decriminalise abortion and remove grounds-based

regulation and gestational limits to abortion (amongst others) to ensure non-discriminatory and equal abortion care to all. The guidelines recommend clinical best practices for safely terminating a pregnancy at any gestational age. The WHO considers grounds-based control and gestational limits on abortion as "medically unnecessary policy barriers", which are not evidence based.

In *X*, the SC gave a purposive interpretation to the MTP Rules, allowing unmarried women to access abortion up to 24 weeks. It adopted a rights-based approach and drew attention to "social realities" and lived experiences of women, structural and legal barriers to abortion, objects and purposes of the MTP Act, constitutional guarantees, and India's obligations under the international human rights law.

Justice Nagarathna, in the divided opinion delivered in the recent case, invoked *X* to bring the focus back to the primary consideration in the case — women's right to life and reproductive autonomy. She emphasised that an unwanted pregnancy, irrespective of the woman's circumstances, has the "same consequence" — she does not wish to continue the pregnancy. She held that forcing a woman to continue a pregnancy endangering her health would be violative of Articles 21 and 15 (3).

But ultimately, this petitioner has failed to receive a treatment like *X*. While in *X*, the Court had acknowledged the "deleterious" impact of an unwanted pregnancy on the physical and mental health of a woman, here it is treated as a mere nine-month episode which an unwilling woman can and must endure. The petitioner's assessment of her ability to continue with the pregnancy ("her reality") has been substituted with the court's and medical board's opinion of her circumstances.

The disproportionate impact of grounds-based regulation and gestational limits to abortion became apparent during the hearings in this case. At several points, judges and the State tried to distinguish the case from *X* (an unmarried woman), or one involving a minor rape victim, or substantial foetal abnormality. Are some reasons for seeking abortion more "valid" than others? In attempting to pigeon-hole this case into one of the grounds, the courtroom discourse has created "artificial distinctions" much like the one struck down in *X*.

The writer teaches at NLSIU, Bengaluru

It's not just nine months

A woman's assessment of her ability to continue with her pregnancy should be given primacy. It wasn't

Justice Nagarathna, in the divided opinion delivered in the recent case, invoked *X* to bring the focus back to the primary consideration in the case — women's right to life and reproductive autonomy. She emphasised that an unwanted pregnancy, irrespective of the woman's circumstances, has the 'same consequence' — she does not wish to continue the pregnancy. She held that forcing a woman to continue a pregnancy endangering her health would be violative of Articles 21 and 15 (3).



SHAFHEY KIDWAI

SIR SYED AHMED Khan is rightly lauded for propagating modern education among Muslims and advocating several reforms for the community. But he is also faulted for siding with the country's colonial rulers and doing little for women's education.

Sir Syed's 125th birth anniversary coincides with the passing of the Women's Reservation Bill. It is time to analyse if the great reformer stood for women's social, educational, cultural and religious emancipation. One has to revisit his writings and actions that prompted historian David Lelyveld to describe Sir Syed as "hardly a man of modern ideas that we usually take him for".

Despite showing a marked inclination for liberal values and a rational outlook that culminated in setting up the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh in 1875, Sir Syed had conservative views on women's education and believed in a "disorganised tutor-based home education" for them. "Female education means much more than... imparting rudimentary knowledge of arithmetic, history, geography and the like to them. It refers to a process of training that enables them to fulfil the duties of family life," he wrote. Education, according to him, seriously jeopardised women's ultimate purpose of life — marriage. Sir Syed argued, "It is my cherished desire that exemplary and

A CONFLICTED MODERNIST

Sir Syed's views on women's education were at odds with his reformist position

His interactions with women in Europe made Sir Syed revise his views on women's education, somewhat. His travelogue has several appreciative comments on gender equality and the centrality of women to human progress. After he visited the continent, Sir Syed was convinced that the rejection of women's education by Muslims played a big role in the community's decline.

good quality education be imparted to women, but in the present pitiable conditions, getting girls educated is not prudent. They cannot live without marriage and will not get educated husbands... Moreover, if they tie the knot with uneducated and uncivilised men, their lives will be filled with agony and misery".

It is intriguing that Sir Syed threw his weight behind gender segregation. He pitched for purdah-centric home education for women. The British government opened co-education schools and started educational institutions exclusively for girls. Along with Bharatendu Harishchandra, another prominent north Indian intellectual, Sir Syed criticised these moves. In his seminal work, *Causes of Indian Revolt (1858)*, he concluded that coeducation was one of the major causes of public unrest against colonial rule. People, irrespective of faith, disapproved of women's education and slackening gender segregation in educational institutions, he said.

These views, no doubt, betray traces of a feudal mindset. Sir Syed was, however, a strong advocate of women's empowerment and a critic of social practices that reduced possibilities of progress. *The Aligarh Institute Gazette*, a multilingual journal started by him, campaigned against female infanticide, polygamy, child marriage, sati, segregation

of widows, and poverty-induced marriages of young girls with older men.

Mary Carpenter, a British philanthropist and proponent of female education, visited India four times between 1866 and 1876. On her first visit, Sir Syed welcomed her by writing an editorial. Her commitment to getting Indian women into public life by providing modern education to them impressed him.

The reformer visited England in 1869-70 and his account of the visit is replete with appreciation for the contribution of women in the collective life of England. His interactions with women in Europe made Sir Syed revise his views on women's education, somewhat. His travelogue has several appreciative comments on gender equality and the centrality of women to human progress. He was, perhaps, the first Muslim traveller to admire the freedom enjoyed by women in large parts of Europe. After he visited the continent, Sir Syed was convinced that the rejection of women's education by Muslims played a big role in the decline of the community.

However, he did not completely go back on his initial advocacy of home-tutor-based education for women.

The writer, a bilingual critic, is the author of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan: Reason, religion and nation



OCTOBER 17, 1983, FORTY YEARS AGO

ISRAEL-LEBANON CLASH

ABOUT 100,000 MUSLIM worshippers battled Israeli troops in Southern Lebanon. Five vehicles were set ablaze and the troops fired at the crowd, killing or wounding 10 persons. The clash came barely hours after Sheikh Mohammed Shamseddin, spiritual leader of the Muslim Shiites, declared "civil resistance" in the predominantly Shiite south against Israeli occupation.

President, sharply reacted to the accusations Prime Minister Indira Gandhi levelled against the Opposition. He asserted there was nothing wrong in the opposition parties trying to overthrow the government. While he did not think that Emergency would be imposed again, he said the PM might try to impose a mini-emergency like the one in Punjab.

BLAST IN PUNJAB

TWO PERSONS WERE injured in a bomb explosion in Durga Mandir in Ludhiana and one person was injured in a shoot-out in Amritsar district. Two assailants reportedly sporting

trimmed beards lobbed a grenade into the central hall of the temple about 25 feet inside the main entrance.

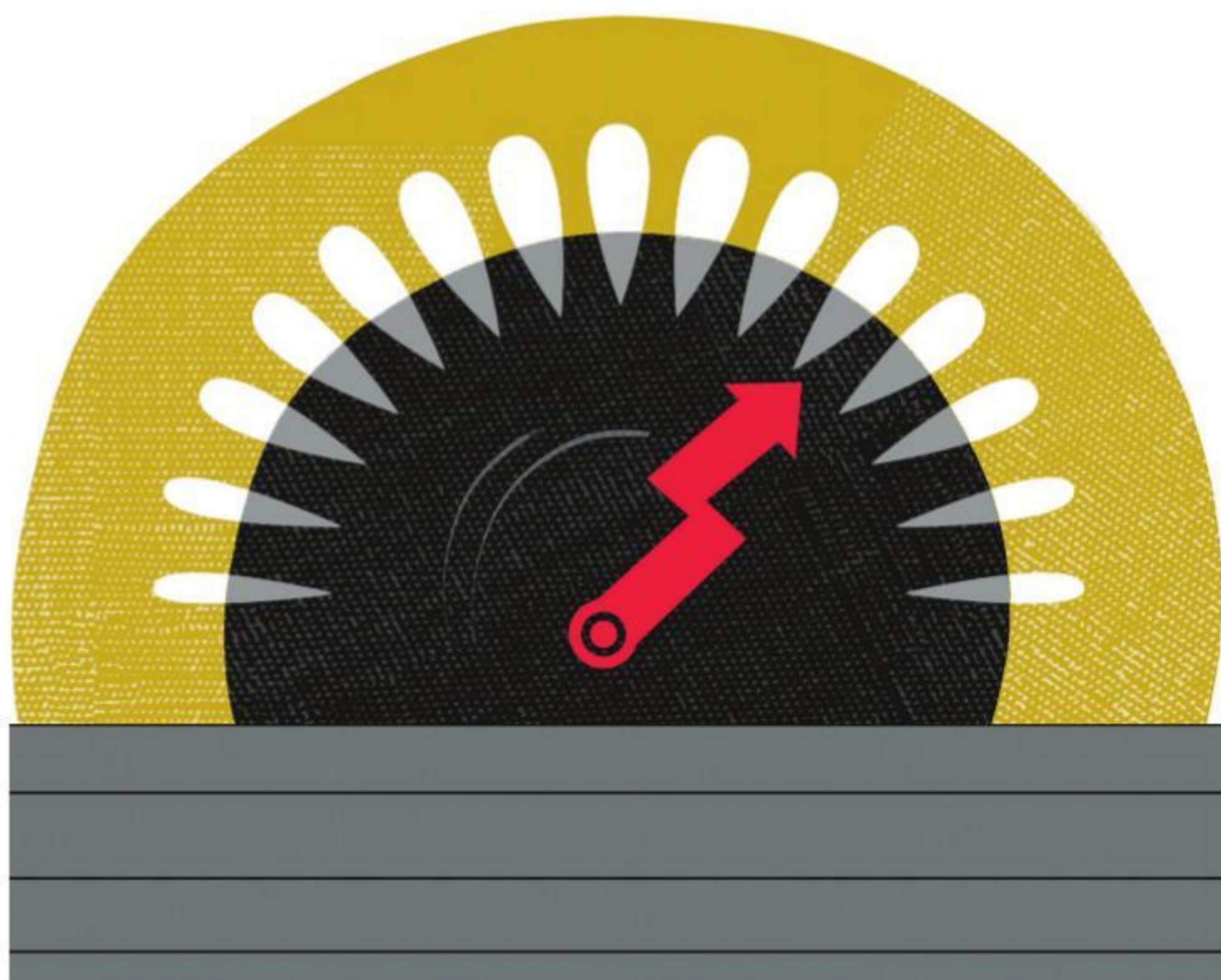
MAHARASHTRA RIOTS

FOUR PERSONS WERE killed, three of them in police firing, and about 30 others injured as rioting broke out near a place of worship in Maharashtra. Heavy stone-throwing on a Duashehra procession led to the riot and police firing. At least one person died in the riot. In the firing, two persons died on the spot and one in hospital. Ten others were hospitalised with bullet injuries.

13 THE IDEAS PAGE

On the upswing

Near normal monsoon, government's thrust on capital spending and increase in credible borrowing are reasons for optimism



CR Sasikumar



Soumya Kanti Ghosh

THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY Fund has recently upgraded India's GDP growth forecast to 6.3 per cent for 2023-24, up 40 basis points from its April forecast. The RBI's forecast remains unchanged at 6.5 per cent. While the latest geopolitical conflict in West Asia may have opened a Pandora's box, we still believe the Indian economy could grow at a faster pace than expected. Our growth projection for the full year is at 6.7 per cent.

Let us first assess the economic momentum in the second quarter (July-September). While the RBI is projecting growth at 6.5 per cent, our tracking of the latest leading indicators suggests the possibility of the economy growing at a faster pace. The long-term trends suggest that whenever the percentage of leading indicators showing acceleration in a quarter crosses the threshold value of 70 per cent, the GDP growth numbers surprise on the upside. Currently, this is at 80 per cent, increasing the possibility of growth surpassing 6.5 per cent in Q2 FY24. The nominal GDP growth could well be in the range of 8-8.5 per cent and given that the GDP deflator is currently tracking at 1.5-2 per cent, a 6.5 per cent or higher growth looks eminently achievable.

The reasons for our optimism are four-fold.

First, the monsoon. While the overall rainfall was 6 per cent below the expected during the monsoon season (due to 36 per cent deficit rains in August), the spatial distribution is quite even. Out of 36 states/UTs, 29 received normal/above-normal rains. The SBI Monsoon Impact Index, which considers the spatial distribution, has a value of 89.5, faring much better than the full season index value of 60.2 in 2022.

Second, the thrust on capital expenditure continues. During the first five months of the current year, the capital expenditure of the states as a percentage of the budgeted target is at 25 per cent, while the Centre's is at 37 per cent. Nearly all states are on a spending spree, with Andhra Pradesh leading the pack, spending as much as 51 per cent of the budgeted amount.

Third, the robust new companies' registration depicts strong growth intentions. Around 93,305 companies were registered in the first half of 2023-24 as compared to 59,241 five years back. It is interesting to note that the average daily registration of new companies increased to 622 in 2023-24 (an increase of 58 per cent) from 395 in 2018-19.

Fourth, what is revealing is the continued traction in credit growth. All scheduled commercial banks' (SCB's) credit growth (year-on-year) has been accelerating since early 2022. Aggregate deposits grew by 13.2 per cent and credit by 20 per cent (without HDFC it was 15.3 per cent, but still broadly similar to FY22) till September. In the coming months, we expect credit demand to remain robust due to the festive season.

There are many interesting facets of this continued traction in credit growth. The combined incremental growth in assets and liabilities of SCB for the nine-year period

that ended in March is at Rs 186 lakh crore. If we compare this incremental growth with the previous decade that ended March 2014, it was Rs 119 lakh crore. If we include the 2023-24 trends, the incremental growth for the banking system for the current decade ending March 2024 could be close to Rs 225 lakh crore — 1.9 times higher than the last decade. This incremental growth, even after accounting for the exceptional years of the Covid pandemic, is staggering.

We believe what is driving this credit growth is the rapid formalisation of the economy over the past decade. Those with no credit history are getting significantly integrated with the banking system. A back-of-the-envelope calculation suggests that the number of beneficiaries who have been either new to credit/deposit in the last nine years is at least 40 per cent on average (of the new credit accounts added during this decade), contributing to at least 10 per cent of incremental credit growth. This is why we believe that there is a revolution at the bottom of the pyramid and this is likely to sustain the credit growth.

Doubts have been expressed about the jump in the outstanding credit card portfolio and the unsecured portfolio. But what does the data say? Household debt as measured by credit card outstanding per credit card in India has been either static or declining both in nominal and real terms (after adjusted for CPI inflation) in 2023. In nominal terms, the outstanding per credit card rose by 13 per cent in August, down from 24 per cent in January. The real outstanding per credit card growth in August declined to 5.8 per cent from 16.4 per cent in January. We thus believe that the hulla-

We believe what is driving this credit growth is the rapid formalisation of the economy over the past decade. Those with no credit history are getting significantly integrated with the banking system. A back-of-the-envelope calculation suggests that the number of beneficiaries who have been either new to credit/deposit in the last nine years is at least 40 per cent on average (of the new credit accounts added during this decade), contributing to at least 10 per cent of incremental credit growth. This is why we believe that there is a revolution at the bottom of the pyramid and this is likely to sustain the credit growth.

balloo about growth in unsecured loans is uncalled for now.

In fact, through schemes like PM SVANidhi, credible borrowers can have continued access to the financial system in the form of repeat loans (second loan at double the first loan, third loan at 5 times the first loan amount of Rs 10,000) provided that they have a good credit repayment history.

Programmes like Jan Dhan Yojana allow banks to meet the demand for credit for households that were operating outside the formal banking sector. We believe that the aspirations of such households are much stronger now and there is nothing to get alarmed at such trends.

Lastly, this sustained healthy credit growth could continue to propel the economic momentum across the country.

The ASCB data for the period 2000-2010 indicates that bank credit grew at an average of 1.86 times of nominal GDP growth, during a period of high growth. However, in 2010-2020, the relationship weakened, and credit to GDP growth declined to 0.99 times, largely because of the severe asset quality issues of banks post the 2008 global crisis. The relationship broke down during the pandemic years of 2020-21 and 2021-22 as GDP contracted.

In 2023-24, the credit to nominal GDP ratio may end up being around 1.7 times, up from 0.93 times in 2022-23, boosting the flow of funds to the broader economy, and helping to sustain the momentum.

If the banking sector's indicators are taken as a new normal, we are in for a sustained period of growth.

The writer is Group Chief Economic Advisor, State Bank of India. Views are personal

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"It would seem as if New Delhi wants anyone whom it suspects has played a role in any one of the nationalist movements active within the territories under its control killed. There must be severe consequences imposed on it."

— DAWN, PAKISTAN

An unwinnable war

The true aim of the attack by Hamas is to start another cycle of violence between Israelis and Palestinians and derail peace efforts



Sarjan Shah

THE RECENT EVENTS in southern Israel need no further description. As with most modern tragedies, live video online provided the world with a front-seat view of the horrors of that first day. Israel's response once the initial impact of the strategic surprise had been overcome has been as expected. The country has united, and Israel's special forces and front-line combat units have made quick work of the 1,500-odd Hamas militants who had managed to penetrate deep into Israel. Spokespersons of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) have made it clear that their mandate now is to "annihilate" not only Hamas' military capacity but also its "capacity to govern Gaza". They also reiterated the IDF's commitment towards the ordinary civilians in Gaza, with whom Israel has no fight and who, therefore, will not themselves be targets.

This second objective, of destroying Hamas' ability to govern the Gaza strip, is a shift in Israel's immediate, explicit goals. What does it mean to say Hamas will no longer govern Gaza? Who will govern the two million people of that territory? Israel? Hamas has given Israel the choice between a bad war and an even worse peace.

For a number of important reasons, Israel's paper military superiority will not mean a decisive conflict ending with a quick peace and the absence of Hamas. Consider that Gaza consists of a mere 139 square miles of land bounded by the ocean and a three-sided, closed border. Also consider that of the two million Gazans, over 5,00,000 are men of military age who have been fed a near-constant stream of anti-Semitic Israel-hate, while having null economic, social or cultural opportunities. All they have experienced of Israel or Israelis has been in their unique context. Consider finally that small arms, IEDs and even various forms of hand-held heavy weaponry are all probably easily accessible to this population.

War-gaming Israel's options and the build-up of ground forces that is already occurring, a ground assault on Gaza is highly likely. The question that remains is what the final objectives and victory conditions of such an operation would be — and that is the terrain on which things get very complicated. Throughout the history of warfare, cities have been natural strongholds. Stalingrad in the Second World War saw Hitler's divisions bleed themselves to death in endless, brutal, urban combat. More recently, operations against ISIS were the most daunting when Iraqi and American forces had to retake cities like Mosul, which may have been an instructive case. Unfortunately, Gaza isn't Mosul.

By and large, the Iraqi civilians of Mosul hated ISIS, and cooperated with them only under extreme duress. These civilians also had multiple directions to try to escape the city at various points during the fighting as avenues of exit opened amidst the fluidity

of the frontlines. Despite these conditions, Mosul was hell — being described as the "City of Death" in a memoir written by one American veteran of that battle. Civilians suffered endlessly as collateral damage and their deliberate use by ISIS fighters to camouflage movements, hide, extract supplies and act as human shields was widespread.

Gaza is much worse. Due to its geographical position and highly constrained extent, Gaza is already a very densely populated urban area, with a population with no opportunity for escape when the fighting reaches the streets. This is also a population that largely supports or sympathises with the efforts of the military wing of Hamas. Medical aid, rescue, supplies and ammunition, observation of Israeli movements — these are all critical support functions that the young children, women, the infirm and the old can perform during an Israeli ground operation. And Israel will face in direct combat not merely Hamas' military wing, but up to five hundred thousand radicalised military-age males who are defending their homes from their greatest enemies. These will also be people who have recently suffered losses and devastation in the Israeli airstrikes of the last few days. Expect every street, every building, every square to be contested. Expect IEDs in every corner, suicide bombers, snipers, and booby traps. Expect gruelling urban combat with a civilian population motivated to help one side, hate the other and having no options for escape and everything to fight for.

Given the best army in the world, Gaza may still be an impossible place to occupy after the decades-long admixture of some of the world's most volatile ingredients. A radicalised, poor, geographically constrained population with no good options but to fight is a recipe for a bloodbath. This implies that Israel cannot — in good conscience and without utter disregard for the civilians of Gaza — undertake a ground operation whose endgame is total occupation of the territory and future governance by Israel. Instead, expect devastation from the air and several weeks, even months, of active Israeli ground incursions deep into various parts of Gaza as targets of interest and importance are systematically reduced, at the end of which, the IDF will withdraw.

None of the above paints anything but an ultimate victory for the ideas and attitudes that Hamas represents. This attack's true aim is simply to recommence another cycle of violence between Israelis and Palestinians and prevent peace overtures from gaining momentum. Hamas has no interest in peace between Israel and Palestine — their own relevance, the power of their false narratives, would be shattered. In maintaining a call for the destruction of Israel and its replacement by a single Palestinian state, Hamas' true aim is to generate a forever-war. In this, they will undoubtedly have been successful, as another generation of Israelis and Palestinians learn the meaning of loss and hate. It is impossible to imagine a sustainable peace after whatever form of military operation Israel undertakes. The world, reeling already from the war in Ukraine, has become an even more dangerous place.

The writer is an alumnus of London School of Economics, Cambridge and Harvard, and lives and works in Mumbai

Doublespeak on terror

India needs to make it clear to Canada that it must course correct



T S Tirumurti

THE RECENT STATEMENT by India that Canada has a "growing reputation as a safe haven for terrorists, for extremists, and for organised crime" and that "they are being politically condoned" has brought the issue of terrorism back to the centre stage.

We are now witnessing four broad, dangerous trends in international terrorism.

The first is that the global fight against terror is getting increasingly fragmented after two decades of opposing it collectively. September 11, 2001, was a defining moment in the fight against terrorism. Before 9/11, the world was divided into what I call "your terrorist" and "my terrorist". But 9/11 proved that nobody was immune to terror and it soon became a fight against "our terrorists". Twenty years on, we are in danger of drifting back.

The recent UN Global Terrorism Index 2023 (GTI) states clearly that "ideologically motivated terrorism continues to be the most common type of terrorism in the West" and that all of it can be attributed to far-right terrorism. For example, Europe has identified right-wing violent attacks as its main terrorist threat. The US is currently dealing with "racially/ethnically motivated violent extremism" (REMVE). Now, of course, the focus of the West is on the Ukraine conflict. China has also focused only on "their" terrorist threats. Its blocking of India's attempt to list terrorists under the UNSC resolution 1267 sanctions list is an example of how Beijing's geopolitical concerns

override the global fight against terror.

But the most dangerous example of this fragmentation is Canada. It has implied that "our terrorists", which are Khalistani terrorists on their soil, are "not their terrorists". Ottawa is, in effect, going on the dangerous path of legitimising terrorism by not recognising it.

The second contemporary trend, geographically speaking, is that Africa has been the region where the virulence of terrorism has been increasing exponentially. The UNGTI 2023 points out that the Sahel region in sub-Saharan Africa is now what it calls the "epi-centre of terrorism", with the deaths in the region constituting 43 per cent of the global total in 2022. Four of the 10 most impacted countries by terrorism last year were in the Sahel region, the Index says, with the deadliest terrorist groups being Islamic State (IS) and its affiliates, Al-Shabaab, Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), among others.

It is, therefore, no surprise that Sahel countries are already facing military takeovers and violent reactions against their former colonial masters. Geopolitics and governments are being changed in the face of rising terror attacks in Africa.

The GTI 2023 also indicates that South Asia remains the region with the worst average GTI score in 2022.

The third trend relates to new and emerging technologies for terrorists' purposes. The landmark Delhi Declaration on Countering

the Use of New and Emerging Technologies for Terrorist Purposes of October 2022 brought to the fore three key areas — countering terrorist exploitation of information and communication technologies; threats posed by terrorists' use of unmanned aerial systems (drones); and countering the financing of terrorism.

Proliferation in online activities, social media, misuse of AI, synthetic biology and 3D printing, modern fundraising, payment technologies, etc, are being used for recruitment, radicalisation and committing terror. The UN GTI Index 2023 points out that 65 non-state actors are now able to deploy drones for terror attacks, arms trafficking etc, which can be easily accessible in public marketplaces.

The fourth contemporary trend relates to the politicisation of religiophobia to justify terror.

The UN and the rest of the world have traditionally condemned phobias against the three Abrahamic religions, namely anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and Christianophobia.

The use of Islamophobia as an excuse or justification to condone terror is worrying. This was evident in the way Pakistan blocked India's amendment to the draft text of the 2023 Global Counter Terrorism Strategy (GCTS) adopted at the UN in July by threatening to introduce a reference to "Islamaphobia" in the text. This addition would have provided Islamophobia as a justification for terrorist acts. India refused to

compromise and disassociated itself from the entire GCTS 2023 and charged that the "arbitrary" move to "pick and choose" was disturbing and uncalled for.

This fight against religiophobia is also selective. There has been a lack of recognition of the growing attacks and hatred against non-Abrahamic religions, including against Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists. The continuing attacks on temples and gurdwaras, forcible conversion of minority communities in Pakistan and our neighbourhood are well known. This hatred has spread to the West, including to the US, Australia, the UK and Canada, with even the PM and the External Affairs Minister being compelled to take the issue up with their counterparts. It is far more extensive than is believed.

In Canada, three pernicious forces have come together — terrorism, Hinduophobia and separatism. As India said, Canada nurtures "politically condoned hate crimes". This has serious implications for a multicultural, pluralistic and democratic country like India.

To address the four dangerous trends in international terrorism as well as India-Canada relations, New Delhi needs to seize the moment and make it clear to the Canadian government that it has to change its course of action. There is no better time than now to do so.

The writer is former Indian Ambassador to the UN in New York

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WEST IN WEST ASIA EMPOWER TEACHERS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'A path in the crisis' (IE, October 16). If the Hamas attack on Israel is despicable, so is Israel's "retaliation" against Gaza. People on both sides are victims of the political manoeuvres of the West. India has responded to the issue maturely. PM Modi has rightly condemned the Hamas attack. But the Indian government has also clarified that it continues to support the Palestinian cause. World leaders must know that an act of injustice somewhere is a threat to justice everywhere. India should strive to broker peace through diplomacy in the interest of global peace.

SS Paul, Nadia

A NEW METHOD

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Keep water at the centre' (IE, October 16). The writer must be congratulated. Measuring irrigation water productivity is a sterling example of "out-of-the-box thinking". This method has the potential to re-balance the Indian economy. Implementing mechanisms to pay farmers a "Kuran Price" — at least 50 per cent of the product's market price for all primary produce, can create significant changes in the farm economy.

Vinod Dhall, Gurgaon

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Helping the teacher' (IE, October 16). The primary duty of a teacher is to impart education. The smooth functioning of state policies and conduction of state surveys should be delegated to other relevant authorities. Bihar already has a poor teacher-student ratio, and tedious non-teaching tasks add to the problem. The state government must take necessary steps to provide a quality teaching environment.

Harshita, Jammu

LET CENSUS HAPPEN

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Don't count, they say' (IE, October 16). The controversy over a caste census is because of the demand to include OBCs in the census. The Centre's refusal to do so defies common sense, given that 27 per cent reservation is given to them in education and jobs on arbitrary grounds. That apart, many welfare policies cannot be properly framed without accurate estimation of the intended beneficiaries. The argument that a census will widen caste schisms is fallacious. Reservation is a product of caste discrimination, not the other way round. This argument is a veiled attempt to hide upper caste hegemony in all walks of life.

L R Murmu, New Delhi

14 THE WORLD

2020 ELECTION OVERTURN CASE

JUDGE IMPOSES LIMITED GAG ORDER ON TRUMP

The order restricts former US President from making public statements attacking the witnesses, prosecutors or court staff involved in the criminal case in which he stands accused of conspiring to overturn the 2020 elections. The judge did not immediately address how she will enforce her gag order. **NYT**

RELIEF TRUCKS STRANDED AT EGYPT BORDER
as Israeli siege hospitals without fuels

ISRAEL EXTENDS SAFE PASSAGE FOR THIRD DAY,
says 600,000 have so far fled Gaza City

ONLY ONE LITRE OF WATER PER DAY
for Gazans taking refuge at UN shelters

No aid yet, Gaza hospitals near breaking point

Israel's Shin Bet owns up security failure leading to Hamas attack: 'Probe after war'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
GAZA STRIP, OCTOBER 16

PALESTINIANS IN besieged Gaza crowded into hospitals and schools on Monday, seeking shelter and running low on food and water. Over a million people have fled homes ahead of an expected Israeli ground invasion aimed at destroying Hamas after it ramped through southern Israel.

As enclave's food, water and medicine supplies dwindled, all eyes were on the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt, where trucks carrying badly needed aid have been waiting for days as mediators press for ceasefire that would allow them enter Gaza and allow foreigners to leave.

Rafah, Gaza's only connection to Egypt, was shut nearly a week ago because of Israeli airstrikes.

Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said Israel "has not taken a position to open the crossing from the Gaza side". The Israeli government did not respond to a request for comment.

Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians sheltering in UN facilities are on less than 1 litre of water per day. Hospitals warn they are on the verge of collapse, with emergency generators that power machines like ventilators and incubators down to about one day of fuel and supplies of medicine almost exhausted.

For a third day, Israel's military announced a safe corridor for people to move from north to south between 8 am and noon. It said over 600,000 have already evacuated Gaza City area.

Hospitals in Gaza are expected to run out of generator fuel in the next 24 hours. According to the UN, Gaza's sole power plant shut down for lack of fuel after Israel completely sealed off the 40-km territory after the Hamas attack.

The World Health Organization said hospitals are "overflowing" as people seek safety. It said water shortages



Palestinians wounded in Israeli bombardment of the Gaza Strip arrive at a hospital in Khan Younis on Monday. AP

Biden considering Israel trip shortly: US official

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 16



US President Joe Biden

caused by Israel's decision to cut off water supplies, combined with a lack of fuel for pumps and desalination stations, put thousands of hospital patients at risk.

The UN health agency said life-saving assistance for 300,000 patients is currently awaiting entry through Rafah.

The UN agency for Palestinian refugees said it has been forced to ration water in schools and other facilities that have been turned into shelters, giving people just 1 litre a day to cover all their needs.

Meanwhile, the head of Israel's Shin Bet security service has taken responsibility for the October 7 Hamas rampage.

In a message sent to Shin Bet workers, Ronen Bar wrote that "despite a number of actions we took, unfortunately, on Saturday we were unable to create enough early warning to prevent the attack." "As the person at the head of the organization, the responsibility for that is on me," he added. "There will be time for investigation — now is a time for war."

PRESIDENT JOE Biden is considering a trip to Israel in the coming days but no travel has been finalized, a senior administration official said Sunday. It would be a symbol of sympathy and support following the attack by Hamas.

A trip would be a chance for Biden to personally affirm to the Israeli people the US is standing firm behind them.

But it would come amid growing fears that a looming Israeli move into Gaza could spark a wider war with devastating humanitarian consequences.

Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has returned to Israel for the second time in less than a week to consult with sen-

ior Israeli officials about discussions he had with Arab leaders over Israel's war with Hamas. Blinken arrived in Tel Aviv Monday after a six-nation tour during which he heard concerns of Arab leaders about an impending Israeli invasion of Gaza. Meanwhile, PM Benjamin Netanyahu has invited President Biden to Israel, according to an Israeli spokeswoman. "We are truly grateful for the support and the united front against Hamas," said Tal Heinrich, spokeswoman for the Prime Minister's office.

DEATH, DESTRUCTION

ISRAEL PALESTINE

TOTAL DEAD

1,400+

2,750+

■ Israel says it has killed at least six senior leaders of Hamas in a campaign of retaliatory airstrikes.

■ Over 450 deaths, 850 injuries were recorded in Gaza Sunday, Palestinian authorities said.

TOTAL INJURED

1,000+

9,700+

■ Military has ordered residents from 28 Israeli communities close to border to evacuate.

■ Two Palestinian students of a college in Pakistan's Punjab were injured in a knife attack.

OTHER LOSSES

■ Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said on Monday that six of his country's citizens had died in Israel and 10 more were missing.

■ Eleven Gazan journalists have been killed and more than 20 others wounded since October 7, according to the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate.



Palestinian boys near the rubble of a building destroyed in Israeli airstrike in Nuseirat camp Monday. AP

Cash, crypto: Global network funding Hamas

HADEEL AL SAYEGH & JOHN O' DONNELL
LONDON, DUBAI, OCTOBER 16

PALESTINIAN MILITANT group Hamas uses a global financing network to funnel support from charities and friendly nations, passing cash through Gaza tunnels or using cryptocurrencies to bypass international sanctions, according to experts and officials.

Earlier this week, Israeli police said they froze a Barclays bank account the authorities said was linked to Hamas fundraising and

blocked cryptocurrency accounts used to gather donations, without specifying how many accounts or the value of the assets.

The move provided a glimpse of a complex financial web, some legitimate, much hidden, that underpins Hamas, or the Islamic Resistance Movement, and its government in the Gaza Strip, which it has run since 2007.

Matthew Levitt, a former US official specialised in counterterrorism, estimated the bulk of Hamas' budget of more than \$300

million came from taxes on business, as well as from countries including Iran and Qatar or charities.

Last February, the State Department said that Hamas raises funds in other Gulf countries and gets donations from Palestinians, other expatriates and own charities.

Reuters was unable to reach Hamas for comment.

Hamas, sanctioned as a terrorist organization by the US and countries like Britain, had increasingly used cryptocurrencies, credit cards or contrived trade

deals to avoid mounting international restrictions, Levitt said.

Blockchain researchers TRM Labs said this week in a research note that crypto fundraising has increased following rounds of violence involving Hamas. After fighting in May 2021, Hamas-controlled crypto addresses received over \$400,000, TRM Labs said.

By last year, Hamas had established a secret network of companies managing \$500 million of investments in firms from Turkey to Saudi Arabia, the US Treasury said, announcing sanctions on the firms in May, 2022. **REUTERS**

South Korea to hold its largest defence show to boost global sales

JOSH SMITH
SEOONGNAM, OCTOBER 16

SOUTH KOREA will kick off its largest-ever defence exhibition this week, as the country seeks to turbocharge its arms sales and showcase a rare appearance by a US nuclear-capable bomber.

The biennial Seoul International Aerospace and Defense Exhibition (ADEX) opens its doors on Tuesday, with organisers saying there will be more companies than ever and an unprecedented flyby from a US-52 bomber, which will make a rare landing at an airbase elsewhere on the peninsula.

This year's show is designed to help South Korea to reach its goal of becoming the world's fourth-largest arms exporter, Lee Jong-ho, chief of the organising office, told a briefing on Monday. More than 450 senior de-

fence officials from 54 countries are expected to attend, along with hundreds of thousands of other professionals and members of the public, he said.

"This is an opportunity for Korea's defence industry to draw international attention and take a giant leap forward," Lee said.

The Korean government has set a goal of reaching \$20 billion in defence exports this year after sealing a record \$17.3 billion in arms sales last year, including huge deals with Poland for tanks, howitzers, warplanes, and rockets.

South Korea has been roughly ninth in the world for defence exports in recent years, but President Yoon Suk Yeol has called for it to improve. At a South Korean military airbase in Seoul Monday, exhibitors made final preparations as participants in early events wandered among Korean and US military vehicles and warplanes. **REUTERS**

Leaders from emerging economies in Beijing for Belt and Road anniversary

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BEIJING, OCTOBER 16

LEADERS OF emerging market countries are arriving in Beijing for a meeting organised by the Chinese government that will mark the 10th anniversary of its Belt and Road Initiative.

More than a dozen leaders from Africa, Asia and the Mideast were flying into Beijing on Monday, following the arrivals of Chilean President Gabriel Boric and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán on Sunday. Others are coming on Tuesday.

Under the Belt and Road Initiative, a signature policy of President Xi Jinping, Chinese companies have built ports, roads, railways, power plants and other infrastructure around the world in a bid to boost trade and economic growth.

But the massive Chinese development loans that funded the projects have also burdened



Indonesian President Joko Widodo arrives in Beijing to attend the Third Belt and Road forum. Reuters

some poorer countries with heavy debts. A flurry of diplomacy is expected on the sidelines of the third Belt and Road Forum, whose main events are on Wednesday. Orbán met with Xi and Premier Li Qiang, Hungary's state news agency MTI said. The forums also were held in 2017 and 2019.

Kenyan President William Ruto will be seeking additional loans for stalled road projects despite the country's already high public debt, and an easing of the repayment of a Chinese loan for a railway project that has not proven commercially viable.

Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to attend the forum, as are representatives of

the Taliban government in Afghanistan. Putin downplayed the idea that China, through its Belt and Road projects in Central Asia, is competing for influence in a region that Russia has long considered its backyard.

"Our own ideas on the development of the Eurasian Economic Union, for example, on the construction of a Greater Eurasia, fully coincide with the Chinese ideas proposed within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative," he told Chinese state broadcaster CCTV, according to a transcript posted on the Kremlin website.

The leaders who arrived on Monday included Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, Republic of Congo President Denis Sassou Nguesso, Papua New Guinea Prime Minister James Marape and Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet.

US: 6-yr-old stabbed to death, police say crime driven by war

JOHNNY DIAZ, MITCH SMITH & ROBERT CHIARITO
CHICAGO, OCTOBER 16

THE AUTHORITIES in suburban Chicago accused a man of fatally stabbing a 6-year-old boy on Saturday and seriously wounding the boy's mother because they were Muslim, an attack that officials tied to the violence in Israel and Gaza.

The killing in Illinois alarmed Muslim leaders, who called on American politicians and journalists to more fully reflect the humanity of Palestinian people as they address the conflict overseas. "This was directly connected to dehumanizing of Palestinians," said Abdelnasser Rashid, a Democratic Illinois state representative who is Palestinian American.

Investigators in Will County, Ill., southwest of Chicago, described a gory scene. They said a 71-year-old landlord turned on the boy and his mother, who were his tenants, at their home in Plainfield Township Saturday morning, stabbing them repeatedly with a serrated knife that had a seven-inch blade.

The boy, identified as Wade Al-Fayoume by a family member and the Council on American-Islamic Relations, was stabbed 26 times and pronounced dead at a hospital, according to the sheriff's office. The boy's mother, 32, was in serious condition with more than a dozen stab wounds,



Oday Al-Fayoume, father of the six-year-old. Reuters

officials said. Officials said she ran into a bathroom and continued fighting off the attacker as she dialed 911. Relatives said the family is Palestinian American.

The Will County Sheriff's Office said Sunday that "detectives were able to determine that both victims in this attack were targeted by the suspect due to them being Muslim and the ongoing Middle Eastern conflict involving Hamas and the Israelis." The statement did not specify how investigators knew the motive, but said they had conducted interviews and reviewed other evidence.

The man accused in the attack, Joseph Czuba, 71, was being held on charges of first-degree murder, attempted first-degree murder, two counts of a hate crime and aggravated battery with a deadly weapon.

Czuba was scheduled to make an initial court appearance in Will County Monday. It was not clear whether he had hired a lawyer. **NYT**

Hamas will free hostages if Israel stops attack: Iran

ASSOCIATED PRESS
GAZA, OCTOBER 16

IRAN'S FOREIGN Ministry said Monday that Hamas potentially was ready to release the nearly 200 hostages it is holding if Israel stops its campaign of airstrikes on the Gaza Strip. The militant group hasn't acknowledged making such an offer.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani spoke at a news conference in Tehran. Iran's theocracy is a main sponsor of Hamas in its fight against Israel, Tehran's regional arch-enemy.

Hamas officials "stated that they are ready to take necessary measures to release the citizens and civilians held by resistant groups, but their point was that such measures require preparations that are impossible under daily bombardment by the Zionists against various parts of Gaza," Kanaani said.

Hamas has said it will trade

the captives for thousands of Palestinians held by Israel in the kind of lopsided exchange deals that have been reached in the past.

"We heard from the resistance that they have no problem to continue resisting," Kanaani said, referring to Hamas. "They said the resistance holds military capability to continue resisting in the field for a long time."

On Monday, the Israeli military said Hamas and other Palestinian militants are holding 199 hostages in Gaza, higher than previous estimates.

Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, a military spokesperson, said that the families have been notified.

He did not specify if the number includes foreigners, or say who is holding them. Most are believed to be held by the Hamas militant group, which rules Gaza.

On Monday, Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group has started destroying surveillance cameras on several Israeli army posts along the border with Lebanon.

France school evacuated over bomb threat days after teacher's stabbing

PASCAL ROSSIGNOL
AUCKLAND, OCTOBER 16

A HIGH school in Arras, northern France, where a French teacher was fatally stabbed on Friday, was evacuated on Monday morning following a bomb alert, according to a Reuters photographer who was at the location.

Friday's attack, which prompted the government to put France on its highest security alert, came as a "jihadist atmosphere" had developed, Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said over the weekend, after a deadly Hamas attack on Israel unleashed retaliatory measures and air strikes.

While there were no classes scheduled on Monday at the Lycee Gambetta high school, its doors were open for pupils and staff to pay tribute to teacher Dominique Bernard, who was killed by a 20-year-old man in an

attack that President Emmanuel Macron condemned as "barbaric Islamic terrorism."

Macron posted a message on social media platform X to pupils and school staff earlier on Monday:





"If I'm speaking to you, it is to assure you all that we stand with you."

"We will always counter blind hatred with the inextinguishable thirst to teach. The thirst to learn. The thirst to live freely."

On Friday, the attacker, a former pupil whose elder brother was serving time in prison for links to Islamist militant networks, fatally stabbed Bernard and wounded three other people.

After the bomb alert on Monday, teachers, some of them in tears and holding each other, left the building, as did pupils who had come to lay flowers in tribute to Bernard. **REUTERS**

15 ECONOMY

 GOLD ₹60,150	 USD RATE ₹83.28	 OIL \$89.84	 SILVER ₹74,000
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Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of October 13

SENSEX: 66,166.93 ▼ 115.81 (0.17%) NIFTY: 19,731.75 ▼ 19.30 (0.01%) NIKKEI: 31,659.03 ▼ 656.96 HANG SENG: 17,640.36 ▼ 173.09 FTSE: 7,625.23 ▲ 25.63 DAX: 15,190.51 ▲ 3.85

International market data till 1900 IST

SECTOR WATCH TAXATION

Angel tax: How does CBDT's new clarification affect start-up companies?

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

AMID NOTICES being sent to start-ups, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has stepped in to direct its officers to not carry out scrutiny of angel tax provisions for start-ups recognised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). In a directive issued last week, the tax department has asked its field officials to not do verification for the recognised start-ups for cases pertaining to Section 56(2)(vii) of the Income-tax Act, which was amended in the Finance Act, 2023 bringing in non-resident investors also under the angel tax levy.

start-up companies on the issue will be summarily accepted. Secondly, where the case of such start-up company is selected under scrutiny with multiple issues including the issue under section 56(2)(vii) of the I-T Act, the issue of applicability of section 56(2)(vii) of the Act "shall not be pursued during the assessment proceedings of such startup company".

What is angel tax for start-ups?

Angel tax - which is income tax at the rate of 30.6 per cent - is levied when an unlisted company issues shares to an investor at a price higher than its fair market value. Earlier, it was imposed only on investments made by a resident investor. However the Finance Act 2023 proposed to extend angel tax even to non-resident investors from April 1.

What were the changes for angel tax in Budget 2023-24?

The Finance Act, 2023, had amended Section 56(2)(vii) of the Income-tax Act. The provision, colloquially known as the 'angel tax' was first introduced in 2012 to deter the generation and use of unaccounted money through the subscription of shares of a closely held company at a value that is higher than the fair market value of the firm's shares.

The provision had stated that when an unlisted company, such as a start-up, receives equity investment from a resident for issue of shares that exceeds the face value of such shares, it will be counted as income for the startup and be subject to income tax.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

Q2 RESULT AFTER MERGER WITH HDFC LTD

HDFC Bank's net profit rises 51% in first qtr post-merger

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 16



The bank's gross NPA ratio rose to 1.34%. File

PRIVATE SECTOR lender HDFC Bank on Monday reported a 50.6 per cent jump in its standalone net profit at Rs 15,976 crore in the quarter ended September compared to Rs 10,605.78 crore in the year-ago period.

This is the first quarterly financial result of the bank post merger with HDFC Ltd, which came into effect on July 1. However, the second quarter financial numbers are not comparable with the same period of previous fiscal as the two entities followed different accounting norms, the bank's Chief Financial Officer Srinivasan Vaidyanathan said.

The lender reported a 51.1 per cent jump in its consolidated profit after tax (PAT) at Rs 16,811 crore in the September quarter. On a half-yearly basis, the net profit grew 41 per cent to 27,928 crore.

"Credit environment is benign and our portfolio continues to remain strong. Our NPA ratio at 1.34 per cent is quite healthy and strong, and if you compare it to our 3, 6, and 12 month ago, it has improved," Vaidyanathan told reporters.

On merger, he said that employees of HDFC Ltd have been onboarded into the appropriate roles in the bank. IT systems have been integrated seamlessly and branches of HDFC Ltd are operational under the banner of HDFC Bank.

"We are now working to derive synergistic benefits along with subsidiaries, and we expect business momentum to gather pace hereon," Vaidyanathan said.

During the September quarter, its net interest income (interest earned less interest exp-

ended) grew by 30.3 per cent to Rs 27,385 crore from Rs 21,021 crore. Core net interest margin for the quarter was 3.65 per cent on total assets and 3.85 per cent on interest earning assets. In the June quarter, core net margin was 4.1 per cent on total assets, and 4.3 per cent based on interest earning assets.

After absorbing debt funded cost for additional liquidity and merger management, the reported NIM for the quarter stood at 3.4 per cent on total assets and 3.6 per cent on interest earning assets in the September quarter.

"If you look at NIM, the bank before the merger was at 4.1 per cent and once you add up the two organisations, math would tell you it is at 3.7 per cent. However, we indicated that going into merger there will be build up on liquidity which we will fund through debt to tide over the merger process. So 25-30 basis points (bps) impact (on NIM) is coming from there," Vaidyanathan said.

In the September quarter, the total credit cost ratio stood at 0.49 per cent as compared to 0.87 per cent in the year ago period.

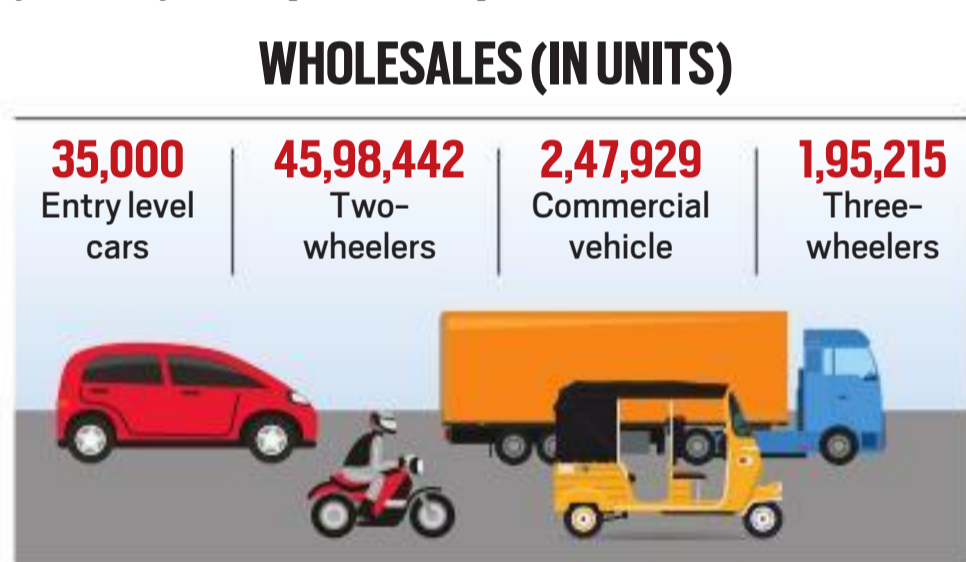
Gross non-performing assets (GNPAs) increased to 1.34 per cent as against 1.23 per cent in the year-ago period. GNPA stood at 1.41 per cent on a proforma merged basis in the June quarter.

Net non-performing assets were at 0.35 per cent as against 0.33 per cent last year in the same period. Gross advances increased by approximately Rs 1.1 lakh crore during the quarter post merger, and were at Rs 23,54,633 crore as of September 30, 2023, an increase of 57.7 per cent over the year-ago quarter.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

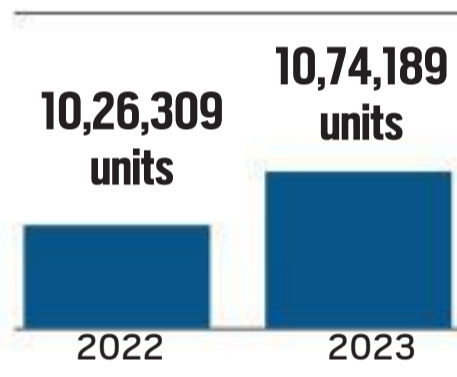
PV sales touch highest ever quarterly mark in July-Sept

In September, PV dispatches increased by 2 per cent year-on-year, as per SIAM report



"As we get into the festival season, all segments of the industry are optimistic and look towards posting good numbers in Q3 as well," said Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) President Vinod Aggarwal

DISPATCHES IN JULY-SEPTEMBER PERIOD



Domestic PV wholesales have crossed the 20 lakh mark for the first time in April-September period

The growth in the automobile sectors can be attributed to the all-round economic growth of the country

Source: SIAM/PTI

Food inflation likely to remain elevated, seen above 6% in H2

PRIYANSH VERMA & SANDIP DAS
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

A SHARP decline in tomato prices may have caused the headline CPI (Consumer Price Index) inflation to plunge to 5.02 per cent in September from 6.83 per cent in August, but risks to food prices still persist, and experts see retail-food inflation staying above the 6 per cent mark in the second half of the current fiscal year.

An erratic monsoon and low reservoir levels are likely to have moderately adverse impact on yields of several crops, including paddy, pulses, oilseeds, and spices, which may keep inflationary pressures elevated in the near-term.

In the south-west monsoon period, which ended in September, rainfall has been particularly weak in east and north-east India, followed by south India. The total rainfall received in June to September was 94.4 per cent of the bench mark - long-period average (LPA), or 'below normal'.

An above-6 per cent food inflation in H2 poses upside risk to Reserve Bank of India's forecast of 5.4 per cent for FY24, as prices of crude oil and other commodities, as witnessed in the September WPI data, have started to rise again which may put pressure on core CPI inflation.

According to the data released last week, the Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI) inflation fell to a three-month low of 6.56

Rupee at all-time low against dollar as oil, other currencies rise

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 16

THE INDIAN rupee on Monday ended at its lifetime closing low of 83.28 against the dollar as a jump in crude oil prices and weakness in other Asian currencies pressured the currency.

The rupee closed at 83.275/28 against the US dollar as against its previous close of 83.26. The currency hit its previous record closing low of 83.2675 on September 18.

Anindya Banerjee, VP - Currency Derivatives, Kotak Securities Ltd, said, "It is a fresh all-time closing high. However, we suspect the RBI will remain a major seller of the US dollars to prevent rupee from making a move above 83.30. Over this week, West Asian tensions and the US central bank member speeches will be key driver of USD-rupee. We could see a new high in the pair and range expand to 83.00 and 83.50 on spot."

The dollar index held steady at 106.5 and Asian currencies weakened, with the Korean won leading losses after a 0.27 per cent fall. The rupee is "slowly weakening but remains sticky as usual," a foreign exchange trader at a foreign bank said.

India's foreign exchange reserves have declined by \$14.154 bn in almost one month

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have pulled out Rs 11,206 crore from the cash market in October so far.

Oil prices rose more than 5 per cent on Friday as investors remained on edge about escalating geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. The stickiness is largely attributable to the RBI whose likely interventions have limited the weakness. The RBI likely intervened during the earlier part of the spot trading session and also supplied US dollars during the mid-day fixing window, traders said.

India's foreign exchange reserves have declined by \$14.154 billion in almost one month due to valuation loss and the RBI intervention in the currency spot market to curb the fall in the rupee against the dollar. From \$598.897 billion as of September 1, the foreign exchange reserves have dipped to \$584.742 billion, the lowest in more than five months, on October 6, the RBI data showed.

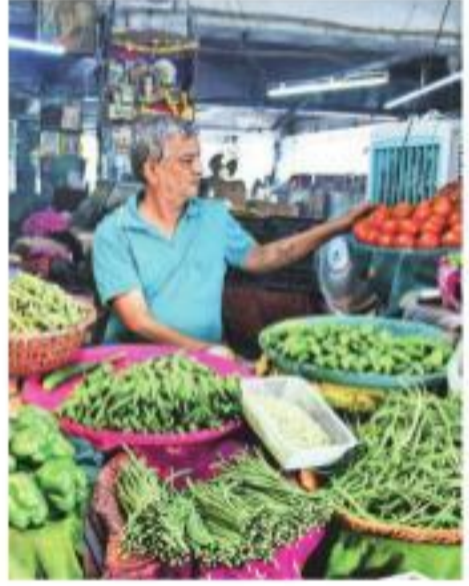
WPI still in negative zone for 6th month

New Delhi: Wholesale Price Index (WPI) remained in the negative zone for the sixth consecutive month in September, but the deflationary pressure came in at the lowest rate in the month. The inflation rate was (-)0.26 per cent in September as compared to (-)0.52 per cent in August, according to data released by the Office of Economic Adviser on Monday.

The deflationary print in September was primarily on account of the statistical effect of high base - in September 2022, WPI inflation was at 10.55 per cent - and continued moderation of vegetable prices.

On a month-on-month basis, the overall WPI index declined by 0.6 per cent, the steepest pace in four months.

"The decline in WPI for September can be attributed to a substantial deceleration in food prices and the continued YoY contraction in fuel prices and manufactured products prices," said Rajani Sinha, chief economist, CareEdge. FE



Inflation in food articles eased to 3.35%. File

per cent in September on the back of a crash in tomato prices, but the inflation rate of cereals, spices and pulses remained in double digits. The CPI comprises 39 per cent of the Consumer Price Index.

The inflation of 'cereals and products' eased to 10.95 per cent in September from 11.85 per cent in August, but stayed in the double digit territory for the 12th consecutive month. The inflation of 'pulses and products' rose to 16.38 per cent from 13.04 per cent, and that of 'spices' remained largely flat at 23.06 per cent. Collectively, these three subgroups constitute 15 per cent of the CPI basket.

"The September inflation narrative was similar to August. The perishable food items are reversing their gains sharply, while non-perishables are showing signs of persistence," said Madhavi Arora, lead economist, Emkay Global. FE

PM Modi, Google's Pichai discuss firm's expansion

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Monday virtually interacted with Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai and discussed Google's plan to expand its electronics manufacturing capabilities in India.

According to an official statement issued by the Indian government, the Prime Minister appreciated Google's partnership with Hewlett Packard (HP) to manufacture Chromebooks in India.

Google recently started producing its Chromebook laptops

in India through a partnership forged with HP, in a major boost to the country's electronics manufacturing ambitions.

The move puts Google among the most high-profile names to kickstart manufacturing in India as companies across the world look to diversify their supply chains in the wake of turbulent geopolitical times.

The Chromebooks - laptops that run on Google's Chrome operating system - will be manufactured at the Flex facility near Chennai, where HP has been producing a range of laptops and desktops since August 2020.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

As TCS calls employees back to office, focus is on dress code

SAMEER RANJAN BAKSHI
BENGALURU, OCTOBER 16

FOR A large number of youngsters who have started their professional career during the pandemic, going back to office itself is a new experience. IT giant Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) knows that, and has therefore lent them a helping hand so that they can "bring their best self to work".

A key component of that "best self" is adherence to a dress code as the freshers needed to be reminded that the days of wearing shorts and T-shirts while working from home were truly over.

In a recent mail to employees,

Milind Lakkad, chief human resource officer, said the company looks forward to having all its associates working from office on all working days.

"A large number of our associates have joined us in the last two years and have been working in a virtual or hybrid mode, and it is our responsibility to ensure they are well integrated - working from the office is key to internalise the TCS values and the TCS way."

Lakkad said while working from office it is important to uphold the highest standard of professionalism through the way employees dress and represent themselves and the organisation.

"This is key to creating the right impact with stakeholders globally. The dress code policy gives clear guidance on the right attire while carrying out official responsibilities and duties..."

According to TCS' dress code policy, associates are required to wear business casuals like tucked-in full-sleeved shirts with trousers (men) and business dresses (women), from Monday to Thursday, and business formal on specific formal events like seminars/summits and client visits. The policy allows smart casuals, which include half-sleeved shirts, turtleneck, khakis/chinos, and kurta and salwar (women) etc. only on Fridays. FE

Show instances of foreign transactions masked as domestic transfers: HC

MALAVIKA PRASAD
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

WHILE HEARING a plea seeking direction to Centre for implementation of uniform banking code for foreign exchange transaction, the Delhi High Court Monday sought an affidavit containing instances where foreign transactions were camouflaged as domestic ones.

A division bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Sanjeev Narula asked the petitioner Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay to file an affidavit giving examples or illustrations in respect of foreign transfers which are undetected as Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS), National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT) and Instant Money Payment System (IMPS). The matter is next listed in December.

The counsel appearing for the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said that the central bank is a regulator and that nothing specific had been pointed out in the plea as to what the RBI is supposed to do. The counsel said that "any international transfer cannot be RTGS".

The RBI's response states that foreign transactions are covered under Foreign Exchange Management Act, and NEFT, RTGS and IMPS are domestic payment systems and scheduled banks within India have access to NEFT and RTGS.

It further states that furnishing of PAN is mandated in the liberalised remittance scheme which permits resident individuals in India to send money abroad for permitted capital and current account transactions.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

BRIEFLY

LinkedIn lays off 668 employees

Bengaluru: LinkedIn on Monday said it would lay off 668 employees across its engineering, talent and finance teams in the second round of job cuts this year for the social media network for professionals amid slowing revenue growth. REUTERS

JFSL Q2 profit doubles

Bengaluru: Jio Financial Services Ltd, in its first earnings report since being carved out from Reliance Industries Ltd, on Monday reported a doubling of net profit in the second quarter from the previous three-month period. PTI

Licence fee paid by telcos is capex, not revenue, says SC

JATIN GROVER
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

IN A setback for telecom operators like Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea, the Supreme Court on Monday held that licence fee paid by them post July 1999 should be treated as capital expenditure and not as revenue expenditure. The telecom operators had argued that since they have to pay licence fee yearly, it should be treated as revenue expenditure incurred for continuity of business.

The apex court's order may lead to re-assessment which may result in higher tax burden on the operators, analysts said. Revenue expenditures are expenses that a company incurs in its normal course of business operations to generate revenue. The same is generally fully deductible from taxable income in the year they are incurred. On the other hand,



Telcos had to pay a one-time licence fee to start operations, along with an annual licence fee. File

capital expenditure are long-run investments that benefit the company for more than one year. Expenditure of a capital nature is not allowed as a deduction when calculating trading profits.

As per the National Telecom Policy 1999, telcos had to pay a one-time licence fee to start operations, along with a yearly licence fee based on their annual

turnover. This was in contrast to the earlier policy, wherein they had to pay the entire licence fee upfront. Since telecom operators usually defer their payment of licence fee or pay them in installments, the SC said the same does not change the nature of capital expenditure into revenue expenditure.

With its ruling, the SC overturned the Delhi High Court order of 2013, which was favourable to the companies as it had held that that such payments should be partly treated as revenue expenditure.

"The decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court could have a huge impact on the telecom industry as the High Court decision seemed to provide a reasonable basis to decide on the deductibility of the payments made by the telecom operators to obtain the telecom licence," said Mihir Gandhi, partner, tax & regulatory services at BDO India. FE

Can AAP be an accused in excise policy case? Here's the law

APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate (ED) told the Supreme Court on Monday that it is "contemplating" adding the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) as an accused in its money laundering probe linked to the Delhi government's now-scrapped excise policy.

How can a political party be booked for money laundering and why is the ED considering charging AAP in the case?

What is the law under which a political party can be booked for money laundering?

Section 70 of the stringent Prevention of

Money Laundering Act deals with offences by companies.

The provision states that, "Where a person committing a contravention of any of the provisions of this Act or any rule, direction or order made thereunder is a company, every person who, at the time the contravention was committed, was in charge of and was responsible to the company, for the conduct of the business of the company as well as the company, shall be deemed to be guilty of the contravention and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly."

While a political party is not a 'company' incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013, the provision has a crucial explanation that could bring a political party under the ambit

of the anti-money laundering law.

It reads: "Explanation 1 [1] .--(i) "company" means any body corporate and includes a firm or other association of individuals;"

The phrase 'association of individuals' can include a political party. A party, according to Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, is any association or body of individual citizens of India calling itself a political party.

Has a political party ever been booked for money laundering?

If AAP is directly named as an accused in the excise scam under the PMLA, it would be

the first instance of a political party being accused of money laundering. However, political parties have been booked and investigated under the Income Tax Act.

Trusts and NGOs are already under the PMLA ambit. In May, the Finance Ministry in a notification included trustees of an express trust also within the PMLA.

How are the charges against Sisodia tied to AAP?

The main allegation of the ED is that AAP was the recipient of the proceeds of crime in the excise scam.

A second explanation to Section 70 of the PMLA adds that a "company may be prosecuted, notwithstanding whether the pro-

secution or conviction of any legal juridical person shall be contingent on the prosecution or conviction of any individual." This means that, even if the cases involving Sisodia and others fall, the political party can still be prosecuted for money laundering separately.

While Sisodia was arrested in February and AAP's communication in-charge, Vijay Nair, was arrested in September last year, the party's Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh was arrested earlier this month.

What prompted the ED to consider booking AAP as an accused?

Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, who appeared for the ED, told the SC that the AAP might be booked under the PMLA "to probe it additionally with respect to vicarious liability."

This statement before a Bench comprising Justices Sanjeev Khanna and SVN Bhatti was made during a hearing seeking bail for former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

Raju's statement was in response to an observation by the Bench in an earlier hearing on October 4 that, as per the ED's case, the recipient of the proceeds of crime was "a political party" and not Sisodia. The bench then asked why the party was not made an accused too.

"As far as PMLA is concerned, your whole case is that it went to a political party. That political party is still not an accused. How do you answer that? He is not the beneficiary, the political party is the beneficiary," Justice Khanna had said.

EXPLAINED LAW

EXPLAINED ECONOMICS

EXPLAINED CULTURE

100 YEARS OF DISNEY: HOW A KANSAS CARTOONIST BUILT A MEDIA EMPIRE

VANDANA KALRA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

WHEN WALT Disney left Kansas City for Hollywood on August 1923, he had nothing but \$40, some drawing material and an animated and live-action film.

With a loan of \$500 and help from his brother Roy, he constructed a camera stand in their uncle's garage in California. Thus was founded Disney Brothers Cartoon Studio on October 16, 1923. Now named The Walt Disney Company, one of the largest media firms in the world, the conglomerate is celebrating its 100th year.



Walt Disney with Mickey Mouse in 1935. Wikimedia Commons

Early life of Walt Disney

Walter Elias Disney was born in Chicago on December 5, 1901, to Elias Disney, a Canadian-American construction worker and entrepreneur, and his wife Flora Call, a school teacher. He was raised on a farm near Marceline in Missouri, and in Kansas City.

One of five siblings, Walt was interested in drawing even as a child and sold his first sketches to neighbours when he was only seven. Studying cartooning through correspondence, and later taking classes at the McKinley High School in Chicago, he also pursued photography.

When he was 16, Walt decided to join the military during World War I. Rejected because he was too young, he joined the American Red Cross and was sent overseas, where he spent a year driving ambulances across France and Germany.

After the war, on his return to Kansas City, Walt began his career as an advertising cartoonist. He created a series of animated cartoon sketches called *Laugh-O-grams* and a pilot film for a series of short fairy tales, called *Alice in Cartoonland*.

Hollywood, Mickey Mouse

Though his cartoons became popular, a New York film distributor reportedly duped Walt, forcing him to file for bankruptcy in 1923. This was when he moved to California to pursue a career as a cinematographer.

The success of his short films prompted him to reopen a studio in Hollywood. Artist Ubbe Iwerks, his former associate in Kansas, also joined him and the two

developed the character of Oswald the Lucky Rabbit, followed by the iconic and mischievous Mickey Mouse.

Walt himself was the voice of Mickey till 1947, by when he had also developed Donald Duck and the dogs Pluto and Goofy. Following his first full-length animated musical called *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* in 1937, he also completed other full-length animated classics such as *Pinocchio* and *Bambi*. The 1964 motion picture fantasy *Mary Poppins* hugely elevated the popularity of the studio.

Disney and war films

During World War II, the studio created military training films, insignia for different military units, and educational short films aimed at instilling patriotism.

Launch of Disneyland

Walt conceived the idea of Disneyland in the mid 1940s, during a visit to the Griffith Park in Los Angeles with his daughters Diane and Sharon. He envisioned a theme-based park meant for kids and adults, and in 1948 began discussing a 'Mickey Mouse Park'.

In 1952, a small group of artists and designers was assigned the task of making his dream a reality. Funding was generated through the ABC network, in exchange for creating and hosting an hour-long weekly television show, resulting in Disneyland TV.

Covering an area of 160 acres, the park opened in California in 1955.

LONGER VERSION
indianexpress.com/explained

UDIT MISRA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

THE MINISTRY of Statistics and Programme Implementation last week released the latest installment of India's official employment data, the findings of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) for the period July 2022-June 2023. PLFS tracks 12-month periods between July and June. This is the sixth report of the survey.

Significance of PLFS

The annual PLFS, the successor of the quinquennial Employment-Unemployment Surveys, is carried out by the National Sample Survey Office (which also conducted the predecessor surveys) in order to get an understanding of the state of employment in the country.

PLFS provides data on various metrics so that policymakers can understand the proportion of people demanding work, the proportion of people among them who failed to get a job, the gender differences in employment and wages, etc.

The surveys also point to the sectoral distribution of workers in the economy — what percentage are involved in agriculture, for instance — and record the type of work people do; for instance, how many do casual labour, how many work for themselves, how many have regular salaried jobs, etc.

The data and results

The PLFS collects data in two ways — Usual Status (US) and Current Weekly Status (CWS). Broadly speaking, in Usual Status, the respondent has to recall their employment details of the last year, while in CWS, the respondent recalls details over the past week.

The estimate of the labour force in the Usual Status includes: (i) persons who either worked or were seeking/available for work for a relatively large part of the 365 days preceding the date of survey; (ii) persons from among the remaining population who had worked for at least 30 days during the 365 days preceding the date of survey.

The estimate of the labour force according to the CWS is derived by considering those who worked for at least 1 hour or were seeking/available for work for at least 1 hour on any day during the 7 days preceding the date of survey.

The global practice increasingly has been to focus more on CWS because the recall is better over the past week. Most of the findings in the latest PLFS report summarised below are based on CWS.

Findings of survey

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (UER): This is often the most talked about metric. It is the proportion of people who demanded work

over the past year and failed to get work.

Table 1 shows that UER for those aged 15 years and older has fallen from 6.6% to 5.1% over the last year (July-June). That is, 5.1% of all people above 15 years of age who demanded work, failed to get work.

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE (LFPR): UER is calculated as a proportion of the population that is demanding work. But this population (which demands work) increases/decreases for a variety of reasons. LFPR is a measure of the population demanding work, and is presented as a proportion of the total population that is above 15 years of age.

The data in Table 1 show that LFPR, which had been inching upwards, shot up significantly in the past year. As of 2022-23, 54.6% of all Indians above the age of 15 were looking for a job.

LFPR FOR WOMEN: This metric indi-

TABLE 1

INDIA'S EMPLOYMENT STORY SINCE 2017

Indicator (in %)/Year	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Unemployment rate	8.7	8.7	8.8	7.5	6.6	5.1
Labour force participation rate or LFPR *	48.4	48.5	51.2	51.8	51.7	54.6
LFPR for females above 15 years of age	21.1	21.6	26.3	27.5	27.2	31.6
Worker Population Ratio	44.1	44.3	46.7	47.5	48.3	51.8
WPR for females above 15 years of age	19.2	19.8	24.4	25.7	25.6	30

(for all Indians above 15 years of age)

TABLE 2

MONTHLY EARNINGS (IN ₹)

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Self-employment	12,318	12,988	11,560	11,411	12,089	13,347
Casual wage	6,959	7,209	7,324	7,431	7,856	7,899
Regular wage	19,450	19,690	18,907	19,074	19,456	20,039

TABLE 3

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WORKERS (OR WHAT KIND OF WORK EMPLOYED PEOPLE DO)

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Self-employment	52.2	52.1	53.5	55.6	55.8	57.3
Self-employment among women	51.9	53.4	56.3	59.4	62.1	65.3
Casual Labour	24.9	24.1	23.6	23.3	22.7	21.8
Regular/Salaried wage	22.8	23.8	22.9	21.1	21.5	20.9

Note: Employment is defined as per Current Weekly Status (CWS). All figures in %
Source: PLFS various rounds, State of Working India 2023, The Indian Express Research

of the total population.

This metric too has been going up. Especially noteworthy are the two discrete step-ups in 2019-20 and 2022-23.

WPR AMONG WOMEN: This helps understand what is leading to the spike in overall WPR. Again, WPR for women has been going up, but the two main spikes have been in 2019-20 and 2022-23.

MONTHLY EARNINGS: PLFS reports also provide a sense of how much people earn in different types of jobs. There are three main categories — self-employment, casual wage, and regular wage. (Table 2)

Broadly, incomes have gone up after falling during Covid. But the main takeaway from the data is how little monthly incomes have changed over the past six years, especially in the face of the sharp rise in inflation — since late 2019, annual consumer inflation has always been above the RBI's target of 4%.

DISTRIBUTION OF WORKERS: It is important to know what kind of work people do. For this, data collected over Usual Status (US) by PLFS is helpful. Table 3 gives details of the three main classifications: self-employment, casual labour (say, a construction worker) and regular salaried job. Self-employed has two sub-categories: (i) own account worker and employer and, (ii) unpaid helper in household enterprises.

Self-employment has risen and jobs in the other two categories have fallen in proportion. It is also noteworthy that self-employment among women is the key driver for this overall trend.

Upshot of the data

At first glance, PLFS 2022-23 shows some positive trends: the unemployment rate continues to fall, and LFPR and WPR see significant spikes. It is heartening that more women are joining the workforce. This would suggest that as the economy recovers, more well-paying jobs are being created.

However, looking at what these new jobs are and how much they pay, this understanding changes.

The only jobs that are getting created are of the "self-employment" type. When an economy grows, businesses employ people. When an economy struggles, people lose their regular jobs, and become "self-employed".

Similarly, the trend for women across metrics suggests that weak household finances have pushed women who were outside the workforce in the past to join in, often as "unpaid helpers in household enterprises".

Sectorally, the proportion of Indians employed in agriculture has gone up over the past year, while that of manufacturing has fallen.

Lastly, a booming economy sees monthly incomes improve. This has not been the case in India.

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After 40 yrs, India-Sri Lanka ferry service restarted: Opportunities, challenges

ARUN JANARDHANAN
CHENNAI, OCTOBER 16

AN AGE-old sea route between India and Sri Lanka has been rejuvenated with the inauguration of a passenger ferry service from Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu to Kankesanthurai in Jaffna, Northern Sri Lanka.

The initiative is aimed at bolstering bilateral ties, boosting tourism, and increasing people-to-people relations. It is expected to benefit local traders on both shores.

The new service

The ferry service was launched on Saturday. The name of the vessel, a High Speed Craft, is 'Cheriyapani'.

A one-way ticket costs around Rs 7,670, with a baggage allowance of up to 40 kg per passenger. The journey starts from Nagapattinam at 7 am, reaching Kankesanthurai by 11 am, and the return trip begins at 1.30 pm, arriving in Nagapattinam by 5.30 pm.

The previous route

Maritime linkage between India and Sri Lanka isn't new. The Indo-Ceylon Express or Boat Mail ran between Chennai and Colombo via the Thoonthukudi port from the early 1900s up until 1982. However, the service was halted due to the civil war in Sri Lanka.

Before the civil war, one of the most popular routes was from Dhanushkodi to Talaimannar. Passengers would get onto the Boat Mail Express, a train from Chennai's Egmore railway station, and transfer to a coal-powered steam ferry in Dhanushkodi, which reached Talaimannar in roughly two hours.

Attempts to restart

The resumption of ferry services has been on the cards for quite some time, especially after the war ended in 2009. A Memorandum of Understanding concerning passenger transportation by sea was signed in 2011 and a similar service was

launched. However, it did not last for more than six months due to poor response.

Attempts were also made to establish services from Rameswaram to Talaimannar and Karaikal to Kankesanthurai. Various challenges kept these proposals from materialising.

such as Nagapattinam, Nagore, Velankanni, Thirunallar, and temple towns such as Thanjavur, Madurai, and Tiruchi are expected to see an influx of Lankan tourists.

Beyond religious tourism, the services would boost regional commerce and trade.

Infrastructure and planning

Anticipating the influx of travellers, Tamil Nadu is ramping up infrastructural developments. E V Velu, Minister for Public Works, said the state is in touch with multiple central departments, such as Customs, External Affairs, Shipping, and Immigration, to ensure a smooth experience for passengers.

The Nagapattinam port, under the Tamil Nadu Maritime Board, was upgraded recently with funds worth Rs 8 crore from the Union Ministry of External Affairs.

Launching the service on October 14, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said connec-

tion is not only about bringing two cities closer but "also also brings our countries closer, our people closer and our hearts closer."

Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, in his video message, called the revival of the ferry service an important step towards strengthening connectivity between India and Sri Lanka.

Initial challenges

Crucial to the success of the new venture will be how it is operated. Already, even as the inauguration of the ferry was being celebrated, the Shipping Corporation of India's (SCI) initial plan to run services every day for 10 days has been rescheduled to operate thrice a week.

While the onset of the northeast monsoon is one of the reasons being cited, sources at Nagapattinam port said the ticket fare, at approximately Rs 7,670, and poor ticketing systems are also a challenge.

EXPLAINED INFRA

The ferry, Cheriyapani, will run between Nagapattinam and Kankesanthurai. PTI

Potential impact

By providing a transportation option, the ferry can amplify religious tourism in the coastal regions of both countries. From India, travellers can access significant religious sites in Colombo and the southern parts of Sri Lanka. Indian pilgrim centres

MoU—REC

REC signed a MoU with National Informatics Centre Services Inc. under National Informatics Centre, M/o Electronics & Information Technology, GOI for various Information & Communications Technology & Digital Transformation Services.

CAMP—ONGC

Two hundred & thirty-three beneficiaries received free artificial limbs (Jaipur Foot) during the seven-day Free Artificial Limb Camp organized by MRPL from 11 to 17 Oct. 2023 at MERC Hall MRPL, Mangalore.



CAMP—THDCIL

RK Vishnoi, CMD, THDCIL informed that THDC organized a three-day training programme titled "SHE-Stronger, Healthier Everyday" from 11th Oct. 2023 to 13th Oct. 2023 at the lush green campus of HRD Center of THDCIL, Rishikesh.

MoU—NBCC

NBCC signed an MoU with Visakhapatnam Port Authority for Renovation/Refurbishment of Office Buildings located in VPA recently. Under this work, Port Administrative Building, DCI building, Old DC building, Signal Station Building & other ancillary buildings will be renovated/refurbished.



INAUGURATION—OIL INDIA

Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, CM, Assam inaugurated the Centre for Developing Sports Training, Rehabilitation at Jorhat today. OIL and NRL under its CSR has financially supported setting-up of the high-performance sports training & rehabilitation centre.

LAUNCH—M/o I & B

Union Minister Anurag Thakur launched the trailer of KTB- Bharat Hain Hum, an animated series consisting of two seasons, produced by Central Bureau of Communication, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting & Graphiti Studios.



CEREMONY—CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA

Boccia Sports Federation of India with the support of Delhi Para Boccia Association organised a Sending Off Ceremony of Boccia Indian Team to Hangzhou Para Games 2022.

BOOK LAUNCH

A new book takes the concepts of Aatmnirbharta and Make in India to another level. Titled, MIDDLE OF DIAMOND INDIA, the book is authored by SHASHANK MANI. As the part of the book launch, the author moderated a panel discussion on the book.



CORPORATE BRIEFS



LAUNCH - UGANDA AIRLINES

Uganda Airlines' launch coincided with Uganda's 61st National Day, signaling a significant increase in India-Uganda business & tourism connections. Uganda's High Commissioner to India, H.E. Prof Joyce K. Kikafunda, gave a congratulatory message from President Yoweri Museveni.

EVENT - INDIA-TANZANIA INVESTMENT FORUM

H.E. Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania addressed the 'India-Tanzania Investment Forum', organized by FICCI, jointly with CII & ASSOCHAM, & said that they want to further elevate the relations between the two nations.

CONTRIBUTION—NHPC

NHPC has contributed Rs 3 cr to the CM's Relief Fund of Sikkim to support the relief efforts of the Govt. of Sikkim for the victims of unexpected natural calamity caused due to the lake outburst in the Lhonak on the night of Oct. 3rd 2023.

GAIL

GAIL reaches over 40 crs people since 2017 through its various social and digital communication initiatives to spread awareness about Natural Gas, new energy initiatives and other clean energy sources.

IRCTC

IRCTC has been set up as an extended arm of the Indian Railways to upgrade, professionalize, & manage the catering & hospitality services at stations, on trains, & in other locations & to promote domestic & int'l tourism.

APPOINTMENT

IREDA Bijay Kumar Mohanty, a distinguished senior finance professional with an illustrious career spanning over 25 years in the Indian power sector, has taken charge as the Dir. (Fin.) of the IREDA effective from 12th Oct., 2023.



NTPC has been recognized as one of the "World's Best Employers 2023" in the Forbes World's Best Employers list 2023 released recently. It ranked 261st out of top 700 companies in the World ranking and is the only Indian PSU to figure in the list.

IRCON The DPE, GOI has upgraded IRCON to "Navratna" status on recently. This recognition is testimony to company's continuous performance, commitment & contribution.

ONGC is going to carry out a controlled reopening of a relief well (Well PD#2) in Periyakudi, Kariyamangalam village, Tiruvurur district. This is being done using a drilling rig to protect the well & the surrounding community.

DFCCIL The first freight train powered by electric traction from EDFC's New Sahnewal (Ludhiana) - New Khurja (401 Km) via New Khatauli station was run on 11.10.2023. It is a landmark achievement marking the completion of the entire EDFC of 1337 km.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Rohit, S/o: Ashok, R/o: H. No. Village Mokampur, Police Station T.P. Nagar, District Meerut, Uttar Pradesh has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case Cr. Cases 0729/2020, FIR No. 42836/2019, U/s 379 IPC, P.S.: Patel Nagar, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Rohit cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Rohit has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said Rohit accused of Cr. Cases 0729/2020, FIR No. 42836/2019, U/s 379 IPC, P.S.: Patel Nagar, Delhi is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 16.11.2023.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Mohd. Tohid, S/o: Masroor Ali, R/o: H.No. 1880, Gali Wazir Beg, Mohalla Kabristan, Turkman Gate, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 263/2021, U/s 323/341/506/34 IPC, P.S.: Kamla Market, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Mohd. Tohid cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Mohd. Tohid has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said Mohd. Tohid accused of FIR No. 263/2021, U/s 323/341/506/34 IPC, P.S.: Kamla Market, Delhi is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 05.12.2023.

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that this Girl (depicted in the photo) namely Aanchal D/o Kishan R/o 6/140, Trilokpur, Delhi has been missing/ kidnapped from her residence since 10.10.2023 at 4.00 PM. In this regard a DD No. 57A/2023 Dated 11.10.2023 has been lodged at PS Kalyanpuri, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out this girl but no clue has come to light so far.

Her physical description is as under:- Sex: Female, Age: 20 years, Height: 5' ft., Complexion: Fair, Face: Long, Build: Medium, Wearing: Black colour Kurta & Black Plazo & Black Sandal in feet.

Advertisement for M.S. P. Projects Pvt. Ltd. regarding construction work in Aligarh and Jaipur.

Advertisement for Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation Ltd. regarding road development work in Mumbai.

Tender notice for leasing of plot admeasuring approximately 5,480 sq.mts. at Village Waksai in Taluka Maval, Dist. Pune on YCEW.

High Court of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-171001 advertisement regarding recruitment for stenographer and other posts.

Advertisement for recruitment of stenographer and other posts in Himachal Pradesh.

Advertisement notice for recruitment of stenographer and other posts in Himachal Pradesh.

Advertisement for CPSIDA regarding construction work in Aligarh and Jaipur.

Tender notice for UJVN Limited regarding construction work in Gurgaon.

Advertisement for recruitment of stenographer and other posts in Himachal Pradesh.

Advertisement for recruitment of stenographer and other posts in Himachal Pradesh.

Advertisement for Container Corporation of India Ltd. regarding container services.

The Gazette of India, Ministry of Railways notification regarding the development of Freight & Coaching Terminal at Bijwasan.

18 CLASSIFIEDS & TENDERS

Classifieds

PERSONAL

This is to inform the general public that I want to Correct the parentage of my son namely MohammadAnzar Khan in his school records from Nissar Ah KhanTo Nissar Ahmad Khan in Delhi Public School PanthachokwSrinagar bearing DOB. 21.11.2006.If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file the same beforeThe principal of the said school with in a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice after thatno objection shall be entertained.Nissar Ahmad Khan S/O Nazir Ahmad Khan/R/O Shamas Abud Beminia Srinagar J&K UT Pin Code: 190018 0020466274-1

It is for general information that I,Yogender Kumar Dhiman,S/o Late Mohan Lal Dhiman R/O,H.No.S-502,School-Block,Shakarpur Delhi-110092,declare that name of mine has been wrongly-written as Yogender Dhiman in my minor son Jairaj Dhiman (aged-14-Years) in his School-Record.The actual name of mine is Yogender Kumar Dhiman,which may be amended accordingly. 040694006-10

It is for general information that I,Harish Kumar Sharma,S/o Nem Chand Sharma R/O-2/74,Bhim Gali,Vishwas Nagar,Shahdara,Delhi-110032,declare that name of mine and my Father has been wrongly-written as Harish Kumar and Nem Chand in office-Record of MCD,Shahdara, South.The Actual Name of mine and my father are Harish Kumar Sharma and Nem Chand Sharma Respective.ly,which Mmay be amended accordingly. 040693999-10

It is for general information that I, VICKY S/O GANGA RAM R/O H.NO.-84, GALI NO.-2, MATTA WALI GALI, KARAWAL NAGAR ROAD, NEW CHAUHAN PUR, NORTH EAST DELHI-110094 declare that name of mine and my father has been wrongly written as VICKY TOMAR and GANGARAM in my 10th educational documents. The actual name of mine and my father are VICKY and GANGA RAM respectively which may be amended accordingly. 0070868653-1

I,heritho known as AMNA,D/o SAIRA FARIDI,R/O T-33/10,THIRD-FLOOR,R-B HOUSE,BASTI-HAZRAT,NIZAMUDDIN, DELHI-110013, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as AMNA SYEDA. 040694006-8

I,Yogender Kumar,S/o Kalyan Das Sharma R/O.C-205,Ganga Sagar,Ganga-Nagar, Mawana Road, Meerut,UP,have changed my name to Yogender Sharma. 040694006-4

I,Vandana Mohindru,W/O Naveen Mahendru R/O,House.No-190A First floor sector 18A Chandigarh 160018 have changed my name to Vandana Mahendru, permanently 040693999-6

I,VINAY KUMAR,S/O PRAKASH SHAHI ADD-F-52,PART-1 JAITPUR EXTN NEAR ISMAILPUR ROAD BADARPUR,SOUTH EAST DELHI-110044,changed my name to VINAY SHAHI, for all,future purposes. 040694006-5

I,Sourabh Singla,S/o Devendra Kumar Singla, R/O,Plot.No.43,New Anaj Mandi,Sohna, Gurgaon,have changed my name to Sourabh Singla. 040693999-7

I,Subhash Chand,S/O Bhagwan Dass,R/O H.No.575, Sector-8, Faridabade,have changed my name to Subhash Passhey. 040693999-6

I,Shiv Swaroop S/o Harish Chander,R/O 51/23,NIT, Faridabad,have changed my name to Shiv Swaroop Arora. 040693999-3

I,Sarla -o Sarla Khatri,W/o Manoj Kumar,R/O E-17,F.F.Anand Niketan South Mohi Bagh, Delhi-21, have changed my name to Tanisha Amulani. 040693999-9

I,SHYAM AGGARWAL,S/O NAWAL KISHORE, H.NO.78,OLD RAJINDER-NAGAR, BLOCK.NO.06,RAJENDER-NAGAR,NEW DELHI-110060,changed my name to SHYAM KISHOR AGGARWAL. 040694030-1

I,SEEMA MANDAL,W/O NARESH KUMAR MANDAL,R/O B-311,GALI.NO.9,AMRITPUR, GARHI EAST OF KAILASH, NEW DELHI-110065,CHANGED MY NAME TO SUMAN DEVI. 040694006-1

I,SANJAI KUMAR RAI S/O NAGENDRA RAI, R/O PLOT.NO.59-C,5 GYAN KHAND-1 INDIRAPURAM GHAZIABAD,UTTAR PRADESH-201014.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SANJAY KUMAR RAI, FOR ALL,FUTURE PURPOSES. 040694006-7

I,Rohit,S/O Subhash Mandla, R/O-29,Sarai Julena,New Delhi-110025, Declare that my mother name wrongly-mentioned in My 10th-Certificate is Poonam Devi Instead of Juli Devi And Poonam Devi and Juli Devi Both Are Same And One Person. 040694006-9

I,Diya Adwani W/o Jimmy Adwani R/O-B-36 Derawala Nagar 2nd-Floor Delhi-110009, have changed my name to Archana Adwani 040693987-5

I,Ravinder, Ravinder Kumar,S/O Late Sh.Satyra Bhushan Choudhry,R/O 497-B,Nyay Khand-2,Indra Puram,Shipra Sun City, Ghaziabad,Uttar Pradesh-201014,have changed my name to Ravindra Choudhary,for all purposes. 0406983996-1

I,ROHIT,S/O, FIRTHU RAM,H.NO.57, STREET NO-2 SUNDER,NAGRI NAND-NAGRI, NORTH EAST, DELHI-110093,changed my name to ROHIT KUMAR, for all,future purposes 040694012-1

I,ROHINI PUNEET MEHRA W/O- ABHINAV MATHUR,R/O-3-AVENUE-AMALTAS, WESTEND GREENS RAJOKARI,DELHI-110038, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ROHINI MATHUR. 040693999-3

I,RAJESH KUMAR,S/O DAYA NAND RATRA,R/O-1223,DR.MUKHERJEE NAGAR, NEAR BATA CINEMA,DELHI-110009,have changed my name to RAJESH RATRA. 040694006-2

I,RAHULS/O RAJBIR,R/O-G3,3RD FLOOR,AKASH APERTMENT,GALI.NO.4,MAHAV EER PARK, BHADURGARH, Jhajjar-124507, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAHUL RAJORIA, FOR ALL PURPOSE. 040693999-7

I,PRITI,W/O, RAJESH KUMAR, ADD- RZF11-17,GALI.NO.40,NEAR MOTHER-DAIRY SADH NAGAR-2,PALAM-COLONY PALAM-VILLAGE, SOUTH-WEST DELHI-110045,changed my name to PRITI DAHIYA,for all,future purposes 040693996-8

I,Naveen Mohindru,S/O Subhash Chand Mahendru,R/O House.No-190/1-First floor sector-18A,Chandigarh-160018,have changed my name to Naveen Mahendru, permanently. 040693999-5

I,NITIN KUMAR BHALLA S/O SH. PARVEEN KUMAR BHALLA,R/O-17,ANAND-VIHAAR, PITAMPURA,DELHI-110034,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO NITIN BHALLA, PERMANENTLY. 040693999-2

I,ARTI RAI,W/O SANJAY RAI,R/O PLOT.NO.59 C-5,GYAN KHAND-1 INDIRAPURAM,GHAZIABAD,UT TAR PRADESH-201014,have CHANGED MY NAME TO ARTI RAI, FOR ALL,FUTURE PURPOSES. 040694006-6

I,NIRAJ KUMAR,S/O UMAKANT PRASAD SINGH,R/O E-301,2nd-FLOOR, STREET NO.8,NEAR-DURGAM, EAST VINOD NAGAR, DELHI-110091,have changed my,daughter's name,from NEHAL to NEHAL KUMARI,for all,future purposes. 040693999-8

I,Mohd Samie,S/O Mohd Zaki R/O-2444 Chota Rang Mahal Chandni Chowk Delhi-110006,have changed my name to Mohd Sami 040694036-3

I,Mohd Mustafa,S/O Md Tufail,R/O-D-260,Gali No.6,Prem Nagar-3,Astha Vihar Kirari Suleman Nagar Delhi,have changed my name to MD Mustafa,for all purpose. 040694006-8

I,Meena rani,W/O ankush jain,address 1174/30,gohana-road,near om petrol pump,vijay nagar, sonipat,haryana,have change my name meena jain,for all purpose. 040694012-4

I,Manoj Prasad Shivastava, S/o Baccha Prasad Shivastav, R/O A-622, New Ashok Nagar, Delhi-110096 inform that my daughter Jivika D.O.B. 13.12.2009 we have chaged her name from Jivika to Jivika Kumari Srivastava for all future purposes. 040693912-1

I,MEENU VERMA,W/O RAJESH RATRA,R/O 1223,DR.MUKHERJEE NAGAR,NEAR BATA CINEMA,DELHI-110009,have changed my name to RIYA RATRA 040694006-3

I,Kumal Abbas,S/O-zargham haide,R/O Q-22,street no.18,brahampuri new seelampur delhi-110053,have changed my name to kumail abbas,for all purpose. 040694036-1

I,Jasmine Kaur Sahani, alias Jasmine Kaur Sahni D/o Jagbir Singh R/O,h-337, 2nd-Floor,New Rajinder-Nagar, Central Delhi-110060,have changed my-name to Jasmine Kaur for-all-purposes. 040694016-3

I,Jasbir Singh Aulakh S/o Balwant Singh R/O 521, Sector-16A, Faridabad have changed my name to Jasbir Singh. 040693996-5

I,JAI PRAKASH S/O,SUDESH KUMAR,ADD-16R/320H,ARYA SAMAJ-ROAD-NEAR-SHIV MANDIR,BAPA-NAGAR KAROL-BAGH, CENTRAL,DELHI-110005,changed my name to JAIPRAKASH KUMAR,for all,future purposes. 040693996-9

I,Inderpal Singh Narula S/o Amar Jit Singh R/O L-1, Upper Ground Floor, Kirti Nagar, New Delhi-110015, have changed my name to Inderpal Singh for-all-purposes. 040694016-4

I,HARSH,S/O-VINOD KUMAR,R/O D-145,Anand Niketan,Delhi-110021,have changed the name of my minor daughter from INAYA to INAYA SETHI. 040694028-1

I,Gourav Gandhi,S/O Ashok Kumar Gandhi R/O-JG-23,G/F, Khirki Extn, Malviya-Nagar, Delhi-17, have changed my name to Gourav Gandhi. 040693946-1

I,Princless Saba Punjabi D/o Abdul Hakim R/O H.No.A-245, Street No-10, Bhagirathi Vihar, Phase-2, Delhi, North East, Delhi-110094 declares that my correct and exact date of birth is 27.08.2007 instead of 27.08.1999. 040693902-2

I,Diya Adwani W/o Jimmy Adwani R/O-B-36 Derawala Nagar 2nd-Floor Delhi-110009, have changed my name to Archana Adwani 040693987-5

I,Glan Chand Grover S/o Shiv Dyal,R/O H.No.593, Sector-14, Hisar, Haryana-125001, have changed my name to Giyan Chand. 040694016-2

I,Geeta DHEL,W/O Parveen Dhatt R/O hono B-23A,Shivaji Vihar janta colony delhi 110027,Have changed my name to geeta Dhall. 040694012-3

I,Gaurav S/o-Ravindra Choudhary R/O.497-B,Nyay Khand-2,Indrapuram, Ghaziabad,U.P.-201014,have changed my name,from Gaurav to Gaurav Choudhary,for all,future purposes. 040693996-2

I,Ashok Kumar,S/O-Shri Bhagwat Prasad,R/O-CP-188,First Floor,Pitampura,Delhi-110034, have changed my name to Ashok Kumar Garg. 040694028-2

I,Armaan Singh Aulluck S/o Jasbir Singh R/O 521, Sector-16A, Faridabad, have changed my name to Armaan Singh. 040693996-4

I,Ajeet Pal Singh S/O Manjit Singh R/O Model Town, Delhi have changed my name from Ajit Pal Singh to Ajeet Pal Singh 040698665-1

I,Mool Chand Yadav S/o Sh. Nand Lal Yadav R/O 5/213, Subhash Nagar, New Delhi, Mool Chand & Mool Chand Yadav both names are same & one person. 040693969-1

I,Anil Kumar Jain S/o Late Sh. Amar Chand Jain R/O T-3 Mool Chand Colony Adrish Nagar, Delhi-110033, have changed my name to Anil Jain, for all purposes. 040694016-1

I,Aadtree, D/o-Reena Ramanan,R/o-89B,2nd Floor,BA-Block,Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058, Have Changed My Name to Aadtree R, for all,Purposes. 040693996-10

I,ABHISHEK S/O-SUBHASH CHOUDHARY R/O-GH-8/44 PASCHIM VIHAR DELHI-110087,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ABHISHEK CHOUDHARY. 040693999-4

I,ARTI RAI,W/O SANJAY RAI,R/O PLOT.NO.59 C-5,GYAN KHAND-1 INDIRAPURAM,GHAZIABAD,UT TAR PRADESH-201014,have CHANGED MY NAME TO ARTI RAI, FOR ALL,FUTURE PURPOSES. 040694006-6

I,heritho known as YASHWANT S/O YOGESH SINGH RATHOR R/O 46, GALI NO. 18, KARKARDOOMA, EAST DELHI, DELHI-110092 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as YASHWANT RATHOR. 0070868679-1

I,heritho known as ANSH MAL S/O NAVEEN MAL R/O W-19A, 1ST FLOOR, GREATER KAILASH-1, KAILASH COLONY, SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110048 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as ANNSH SONI MALL. 0070868691-1

I, YUVRAJ S/O MAANO HARJAL R/O H.NO.1571, GALI ROD GRAN, LAL KUAN, DELHI G.P.O., NORTH DELHI, DELHI-110006 declare that name of my mother has been wrongly written as ANITA LAL in my 10th class marks-sheet and certificate. The actual name of my mother is ANITA 0070868695-1

I,Shikha D/o Satendra Singh R/O T-612 Jalvay Vihar, Pocket-4, Sector Phi-2, Greater Noida,U.P. have changed my name from Shikha to Shikha Singh vide affidavit dated-20/06/2023 at Greater Noida. 0070868683-1

I,Bhavana Anil Kumar Relwani R/O Flat No- 5, 1st, Plot No. 180, Sector-5, Vaishall, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201010, have changed my name after marriage from Bhavana Anil Kumar Relwani to Bhavana Tyagi Hence forth I will be known as Bhavana Tyagi. 040693943-1

I, Army No- 90888663, EX Hav(now NK) Bashir Ahmad Rather, is serving with Defence Security Corps is hereby declared that my son name Unsai Ahmad Rather has been recorded in my Army service record is required to be change as per Aadhar Card/Pan Card/Civil documents. The correct name is Owais Bashir Rather. Correct name may please be used in all Government/Non Government organization/Institutes in future. 0020466275-1

I,Anubha Mathur W/o Shyam Pushp R/O F1-801, Supertech Eco Village-1, Greater Noida West, G.B.Nagar, U.P. have changed my name to Anubha Vashist for all future purposes. 0070868656-1

I,Parveen dhel,S/o-Trilok Dhall,R/O-hono B-23 A Shivaji Vihar janta colony Delhi 110027,Have changed my name to Parveen Dhall. 040694012-2

I,ANKIT SHARMA S/O KUSHAL KUMAR SHARMA R/O QT.No. 72B, M B ROAD, PUSHP VIHAR SEC-4, MALVIYA NAGAR, SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110017 declare that name of my father and mother has been wrongly written as KUSHAL SHARMA and RENU SHARMA in my 10th and 12th class marks-sheet, certificate and Bachelor of Business Administration and name of my father has been wrongly written as KUSHAL KUMAR in my PAN Card No. IXBPS1505L. The actual name of my father and mother are KUSHAL KUMAR SHARMA and RAMESHWARI SHARMA 0070868682-1

I,have changed my name from Arshad to Arshad beg for all future purpose Arshad beg s/o Shri Tahir beg R/O-335 Gali Bhaddhuje Wali Kabir Basti Malkangari Delhi-110007 0070868655-1

I,MADHU WIFE OF RAVINDER KUMAR RESIDENT OF H.N.- 24 KISKANDA (56) BHIWANI, HARYANA-124308 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MADHU MALIK. MADHU AND MADHU MALIK IS SAME PERSON. 040693930-1

I,PARAMJIT KAUR W/o No.JC181151 RANK NIB/SUB DARSAN SINGH R/O, C-103, RAM DUTT ENCLAVE, UTTAM NAGAR, Delhi-59,have CHANGED MY NAME TO PARAMJEET KAUR VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATE 16.10.23 BEFORE DELHI 0070868692-1

I,Nitin, S/o pranat pal Singh R/o house no-g-1/1081 3rd floor East Rohtash nagar Mansarovar park shahdara Delhi-110032 have changed my name to Nitin singh 0070868721-1

I,NIKKI MAAN S/O PARKASH MAAN R/O H/O.-65, VPO GHATEA VILLAGE, DELHI-110081 THAT HAVE DECLARE NIKKU MAAN and RHUSHIRAM BOTH NAMES SAME AND PERSON. 0070868687-1

I,NEHA BHANDARI CHOUDHURY W/O NISITH RANJAN CHOUDHURY R/O 84, RAJAT VIHAR, DUPLEX-2, BLOCK-A, SEC-62, NOIDA, DISTT-GAUTAM BUDDH NAGAR, U.P.-201301, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO NEHA BHANDARI FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES. 040693972-1

I,Mansi Navani, W/o Vijay Kant Navani, Address-56, DDASFS Flats pocket 1 sector 6, Dwarka Delhi 110075 040693999-1

I,B.S.Vohra,S/O K.S.Vohra,R/O-F-19/10 Krishna-Nagar,Delhi-110051,have changed my name to Bhupinderpal Singh Vohra. B.S.Vohra and Bhupinderpal Singh Vohra is one and the same-person. 040693987-8

I,ROBERT ROBINSON,S/O ROBINSON S DANIEL,R/O LEFT SIDE 4TH FLOOR HOUSE NO-894,NEAR-SHALIMAR CINEMA-HALL SUNLIGHT-COLONY 2ND HARI-NAGAR ASHRAM DELHI-110014,have changed my name to ROBERT S DANIEL,for all,future purpose. 040693987-1

I,Pradeep Mehta, S/O Shri Kamal Krishna Mehta, R/O D-37, Delhi Citizen Apartment, Sector-13, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed my name from Pardeep Mehta to Pradeep Mehta. 040693987-9

I,Paway Kripplani,D/o Dharam Pal,R/O D-216 Pitampura, Delhi-110034, have changed my minor-son name Oniesh to Oniesh Kripplani 040693987-2

I,Pawan Gupta S/O Braj Nandan Gupta R/O-328 SFS Flats Dr.Mukherjee Nagar Delhi-110009,have changed my name to Pawan Kumar Gupta. 040693987-6

I,Kum.Shalini Gupta,W/o Vaneet Jindal,R/O R-214,Pitampura Delhi-110034 have changed my name to Preema Jindal 040693987-3

I,HARSH KUMAR S/O OM PAKASH SHARMA R/O-Block A-3,Flat.No.24 Saakshara, Apartment Paschim,Vihar Delhi-110063,have changed my name to HARSH SHARMA. 040693987-7

I,SONIYA RANI W/O PAWAN WADHWA R/O-619/2,WARD NO.32,Shivaji Colony, Rohtak,Haryana-124001,have changed my minor daughter,name DIVANSHI aged 13 years to DIVANSHI WADHWA 040693987-4

I,Bhavana Anil Kumar Relwani R/O Flat No- 5, 1st, Plot No. 180, Sector-5, Vaishall, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201010, have changed my name after marriage from Bhavana Anil Kumar Relwani to Bhavana Tyagi Hence forth I will be known as Bhavana Tyagi. 040693943-1

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I,Anubha Mathur W/o Shyam Pushp R/O F1-801, Supertech Eco Village-1, Greater Noida West, G.B.Nagar, U.P. have changed my name to Anubha Vashist for all future purposes. 0070868656-1

I,Parveen dhel,S/o-Trilok Dhall,R/O-hono B-23 A Shivaji Vihar janta colony Delhi 110027,Have changed my name to Parveen Dhall. 040694012-2

I,ANKIT SHARMA S/O KUSHAL KUMAR SHARMA R/O QT.No. 72B, M B ROAD, PUSHP VIHAR SEC-4, MALVIYA NAGAR, SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110017 declare that name of my father and mother has been wrongly written as KUSHAL SHARMA and RENU SHARMA in my 10th and 12th class marks-sheet, certificate and Bachelor of Business Administration and name of my father has been wrongly written as KUSHAL KUMAR in my PAN Card No. IXBPS1505L. The actual name of my father and mother are KUSHAL KUMAR SHARMA and RAMESHWARI SHARMA 0070868682-1

I,have changed my name from Arshad to Arshad beg for all future purpose Arshad beg s/o Shri Tahir beg R/O-335 Gali Bhaddhuje Wali Kabir Basti Malkangari Delhi-110007 0070868655-1

I,MADHU WIFE OF RAVINDER KUMAR RESIDENT OF H.N.- 24 KISKANDA (56) BHIWANI, HARYANA-124308 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MADHU MALIK. MADHU AND MADHU MALIK IS SAME PERSON. 040693930-1

I,Tushar S/O Ratihban, R/O H.No. 938, Sector 13, Bhiwani, Haryana do hereby declare that I have changed my name from Tausar to Tushar for all future purposes. 040693938-1

I,Subhril Kumar,S/O,Late Sh. Babu Lal Sugandh R/O 11/46, Sadar Bazar, Delhi Cantt, South-West Delhi, Delhi-110010 have changed my name to Sudhir Sugandh for all purposes. 040693902-1

I,Ranjeet S/O Kiranpat Singh R/O Near Sikandrabad Road, Near Adarsh Inter Collage, Renhera Pedda Nalla Kalva, Ranhara, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-203135, declare that in my daughter school records,her date of birth 04/05/2009, Father Name & Mother Name are erroneously written as Ranjeet Singh, Ranjeet & Rajni where as our actual names are Rajni Devi, Ranjeet & Rajni Devi, which may be amended accordingly. 040693972-1

I,Manasi Navani, W/o Vijay Kant Navani, Address-56, DDASFS Flats pocket 1 sector 6, Dwarka Delhi 110075 040693999-1

I,B.S.Vohra,S/O K.S.Vohra,R/O-F-19/10 Krishna-Nagar,Delhi-110051,have changed my name to Bhupinderpal Singh Vohra. B.S.Vohra and Bhupinderpal Singh Vohra is one and the same-person. 040693987-8

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I, Army No- 90888663, EX Hav(now NK) Bashir Ahmad Rather, is serving with Defence Security Corps is hereby declared that my son name Unsai Ahmad Rather has been recorded in my Army service record is required to be change as per Aadhar Card/Pan Card/Civil documents. The correct name is Owais Bashir Rather. Correct name may please be used in all Government/Non Government organization/Institutes in future. 0020466275-1

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I,Parveen dhel,S/o-Trilok Dhall,R/O-hono B-23 A Shivaji Vihar janta colony Delhi 110027,Have changed my name to Parveen Dhall. 040694012-2

I,ANKIT SHARMA S/O KUSHAL KUMAR SHARMA R/O QT.No. 72B, M B ROAD, PUSHP VIHAR SEC-4, MALVIYA NAGAR, SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110017 declare that name of my father and mother has been wrongly written as KUSHAL SHARMA and RENU SHARMA in my 10th and 12th class marks-sheet, certificate and Bachelor of Business Administration and name of my father has been wrongly written as KUSHAL KUMAR in my PAN Card No. IXBPS1505L. The actual name of my father and mother are KUSHAL KUMAR SHARMA and RAMESHWARI SHARMA 0070868682-1

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PUBLIC NOTICE
My Clients: Smt. Rani Pal Goyal S/o Sh. Om Prakash Goyal & Smt. Sheela Goyal W/O Shri. Ram Pal Goyal, R/O 24/23, Sector-42, Phase-1, Sector-17, Rohini, Delhi-110089, have disowned and debarred their son Ajay Goyal S/O Shri Ram Pal Goyal and legal heirs (if any) in future. If any, from their all movable and immovable properties forever and my clients will have no concern from them in any manner Anybody dealing with their own risks, costs and consequences.
Sd/- Aniruddh Gang Advocate
Ch. No. 211, Lawyers Chamber District Court, Rohini, Delhi-110085

PUBLIC NOTICE
My client M. KAMAR-CHOUDHARY S/O LATE M. H. CHOUDHARY, RESIDENT OF FLOOR-GULSHAN APARTMENT 10355, GALI NO. 11, LALITA PARK LAXMI NAGAR, DELHI-92, has severed all relations and severed the relationship with YASA CHOWDHRY. The said person has been living separately from my client since my client divorced his mother. The said person has been disowned and disinherited and shall henceforth be treated as a stranger. I claim over any movable or immovable properties of my client. Anybody dealing with said person, Mr. YASA CHOWDHRY will do so at their own risks and consequences thereof, as my clients shall not be responsible for any of acts, deeds and commitments of YASA CHOWDHRY.
Sd/- SHEEPER KUMAR EN. NO. D2874/2009 Advocate Ch.No. C-78, C.JOSEPH BLOCK TIS HAZARI COURTS, DELHI.

PUBLIC NOTICE
GENERAL-PUBLIC-IS-HEREBY-INFORMED THAT MY CLIENT Smt. Anoop Singh and Pte. AADHAR NO. 528139195414. W/O LATE RAM GOPAL GUPTA, R/O FIRST FLOOR, K X-36

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER BALANGIR IRRIGATION CIRCLE, BALANGIR. E-mail: sebalangir@gmail.com "e-procurement Notice" BID Identification No: ACE, BOIC- 04/2023-24

दक्षिणांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि० कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत वितरण मण्डल 132 केवी विद्युत उपकेन्द्र, आँदपुरा, हाथरस

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY NOTICE It is to inform that 12506 Anand Vihar-Kamakhya Express had derailed at Raghunathpur station of Danapur Division over East Central Railway on 11.10.2023.

Uttarakhand Landslide Mitigation and Management Center (ULMMC) Under Department of Disaster Management & Rehabilitation (Government of Uttarakhand) REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL REFERENCE No. 199 / 23 /ULMMC/2023 DATE: 13.10.2023

दक्षिणांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि० कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत वितरण मण्डल 132 केवी विद्युत उपकेन्द्र, आँदपुरा, हाथरस

दक्षिणांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि० कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत वितरण मण्डल 132 केवी विद्युत उपकेन्द्र, आँदपुरा, हाथरस

GUJARAT URJA VIKAS NIGAM LIMITED CIN U40109GJ2004SGC045195 (Wholly owned company of Govt. of Gujarat) INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS

Executive Engineer C,D, P.W.D, Khurja (Bulandshhar) No. 1718 /6A /E-TENDER/2023 Dated- 07.10.2023 E-Procurement Inviting Tenders Notice

Table with 7 columns: Sr. No., Name of Work, Estimated cost (Rs. in Lac), Bid Security (Rs. in Lacs), Work Completion, Tender document fee including GST, Contractors Category. Lists various road works in Bulandshhar.

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE Table with 6 columns: Sr. No., NAME OF BOARD/ CORP./AUTH, NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER, OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME), AMOUNT/TEND (APPROX.) IN RUPEES, WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH

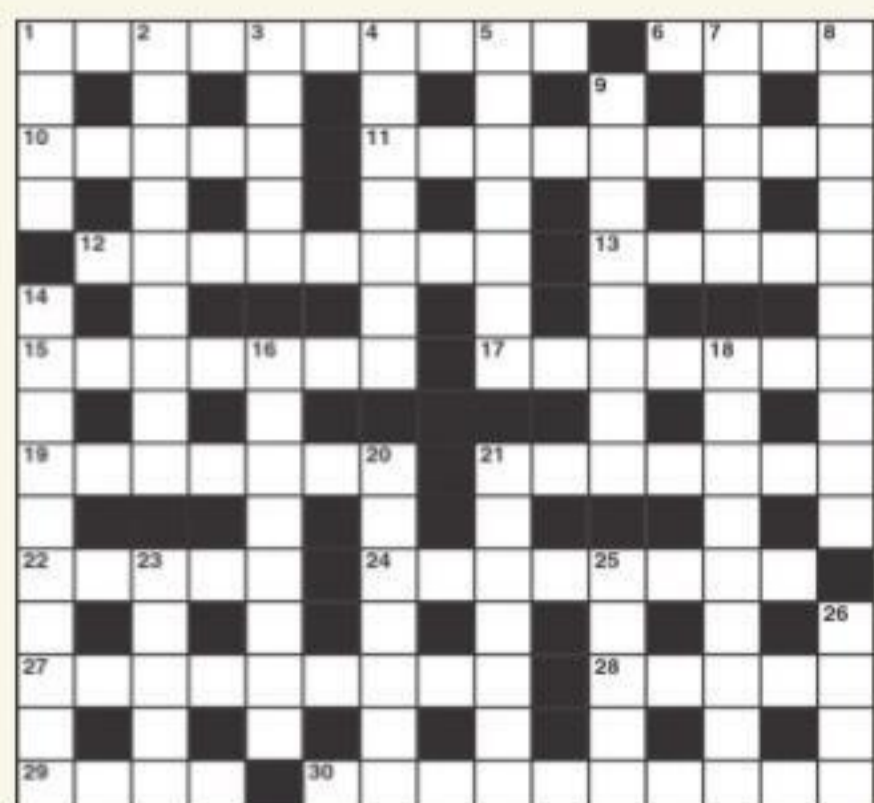
GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE Table with 6 columns: Sr. No., NAME OF BOARD/ CORP./AUTH, NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER, OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME), AMOUNT/TEND (APPROX.) IN RUPEES, WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH

Government of Jharkhand Rural Works Department JHARKHAND STATE RURAL ROADS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (JSRRDA) NOTICE INVITING TENDERS e-Tender No.- 105 /2023-24 Dated: 16.10.2023

Table with 7 columns: Sr. No., Name of Work, Estimated cost (Rs. in Lac), Bid Security (Rs. in Lacs), Work Completion, Tender document fee including GST, Contractors Category. Continuation of road works list.

1. Tender Document Fee & Bid Security must be deposited through Internet Banking. 2. All registered contractors have to upload Turnover certified by C.A. of last 5 Year and details of maximum cost work satisfactorily completed in last 5 Years on chanakya software before Submission of tender details of e-tender uploaded on https://etender.up.nic.in shall also be uploaded on Uppwd Chanakya software, before last date & time of submission of bid.

CROSSWORD 5184



ACROSS
1 Dismissed from brotherhood for not working (3,2,5)
6 An attempt to cause grievous bodily harm (4)
10 Urge quiet with children around (5)
11 Poor start led expert losing time to be confused (9)
12 Drive a camping convertible (8)
13 Incur changes in old Scandinavian characters (5)
15 To reduce consumption is of no avail (7)
17 Cut and is cross perhaps (7)
19 Puts it on without being told? (7)
21 Limits in rents perhaps (7)
22 Baggage vehicles? (5)
24 A popular calling (8)
27 Absurd result of devaluation (9)
28 Famous doctor seen from a new angle (5)
29 Russian girl in gaol break (4)
30 A pop star possibly pulsating with vitality (10)
DOWN
1 This oven has a ring outside for roasting (4)
2 Youngsters eat greens for development (9)
3 Surfeited from a meal in flight? (3,2)
4 Rips are put in order by mending (7)
5 Jobs for the boys (7)
7 Unwelcome substance in canned beef? (5)
8 Casts bread out; gets ham instead (3,7)
9 He raises unnecessary fears of a mistral storm (8)
14 Finish - a sentence? (3,1,4,2)
16 Engaged - that's the conclusion about me and a girl (8)
18 Secret communications attachment for a rock climber (9)
20 It's true I will appear in the screen version (7)
21 An ivory cutter (7)
23 Imitating the sound of a bullet? (5)
25 Dark side of Sir Lancelot we hear (5)
26 A slight cut (4)

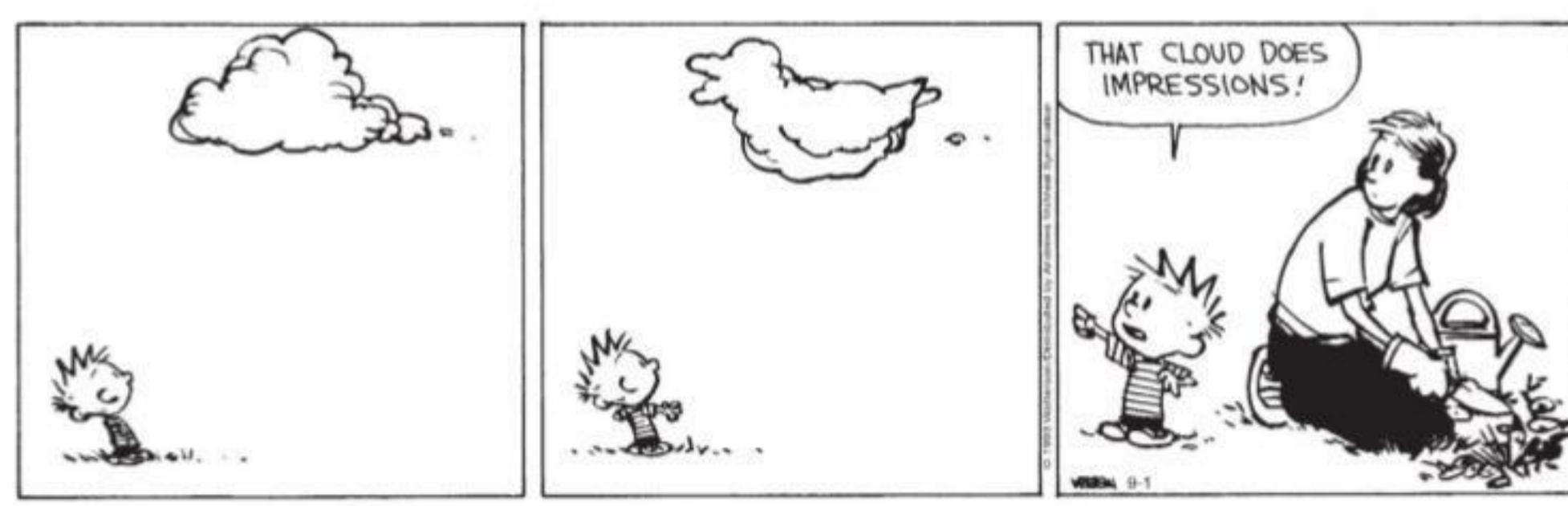
JUMBLD WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip. It takes as much energy to ___ as it does to ___. - Eleanor Roosevelt (4,..4)
JNNAI
SILTY
HILTNP
EEYZHW

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



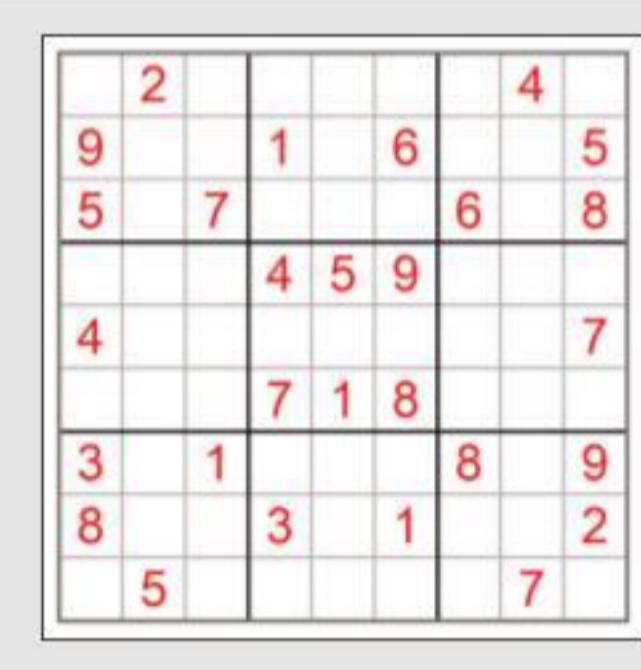
CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



Difficulty Level 4s
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 5352



DAY TODAY BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)
GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)
CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

Supervising Engineer Bulandshahr Circle, P.W.D., Bulandshahr E - Procurement Inviting Tender Notice

Purvanchal Vidyut Vitaran Nigam Limited Vidyut Nagar, POST OFFICE: BLW Varanasi-221004 Very Short E-Tender Notice

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, PWD (ROADS), CITY ROAD CIRCLE, BAMUNIMAIDAN, GUWAHATI-21

MANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED (Government of Karnataka undertaking)

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE

Department of Higher Education, Haryana Advertisement for the position of Vice Chancellor, Chaudhary Bansi Lal University, Bhiwani

Department of Higher Education, Haryana Advertisement for the position of Vice Chancellor, Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa

"IMPORTANT" Whist care is taken prior to acceptance of advertising copy, it is not possible to verify its contents.

कार्यालय उज्जैन नगर पालिक निगम, उज्जैन (Online) निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE



TODAY'S MATCH

South Africa vs Netherlands, 2pm

Live on Star Sports network

STANDINGS

TEAM	M	W	L	T	PTS	NRG
Ind	3	3	0	0	6	+1.821
NZ	3	3	0	0	6	+1.604
SA	2	2	0	0	4	+2.360
Pak	3	2	1	0	4	+0.927
Eng	3	1	2	0	2	-0.084
Afg	3	1	2	0	2	-0.6552
Ban	3	1	2	0	2	-0.699
Aus	3	1	2	0	2	-0.734
SL	3	0	3	0	0	-1.532
Ned	2	0	2	0	0	-1.800

Had to clear fitness test before SL game: Zampa

Lucknow: Australia spinner Adam Zampa says there were question marks on his fitness ahead of their must-win fixture against Sri Lanka due to the back spasm. "I have been sporting a back spasm for a couple of days. I had to go through the fitness test before the match. But I felt I bowled better today," he told the reporters after Australia's first win in the World Cup.

Zampa has been under the pump in the past few games. In the first two matches of the ODI World Cup, he has given away 123 runs in 18 overs with an economy close to seven. On his form, Zampa said: "I am very good at the self-reflection. I looked back at the last two games, I could have made the difference against South Africa. I couldn't bowl better in the last game and to be honest, I feel I can do better but good to be at the better end of the result tonight.

"Against India we were more under the pump defending the total of 200. I am someone who likes to attack and get wickets. I don't care about figures, it is more about my attitude. I didn't feel at my best but I want to try and keep my wicket-taking attitude. We have a big game against Pakistan in Bangalore and that's going to be a tough one." ENS

Win over Eng can boost Afghan cricket: Trott

New Delhi: Afghanistan's 69-run win over defending champions England at the World Cup will give them the belief they can go toe-to-toe with cricket's leading nations for years to come, coach Jonathan Trott said. "This is significant, certainly in the manner and by the margin as well," Trott told reporters on Sunday. "There's a lot of confidence that will hopefully come from this when competing against the bigger nations and it'll have a knock-on effect to all the other games, not only in this World Cup, but for the future as well." REUTERS

Have to show character from here on: Buttler

New Delhi: England will have to play some of their "best cricket" to come out of the hole they find themselves in following their shock defeat to Afghanistan in the ODI World Cup. On whether it was premature to say that England's World Cup defence was under threat, Buttler, whose team is yet to face India, Australia and South Africa, said, "As I mentioned just before, it's not been the way we wanted to start the competition, but this is the situation we find ourselves in and we're going to have to play some of our best cricket moving forward." PTI

RAHUL PANDEY
DHARAMSALA, OCTOBER 16

AS EARLY as the mid-17th century, Cape Town would act as a refreshment outpost for the Dutch East India Company (VOC), supplying them with fresh fruits, vegetables and meat on their way to Asia, and give weary sailors an opportunity to recuperate. Almost four centuries later, the trade route is still operational with the United Nations Comtrade database confirming US\$6.02 billion worth of South Africa's exports to the Netherlands in the year 2022. As the two countries face off in the World Cup on Tuesday, it is fitting that the Dutch's marquee player has South African roots. Roelof van der Merwe, who arrived on the international stage as a Protea, switched shirts in 2015, and is finally living his dream of playing in world cricket's biggest tournament. He recalls his early vis-

Australia rediscover fight

From cruising at 125 for no loss in the 22nd over, Sri Lanka tottered, horribly, to 209 all out in the 44th over

SANDIPG
LUCKNOW, OCTOBER 16

IT WAS an evening of collapses. In the stands, minutes before Australia shut out Sri Lanka, the World Cup-logo imprinted hoardings of the boudin-shaped roof fell dangerously and dramatically into the pale-blue seats. Some clung onto the edges of the frame and flapped violently in the breeze that kicked up from nowhere. Spectators fled their seats to the safety of the corridors, its entrance carved like the guards' perch of Mughal forts. There were intermittent power outages, a bristling spell of rain that stopped the game for half an hour and a gust of dust-storm.

But Sri Lanka and Australia combined to script the biggest collapse story, one that rivals Pakistan's the other day in Ahmedabad in its suddenness, though without the cruelly partisan crowd shrieking hostilities in their ears. From cruising along at 125 for no loss in the 22nd over, Sri Lanka tottered, horribly, to 209 in the 44th over. The Australian chase wasn't without hiccups—they were 2 for 24 and 3 for 81—but they wrapped up the chase with 15 overs to spare and five wickets intact.

Australia needed a match like this, to restore confidence, to rebuild their campaign, to heave a sigh of relief at last. The victory did not set a victory-template—some things are falling into place, but there are things yet to fall into place—but there is belief too. Whether this inspires a dramatic turnaround or not, until they meet Pakistan, they could dream, hope and take a deep breath of relief. There is something to clutch onto. Hence perhaps the mild celebrations after Marcus Stoinis sealed the game with a six.

Finally, two-and-a-half games into the tournament, Australia rediscovered Australia. The fight, the energy, the belief and every single emotion that you associate with them. It was loosely what Pat Cummins had described as the Australian way of playing the game. "When we're at our best, we're putting big runs on the board. We're putting the pressure back into the opposition. Us bowlers are taking wickets through the middle. So, we haven't been able to pull any of that together so far," he had said. In parts, they managed to play the Australian way.

Captain's contribution

The brightest light was the reemergence of their old-hands, their flatness held responsible for the shocking start. Cummins was the central protagonist—it is little coincidence that the spirit of the team picks up when the captain puts on an inspired show. In his second spell, Cummins produced his best of the tournament, bowling with aggression and hostility; he was nasty and mean, bowling with



For Australia, the brightest light on Monday was the re-emergence of their old hands. AP

the anger of a rebel. He conjured the wicket that turned the game on its head. The ball that blasted the stumps of Kusal Perera was his staple stuff—angling in from around the stumps to the left-hander, beating him with pace, angle and marginal away movement. But it meant a lot to him. His celebrations are usually mild, a beatific smile spreads over his face. But here, he snarled, the veins of his neck and arms popping out, and punched the air.

His team could sense something special unfolding. Just a few overs ago David Warner kept them in the game with a stunning catch of Pathum Nissanka to end a 125-run partnership. Baited to pull by Cummins, Nissanka top-edged and Warner ran from the square-leg fence to midwicket to pounce the catch. Hitherto, Australia had looked utterly deflated, as though they were living the first two games again. Inept bowling, reckless fielding and dodgy strategies had come to haunt them again. But as the old truism goes, or to tweak the unimaginative tournament caption, (it takes a day) it takes just a moment of brilliance on the field or a splendid ball to change the tide, to re-instil belief and hope.

Suddenly there was a buzz, a rush of energy, a surge of dopamine. They were noisier and nastier. Then men saving singles became catchers. Energy seized the strides of bowlers. Wickets were moments of wild

celebrations. There was joy again in the way Australia played, and there was joy again in watching them play, forging a comeback from another difficult match. At 125 for 0, they would see the hopes of reclaiming the World Cup sinking beyond their horizons. But then Australia always bounces back, from the edge, from the slope, from being written off.

Zampa answers critics

Another condemned and criticized Australian bowler, Adam Zampa, chose this moment to strike back. He nailed Sri Lanka's mainstay Kusal Mendis, teasing him with the googly and cross-seamer (that slips into the right-hander) before dangling the leg-break. Mendis unpacked his sweep, one of his high percentage strokes. He miscued and Warner clawed it, before he let out a scream of rage that could have been heard as far as the shopping mall in the outer edges of the stadium. Abruptly, Sri Lanka trembled. They looked dazzled, thoughts and ideas blanking out. When they needed ice-veined batsmen, they got muddle-headed ones. Be it lack of experience or skill, or perhaps both, no one knew how to stop the rot. Instead panic set in, they wilted like the claddings of the roof. Zampa, a force reborn, consumed Sadeera Samarawickrama with his cross-seamer that skidded onto

hit the pads. From then on, Australia swaggered, like the Australia of the old.

Then whistled in the rain, but post the break, Sri Lanka seemed even more rattled. Australia sensed this fear and they ratcheted up the ante, going for the jugular. Mitchell Starc, bowling as fast as he had in this tournament, winked out the tentative Dhananjaya de Silva with a ball that angled into him from around the stumps. De Silva played down the wrong line and inside-edged the ball back onto his furniture. Bafflingly, most of Sri Lanka's batsmen perished playing down the wrong line—Perera, Samarawickrama and de Silva.

This was typical of Sri Lanka in this tournament, a lack of snuffing out the match when the opportunity arises, stalling them in all three games. Against Pakistan, they could have stretched the total beyond 350 but for the last four wickets falling for 20 runs. Versus South Africa, they lost the steam in the middle overs, losing three wickets for 41 runs.

A team as seasoned as Australia, in dire need to turn their campaign around, were not in a merciful mood to get them away lightly. But whether this moment sparks a reversal of fortunes has to be seen. Their fate is akin to the hoarding flapping in the air, one end still fastened to the roof, the other a breeze away from a free-fall, but still clutching on.

SCOREBOARD

AUSTRALIA vs SRI LANKA

BRISABVE STADIUM, LUCKNOW
Toss: Sri Lanka elected to bat

SRI LANKA

■ P Nissanka c Warner b Cummins **61** (67b, 8x4)
 ■ K Perera b Cummins **78** (82b, 12x4)
 ■ K Mendis c Warner b Zampa **9** (13b)
 ■ S Samarawickrama lbw b Zampa **8** (8b)
 ■ C Asalanka c Labuschagne b Maxwell **25** (39b, 1x6)
 ■ D de Silva b Starc **7** (13b, 1x4)
 ■ D Wellalage run out Cummins **2** (9b)
 ■ C Karunaratne lbw b Zampa **2** (11b)
 ■ M Theekshana lbw b Zampa **0** (5b)
 ■ L Kumara b Starc **10** (3b, 1x4)
 ■ D Madushanka not out **0** (6b)
 ■ Extras (b 2, lb 2, w 9) **13**
 ■ Total 43.3 Ov (RR: 4.80) **209**
 ■ FoW: 1-125 (Pathum Nissanka, 21.4 ov), 2-157 (Kusal Perera, 26.2 ov), 3-165 (Kusal Mendis, 27.6 ov), 4-166 (Sadeera Samarawickrama, 29.1 ov), 5-178 (Dhananjaya de Silva, 32.3 ov), 6-184 (Dunith Wellalage, 34.5 ov), 7-196 (Chamika Karunaratne, 37.6 ov), 8-199 (Maheesh Theekshana, 39.2 ov), 9-204 (Lahiru Kumara, 39.2 ov), 10-209 (Charith Asalanka, 43.3 ov)
 ■ Bowling: Mitchell Starc 10-0-43-2, Josh Hazlewood 7-1-36-0, Pat Cummins 7-0-32-2, Glenn Maxwell 9.3-0-36-1, Adam Zampa 8-1-47-4, Marcus Stoinis 2-0-11-0.

AUSTRALIA

■ M Marsh run out Karunaratne **52** (51b, 9x4)
 ■ D Warner lbw b Madushanka **11** (6b, 1x6)
 ■ S Smith lbw b Madushanka **0** (5b)
 ■ M Labuschagne c Karunaratne b Madushanka **40** (60b, 2x4)
 ■ J Inglis c Theekshana b Wellalage **58** (59b, 5x4, 1x6)
 ■ G Maxwell not out **31** (21b, 4x4, 2x6)
 ■ M Stoinis not out **20** (10b, 2x4, 1x6)
 ■ Extras (w 3) **3**
 ■ Total 35.2 Ov (RR: 6.08) **215/5**
 ■ FoW: 1-24 (David Warner, 3.1 ov), 2-24 (Steve Smith, 3.6 ov), 3-81 (Mitchell Marsh, 14.3 ov), 4-158 (Marcus Labuschagne, 28.5 ov), 5-192 (Josh Inglis, 33.1 ov)
 ■ Bowling: Lahiru Kumara 4-0-47-0, Dilshan Madushanka 9-2-38-3, Maheesh Theekshana 7-0-49-0, Chamika Karunaratne 3-0-15-0, Dhananjaya de Silva 3-0-13-0



Day before game, rain puts Dharamsala outfield in more strife

RAHUL PANDEY
DHARAMSALA, OCTOBER 16

ON THE eve of the South Africa-Netherlands World Cup game, the hill town witnessed rain throughout the day, starting early in the morning.

The surrounding mountains had their first snowfall of the season and as a result, Dharamsala saw heavy showers from well before dawn. Not a ray of sunshine graced the HPCA Stadium throughout the day and the groundstaff were hard at work with super-soppers.

It remains to be seen how an already 'average' outfield fares during Tuesday's match.

"*Kya lagta hai sir, match hoga kya* (What do you think, will the match take place?)" ACID official tasked with the security of the venue can't resist asking if the game is un-

der threat. It may take the investigation resources and nuance of the agency to find an answer to the question.

However, the host association expressed confidence that there was no threat to the fixture.

"The prediction for the next games is fine and we are fully equipped for them," Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association (HPCA) secretary Avnish Parmar told The Indian Express.

But he did admit that the venue had been in a race against time to get ready for the marquee event.

"Our plans were formulated keeping in mind normal weather conditions in Dharamsala, but this year the monsoon and winter has prolonged which has affected ground preparation."

The venue, which has hosted two World Cup games so far, is marked to host three more including the India-New Zealand



It remains to be seen how an already 'average' outfield fares on Tuesday. Rahul Pandey

match this Sunday. When asked if there are any contingencies in place to move the matches elsewhere, Parmar reiterates,

"There is no such concern as all World Cup matches are on schedule and we are fully prepared."

However, with rain making the patchy outfield even muddier, the issue has been flagged by the two teams scheduled to play on Tuesday.

"Yeah, it looks a bit touchy. When we practised last night, it didn't affect us so much. I don't know if it's easy to change your diving technique as a result in the heat of the moment (during the game). Guys will have to put a bit more attention to it," South Africa skipper Temba Bavuma said on Monday.

Netherlands head coach Ryan Cook weighed in on a lighter note. "I'll speak about the outfield with a bit of glee because this is probably better than most of the outfields we play in any way."

It's not the first time that players and coaches have critiqued the Dharamsala

surface during the tournament. Afghanistan head coach Jonathan Trott had claimed their spinner Mujeeb ur Rahman was extremely lucky to escape injury following a dive in the deep that saw his knee getting stuck in the turf.

England skipper Jos Buttler had termed the outfield 'poor' and something that went 'against everything you want to be as a team'.

There'd been heavy showers on the night before the England-Bangladesh game when the ICC had termed the outfield 'average'; however, a clear sky and sunshine saved the day. Whether or not South Africa and Netherlands enjoy similar luck remains to be seen.

"Ground maintenance is a continuous process and conditions here improve each day when the sun comes out, and should improve further as per the forecast," adds Parmar.

FORMER PROTEA

Van der Merwe & his Dutch mates aiming for Adelaide replay against SA

RAHUL PANDEY
DHARAMSALA, OCTOBER 16

AS EARLY as the mid-17th century, Cape Town would act as a refreshment outpost for the Dutch East India Company (VOC), supplying them with fresh fruits, vegetables and meat on their way to Asia, and give weary sailors an opportunity to recuperate. Almost four centuries later, the trade route is still operational with the United Nations Comtrade database confirming US\$6.02 billion worth of South Africa's exports to the Netherlands in the year 2022. As the two countries face off in the World Cup on Tuesday, it is fitting that the Dutch's marquee player has South African roots. Roelof van der Merwe, who arrived on the international stage as a Protea, switched shirts in 2015, and is finally living his dream of playing in world cricket's biggest tournament. He recalls his early vis-

its to India courtesy the IPL and a tour he missed out on with the South African team in 2011.

"It's been a while since the IPL days but just thinking back on that, at the time in 2011, I was pretty disappointed not to have made the 50-overs World Cup team that year," says van der Merwe before sighing in relief on "the opportunity that has finally come".

For someone who was part of two South African T20 World Cup squads and the Royal Challengers Bangalore franchise that made it to the 2009 IPL final, why the shift to Dutch cricket though?

"Obviously, my mom's Dutch. That's where my gravitation to play for Holland comes from. At the time of making the decision to switch, there wasn't much opportunity for me to break into the South African team. At that time, it was the best decision for my family," says van der Merwe, who played his last game for South Africa in June 2010.

Playing against his former side makes



Roelof van der Merwe played his last game for South Africa in June 2010. PTI

Even though the Dutch have lost their first two games of the Cricket World Cup so far, van der Merwe believes a favourable result is possible on Tuesday

little difference to the spin bowling all-rounder's pre-game psyche.

"It drags the same weight for me. I don't think it'll be any more special than any other team. We're looking to win the game."

Even though the Dutch have lost their first two games of the tournament, van der Merwe believes a favourable result is possible on Tuesday.

Not just because Afghanistan have managed to topple world champions England, but also because of the recent history between the two teams.

Van der Merwe remembers the after-

noon in Adelaide less than a year ago when he pounced a spectacular catch of David Miller to set in motion a T20 World Cup knockout punch to the Proteas. Any texts from former South Africa teammates afterwards?

"I did not receive any. It was a good win for us and a tough day for them. There weren't any funny exchanges and... it's better that way," says van der Merwe, further suggesting that win worked wonders as far as the confidence of his current teammates is concerned.

Cricket? Hopefully, little longer

The Dutch international believes his longevity on the international stage is due to a childlike enthusiasm for the sport, even at 38.

It might also be the prospect of completing unfinished business of playing in an ODI World Cup that's kept van der Merwe going, especially as he missed out on the 2011 edition in India.

Or, it may be something about his role

with the ball.

"Everyone said left-arm spin won't play a big role in 50-overs cricket but as we see, left-arm spin or finger-spin in general just offers something different to the mystery spin or your wrist spinners.

"For more control in the game and holding things together. There's a massive part to play for them and we've seen at this World Cup with (Mitchell) Santner, (Ravindra) Jadeja and (Shakib) al Hasan.... they're all still very competitive and taking wickets."

But there's also the bigger picture.

"If we look at cricket in South Africa, it's well developed and we've got a lot of numbers playing it.

"In the Netherlands, it's still developing into a big sport.

"I think from the players' side, all we can keep doing is going to the World Cups and performing.

"Hopefully, the next generation picks up on it and we can grow the game further in the Netherlands," he says.

Will the best in cricket be at the Olympics?

Cricket reaches Olympics, via IPL

Cricket's return to Games based on success of the league; matches in 2028 could be played in stadium being built by KKR

MIHIR VASAVDA
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 16

THE UNANSWERED questions after cricket's return to the Olympics:

Will the big stars turn up?

Cricket is back at the Olympics, but whether the top cricketers will follow is the question. At the recent Asian Games, most top teams of the continent didn't send their main players given the tournament's proximity to the ICC Men's 50-over World Cup. India, in fact, wasn't even going to send a team until the cricket board had a last-minute rethink.

Karl Stoss, the chairman of the Olympic Programme Commission, said the IOC will 'work closely' with the International Cricket Council to ensure the best players compete at the Olympics. The international cricket calendar for 2028 isn't finalised yet and with the Games to be held from July 14-30, the IOC hopes a window will be created for the Games in the FTP.

When asked about the top cricketers' availability, ICC chairman Greg Barclay said, "Of course, it's the Olympics."

Will it make cricket a global game?

A lot is being said about the return into the Olympic fold making cricket a global game and taking it to countries where it has a very limited presence. Basically, make it a truly global sport rather than just one played by Commonwealth countries.

But there are doubts over this. With the competition set to be a six-team affair, and the USA likely to get a direct berth by virtue of being hosts, there is a risk that cricket at the Games will be restricted to the usual suspects who will take the other spots. The qualification pathway for the Games will be decided after the Paris Olympics.

Meanwhile, the IOC member from Ivory Coast, Tidjane Thiam, said the sport must increase its footprint to at least 75 percent of the 206 nations recognised by the IOC. At present, Thiam said, cricket is played in 'less than 50 percent of the national federations'.

How will it impact other sports?

The addition of five sports - four of them being team sports - in Los Angeles means the total number of athletes will go beyond the agreed quota of 10,500. Stoss said the IOC has projected that roughly 742 more athletes will be a part of the Games.

To alleviate the burden on the Games village, the organisers have floated the possibility of some sports being held out of Los Angeles.

And then, there is a likelihood of other sports losing athlete quota or seeing a reduction in disciplines. There were murmurs about the number of teams in hockey being reduced from the current 12, but International Hockey Federation president Tayyab Ikram denied there was any such move.

Nicola Campriani, Italy's gold medal-winning shooter who is the LA Games' sports director, said it hasn't been decided yet if medal events in shooting will be reduced.

"The exact combinations as well as athlete quotas will be confirmed at the time of event programme decision, which is after Paris 2024," Campriani said.



At the Asian Games, India won gold in men's and women's cricket.

MIHIR VASAVDA
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 16

AS CRICKET charted its way back into the Olympic fold after more than 120 years, it had one major reference point: the Indian Premier League (IPL).

The competition wasn't even 10 years old when Los Angeles was awarded the 2028 Olympics. However, it had caught the imagination of the Games organisers not just for its money-spinning ability but also the match-day fanfare, the heady mix of sport and entertainment as well as for showing the full potential of the sport that, outside the Commonwealth, was mocked for being too long, too slow and too complex. "We want to recreate that environment," said Casey Wasserman, the head of the Los Angeles Olympics Organising Committee.

Wasserman was speaking moments after the International Olympic Committee (IOC) members rubber-stamped cricket's return to the Games for the first time since Paris 1900 during its Summit here on Monday.

Cricket's path to the Olympics after a long exile is indelibly inked with IPL's footsteps. The thrust provided by the league in the rise of the T20 format, followed by countries across continents, is seen as one of the reasons it was considered to be a part of the Olympics, which earlier couldn't accommodate the 50-over format.

Then, the IOC relied on the advice of Nita Ambani, co-owner of Mumbai Indians, for the sport's inclusion. Moreover, the LA Olympics cricket matches could be held at a stadium that is being built by another IPL franchise - Kolkata Knight Riders.

Wasserman experienced the IPL first hand in 2010. And in an instant, he was sold.

"To have that expertise, that understanding, how to operate a tournament at that level, how to attract the greatest players in the world, how to make it the most exciting environment..." the American sports executive gushed on the sidelines of the IOC Session in Mumbai. "I will never forget my first IPL match. It was electric."

And so, in 2017, after Los Angeles was awarded the Games, cricket was included in the initial shortlist of 14 sports that could be added to the programme on their recommendation.

Perpetual bridesmaid squash finally gets its grand wedding

AMIT KAMATH
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 16

THERE IS a one-decade-old line from Malaysian squash superstar Nicol David that sums up the frustration of anyone who has played the sport at the elite level. "I would trade my six world titles for an Olympic gold medal," an exasperated David had said after the sport had been ignored for the sports program for Rio 2016, the second successive time it was failing to break into the exclusive club that is the Olympics.

David's frustrations have been shared by many of her peers over the past decades. But after repeated rejections, the sport finally finds itself as a part of the Olympic movement after the IOC voted on Monday to approve its presence at the Los Angeles Olympics in 2028. At the IOC Session, former Olympic medal-winning shooter Niccolò Campriani, who is now the LA28 Sports Director, summed up the situation simply: "This sport has always been the bridesmaid, never the bride."

"The Olympics (will be) the epitome of world squash! You ask anyone who has even won seven-eight world titles, they will be ready to give up every single one of them to be able to get that one Olympic medal." said 37-year-old Saurav Ghosal. "It's an absolutely monu-



The IOC, led by Thomas Bach, relied on the advice of Nita Ambani, co-owner of Mumbai Indians, for cricket's inclusion. ANI

mental day for world squash. Every squash player worth his salt has dreamt of this day. I wish I was 10 years younger, no doubt about it."

Despite the ravages of age on his body, and the fact that he will be 42 when the LA 2028 Games come along, Saurav did not rule out the

What I can see, what we all can see is great development of cricket and we have always been made aware of this by our IOC member in India Nita Ambani, who has given good advice," Bach said. "We had this discussion with the organising committee of LA. So everything came together."

Italy's gold medal-winning shooter Niccolò Campriani, now the sports director of the LA Games, said he witnessed the high levels of interest during the women's cricket matches at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games last year.

The Women's Premier League and other professional competitions, he added, provided a 'unique platform. "These professional leagues (are a) unique platform to engage with a whole new community of athletes," Campriani said. "As an athlete, it's going to be life-changing."

Cricket's return to the Olympics, though, comes with certain conditions. Karl Stoss, the chairman of the Olympic programme commission, said they will 'monitor closely' that the participating na-

tions field 'their best players' at the Games.

And the IOC member from Ivory Coast Tidjane Thiam said the sport must increase its footprint to at least 75 percent of the 206 nations recognised by the IOC. At present, Thiam said, cricket is played in 'less than 50 percent of the national federations'.

Bach expressed hope that the sport will overcome these hurdles. And if it does, and when cricket returns to the Olympics, it's likely to be played in an arena built in collaboration with the Shah Rukh Khan-owned Kolkata Knight Riders, who also own the LA franchise of Major League Cricket.

Wasserman said he's already met the franchise's owners regarding this matter. "The Bollywood connection there is obviously powerful and exciting for us. So if they are able to create a facility, we'd love them to be the host of cricket," Wasserman said. "But obviously that's their responsibility for their team. LA Knight Riders, I guess, is what it's going to be called. And so if it comes in time for '28, it's great. If not, we have other options."



Squash's presence at the Olympics has the power to rejuvenate the sport. PTI

mentality. I hope that I can do it! No promises right now, but it's definitely something that is a big pull for me now. I will do everything I can to be there," Saurav told Indian journalists at the Jio World Centre in Mumbai after the news was sealed by the IOC Session.

Not just its protagonists, squash's presence at the Olympics also has the power to rejuvenate the sport, believe the global custodians of the sport.

The World Squash Federation currently has 86 full members besides 39 associate members. This number of 125 nations that play the sport globally could have been much higher if the sport had been at the Olympics. LA 2028, in a sense, could be a 'breakthrough' moment for the sport in a country like China, which is very serious about Olympic sport at large. At the recent Hangzhou Asian Games, which China hosted and dominated in almost every sport, they only had doubles players competing in squash.

"This is a game changer for us. Being in the Olympics is very important to our sport and our national federations. We haven't had the chance to drive that growth because there are nations which will engage with Olympic sports, but not non-Olympic sports. That's been one of our problems. Since we are not in the Olympics, it has been difficult for our national federations to get funding from governments," said Zena Woolldridge, president of the global squash federation.

Woolldridge said that what worked in the favour of the sport was a troika of factors: one, that it puts a diverse variety of athletes on the podium from various continents. Two, that it has been donning its creative hat over the years to make it more appealing with glass flooring and LED lights to make the field of play look more exciting.

And three, that it was financially flexible which helped the LA 2028 organisers include it as part of the five-sport package, which had four other team sports.

This is why squash at the LA 2028 will only be a singles event, since doubles requires a separate, wider court.

"For LA, what we did was tell the organising committee that we'll be flexible. We are open to fitting into what you need. We'll work with you. Needing the doubles court would have added complexity. We're the smallest sport among those five (cricket, lacrosse, flag football and baseball/softball). We have the smallest footprint," said Woolldridge.

The sport can also add more drama than other racket sports.

Come 2028, the perpetual bridesmaid will get its grand wedding.

MIDDLE-DISTANCE RUNNING

After Asiad silver in 1500m, Saroj hopes he gets cash prize from UP govt

NITIN SHARMA
CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 16

THE FIRST time India's long distance foreign coach Scott Simmons met middle distance athlete Ajay Saroj during a training camp at Bengaluru, the foreign coach was impressed by the calm demeanour of the Uttar Pradesh athlete.

With Saroj training for months under him, the impression stayed the same and Simmons would give a new name to Saroj in his diary. It would read 'The Silent Monk' and as the 26-year-old Indian athlete won the silver medal in men's 1500m final in Hangzhou Asian Games earlier this month, Simmons would once again make an entry in his training diary.

"My first impression of Saroj being so calm and silent made me name him 'The silent monk'. Luckily the impression has remained the same and that has been Saroj's biggest strength as a middle distance runner. The same is true about his race tactics and that's what he showed in Hangzhou. He adjusted to the conditions well and to see him win his first Asian Games medal in a calm manner has made me

expect more medals from him at the international level," Simmons told *The Indian Express*.

With his father Dharamraj working as a plumber in Kajjani village near Allahabad, Saroj grew up accompanying him to the village ground in the evenings. Youngest among six siblings, Saroj would listen to the track tales of his elder brother Ajit, a 800m and 1500m national-level runner and sisters Shashi and Shastri, both of whom competed in 5000m and 10000m at the national level.

Saroj's initiation in middle distance running happened at the Meva Lal Inter College at his village before he started training at the Madan Mohan Malviya Stadium at Allahabad. "My father used to take me to the village ground after his plumbing work and show me the village athletes toil hard. My elder brother and sisters competed at the national level and they wanted me to follow them. Pehle pehle toh 300 rupaye ke shoe ki tension rehti thi par ek bar daudna shuru kia toh dimag main bus running chalti thi. (Initially, I would worry about the Rs 300 running shoes... But once I got into running, I would think about only running at the village track and later stadium). A lot of times, my father would take loans from rela-



Ajay Saroj followed his older siblings into the sport, accompanying them to the village ground in evenings. PTI

tives or my brother would spend his salary on my training," remembers Saroj.

A bronze medal in 1000m in junior nationals in Lucknow in 2012 meant that the

UP youngster was spotted by coach Jaswinder Bhatia and shifted to Lucknow to train under the coach. A fifth place finish in Youth Olympic Games in China in 2014 was followed by a gold in Asian Junior Athletics Championship in Vietnam in 2016. The same year saw him breaking the three minutes and 45 seconds mark when he clocked a timing of three minutes and 44 seconds to win the gold at the Indian Grand Prix in Delhi.

Saroj would record sub three minutes and 42 seconds timings a couple of times in the next two years apart from an Asian Championships 1500m title in Bhubaneswar in 2017. He also won the gold in pre-tournament event of Jakarta Asian Games with a timing of three minutes and 43.85 seconds but a fracture in his right leg meant that he missed the flight to 2018 Asiad.

"My target was always the 1500m and I would always think of it as a race to run in stages. My strong part has been the push at the end but that too comes from the planning for the first 1000-1200m. It requires a lot of patience to wait for your chance till the first 1000-1200m and I would read books by Swami Vivekanand to keep my mind calm and to plan

my races with a strategic mind," says Saroj.

While he missed the Jakarta Asian Games, Saroj became the Asian champion in 1500m with a timing of three minutes and 46.49 seconds in Bhubaneswar the same year. In the last four years, Saroj has won an Asian Championship silver in Doha in 2019 apart from clocking his best ever timing of three minutes and 38.24 seconds this year at the World Championships in Budapest before the Asian Games.

At Hangzhou, Saroj clocked 3:38.94 seconds to finish behind Mohamad Al-Gami of Qatar who clocked three minutes and 38.36 seconds. Compatriot Jinsen Johnson won the bronze medal.

The Indian runners had trained in Colorado Springs prior to the Asian Games and Saroj finds Colorado experience a learning experience.

"While we took some time adjusting to the altitude of Colorado which saw us bleeding from the nose in the initial training sessions, it helped our body to adjust to the conditions. The conditions helped us to work on the stamina required for the 1500m race as well the speed required to set the pace in

EXPLAINED
E
Know the other sports included

Flag football

It's American football, with one major difference: There's no contact allowed. This means an opponent can't be tackled by bringing them down or blocking them. Players wear flags that hang out of their belts.

The way to "tackle" an opposition player in possession of the ball is to yank one or both of their flags off. Flag football is designed to keep players safe. The ball also can be 'passed' only via a direct handoff.

Lacrosse



Players pass a ball using a stick with a mesh or net at one end. The objective is to 'shoot' the ball into the opponents' goal. Legend has it that the sport originated from the training regime of tribal warriors in Native American communities.

The sport entered popular culture when it was shown in the Hollywood flick 'The Last of the Mohicans' starring Daniel Day Lewis.

The game is split into four quarters of 20 minutes each.