



DHAMI BEGINS TERM TWO

PM Narendra Modi, Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami, Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Uttar Pradesh CM-designate Yogi Adityanath, Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar, Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel at the oath-taking ceremony in Dehradun Wednesday. **PTI PAGE 8**

India tops \$400-billion target for goods exports

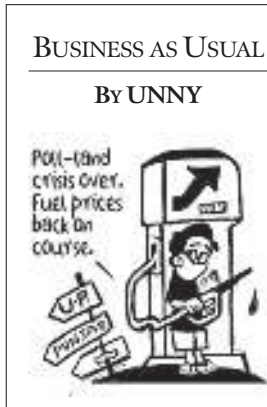
KARUNJIT SINGH
NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

AS INDIA surpassed its merchandise export target of \$400 billion set for FY2022, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday hailed the achievement as “a key milestone” in the country’s “Aatmanirbhar Bharat journey”.

The target was achieved with 10 days to spare — exports crossed \$400.8 billion on March 21 and there’s a likelihood that

EXPLAINED
E The surge, the caution

HEADWINDS TO the global economy due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, withdrawal of policy support by global central banks, and increasing protectionist measures could hit global trade sentiment going forward.



DELHI DEMARCHE AFTER OIC Wang Yi’s J&K remark: India hits back, names him

We don’t speak in public on your internal issues: MEA message to China

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

AT A time when New Delhi is still to confirm a visit by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, India Wednesday “rejected” what it said were “uncalled for” comments he made while referring to Jammu and Kashmir at a meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Islamabad.

It reminded the leadership in Beijing that “India refrains from public judgement of their internal issues”. This has been conveyed in a demarche sent via



Wang Yi, Shah Mahmood Qureshi in Islamabad on Wednesday. **Reuters**

diplomatic channels, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

This could impact the fate of Wang’s visit expected this week. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

Lviv Ukraine’s small haven of peace — and transit for those fleeing war



EXPRESS FROM THE FRONTLINE

KRISHN KAUSHIK
LVIV (UKRAINE), MARCH 23

ABOUT 70 km from the border



A checkpoint outside Lviv. **Krishn Kaushik**

with Poland, Lviv in Ukraine has become the main transit point for all those fleeing the war. Located in the western part of

the country, this city has largely been untouched by Russia’s invasion. But on the road from the border, there are reminders.

The city’s limits are guarded by volunteers and the police, with a checkpoint marked by sand bags, barbed wire, concrete blocks, tyres and metal slabs. Smaller checkpoints can be seen outside every village and town, even if some are left ungarded. Everyone is prepared, in case the war comes west.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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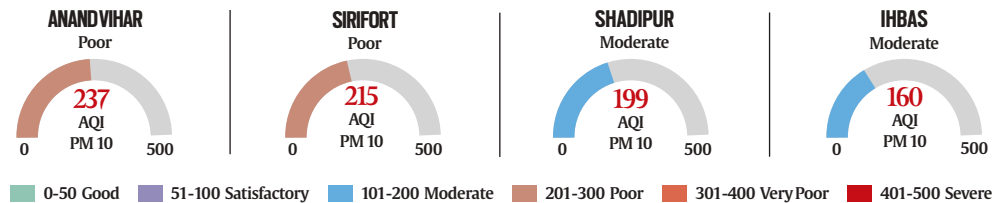
LIC/PRA/2021-22/40/Eng

In 2021, Canada set a record by welcoming more than 4,05,000 permanent residents, and it is aiming to achieve higher targets now

ENTERTAINMENT



“Post Republic, India is governed by the Constitution,” the court said. “The Constitution



Amid Ahir protest in Gurgaon, Hooda says will move bill in RS seeking regiment

PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA
GURGAON, MARCH 23

EXTENDING HIS support to the protest demanding the formation of an Ahir regiment in the Army, Congress MP Deepender Singh Hooda said he will move a private member's bill in Rajya Sabha.

"We will first discuss a proposal among all parties. I will table a private member's bill in Rajya Sabha for formation of an Ahir regiment. I am sure I will get the support of other MPs," said Hooda, addressing hundreds of people from the Ahir community, who had gathered at the protest site at Kherki Daula in Gurgaon Wednesday.

Expressing his "complete support", Hooda said, "The farmers' agitation was successful because it remained democratic, peaceful, constitutional and united. *Wo andolan rajneeti se upar raha* (The farmers' protest remained apolitical). I feel that if someone holding political office comes here, they should only support demand for Ahir regiment and leave aside politics."

The protest was organised under the banner of 'Sanyukt Ahir Regiment Morcha', a group of community leaders from the Ahirwal region in South Haryana, who have been holding an indefinite protest since February 3.

Manoj Yadav, founder-member of Sanyukt Ahir Regiment Morcha, said their core committee, which had sup-



A stretch of six kilometres on the Delhi-Gurgaon expressway was closed. Express

port from 36 communities, had taken a decision to start a nationwide agitation to press for their demand. "We

will go to all the states to campaign. In every village in the Ahirwal region, a board will be put up '*vote wahi paega jo Ahir Regiment banwaega*' (those who will get the Ahir regiment formed, shall get the vote). The committee will write to the Defence Minister. This is a fight for the honour of 26 crore Yadavs. Our next meeting/rally will take place on September 23. If required, we shall go to Delhi too," he said.

Gurgaon traffic police had closed a stretch of six kilometres on the Delhi-Gurgaon expressway from Kherki Daula toll to Hero Honda Chowk, and diverted traffic to alternate routes. Hundreds from the Ahirwal belt — Gurgaon, Rewari, Mahendragarh — in South Haryana,

parts of Rajasthan and western Uttar Pradesh had arrived at the Kherki Daula toll plaza, which had been made non-operational by the authorities on Wednesday morning.

Raising '*Ahir regiment hakk hai hamara*' (Ahir regiment is our right) and '*Jai Yadav Jai Madhav*' slogans, the protesters perched atop buses, tractors and trucks, which they had parked near the protest site. The march was not carried out and a public meeting was held.

Rajesh Yadav, an unemployed youth from Rewari said, "Sikhs, Rajputs and Jats have their regiments along caste and community lines. Our demand is the same. This will also solve the problem of unemployment to an extent."

Real-time pollution data will be available in capital from Aug 1

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

REAL-TIME DATA on sources of pollution in Delhi will be available from August 1, according to a communication from the Delhi government.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal chaired a review meeting with teams from IIT Kanpur, IIT Delhi, and The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) that are part of a Real-Time Source Apportionment System and pollution forecasting project. The Delhi Cabinet had approved the project last year. The source-apportionment study will help identify sources of pollutants in the city, and determine the impact of sources like vehicular emissions, industrial sources, dust and biomass burning.

A 'supersite' will be set up at



The source-apportionment study will help identify sources of pollutants in Delhi. Archive

Pandara Road in Central Delhi, and work on the supersite will begin by the end of July on an area of around 36 square metres. The monitoring apparatus that will be set up at the supersite will keep tabs on pollutants and help trace their sources. Equipment for the project, like real-time ambient air analysers, and particulate matter and ion analysis systems, are be-

ing procured for the project.

Kejriwal said: "In Delhi, pollution remains in the 'moderate' category around October 9 every year. After that, the pollution level starts increasing suddenly. Looking at NASA's photos, it has been noticed that a large amount of stubble was burnt during that period. Whereas, the figures every time say that only 5% of Delhi's pollution can be blamed on stubble. In such a situation it is important to ascertain the actual contribution of stubble in Delhi's pollution and how many other factors contribute to pollution. This would enable real-time detection of factors causing pollution in the state, and help in controlling that source of pollution."

The forecasting system will provide hourly, daily and weekly pollution forecasts, and could help make policy decisions like imposing restrictions.

HC orders eviction of people from Kalkaji Mandir premises

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

THE DELHI High Court has ordered the Delhi Police to proceed with the eviction of several unauthorised occupants of jhuggis and dharamshalas from Kalkaji Mandir premises from March 24.

"The eviction of the said occupants also has a sense of urgency in view of the fact that the Navratras will be commencing from April 2, and proper arrangements have to be made for the entry and exit of lakhs of devotees who visit the Kalkaji Mandir," said Justice Prathiba M Singh in an order.

The court said Kalkaji Mandir premises see a steady and high influx of devotees during the

Navratra period, and the continued occupation of the jhuggis and dharamshalas would pose "enormous threat" to the safety and security of devotees.

The unauthorised occupants, nearly 40 families, had earlier been given three options in accordance with a court order and asked to either take flats on rent from the DUSIB or apply to DDA for purchase of EWS flats or take up flats on rent from the DUSIB. However, they allegedly refused to accept any of the options following which the court has now passed an order to evict them.

"The unauthorised occupants of jhuggis and dharamshalas, who are 142 and 46 in number respectively, are directed to cooperate with the eviction process," said the bench.

400 English teachers write to V-C over 'loss of workload'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

MORE THAN 400 English teachers in Delhi University have signed a letter to the Vice-Chancellor appealing to him to intervene in the "unprecedented loss of workload that English departments will suffer" with the Undergraduate Curriculum Framework (UGCF) approved by the University's statutory bodies.

English teachers in the University are alarmed by the UGCF, stating that the Ability Enhancement Courses pool that students can choose among in their first four semesters will have languages included in the eighth schedule of the Constitution, which does not include English. They have stated that this replaces the current system where both English and

Hindi/Modern Indian Languages are offered as options to students as AECs.

"The AECC course was assigned 4 lectures — constituting a substantive workload of the English department in every college. The removal of English as an option in AEC will drastically reduce the workload of each English department in colleges," reads their letter.

Additionally, they have also pointed out that core English papers offered in two of the first four semesters currently offered have been removed from the UGCF structure of the BA and BCom programme courses.

"Moreover, the compulsory English language courses that are offered at three levels, namely, A, B and C, depending on their proficiency level are now

being removed from the UGCF — in this reducing the workload of the English department irreparably. In every section of BA and BCom Programme, a minimum of 30 lectures are lost: the loss is multiplied across every section," reads their letter.

According to Rudrashish Chakraborty, English teacher at Hansraj College and former Academic Council member, there are more than 500 ad hoc English teachers in DU who make up half of the total strength of English teachers in the University.

Appealing the Vice-Chancellor to intervene to ensure English remains in the AEC pool, and as a Core Language course in the BA and BCom programme courses, they have written that this will "crucially safeguard the livelihoods of hundreds of ad hoc teachers".

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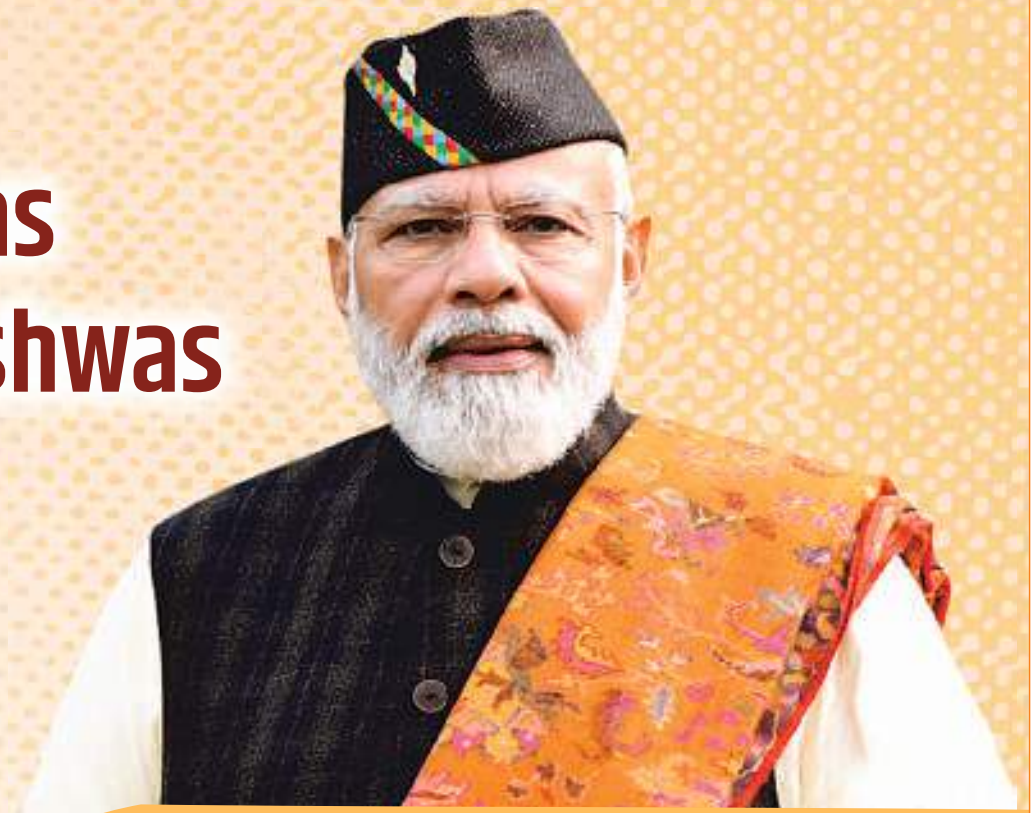
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Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

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Uttarakhand
Apna

Dear Citizens of Uttarakhand,

I express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you for reposing faith in us and once again, helping us register a historic victory in Devbhoomi Uttarakhand. The faith you have expressed in a soldier's son, coming from a simple family is an unmatched feeling. Your faith has infused a new energy in me and I assure you all that I will make every effort to channelize this energy towards the all-round development of the state.

I pledge to dedicate every moment of mine for the people of the state. Taking this forward to ensure the progress of the state, I have adopted the mantra of 'Optionless Resolution'. This resolution includes a list of duties and tasks to make the state the very best in the country and to fulfill the countless hopes and aspirations of the people. Embodying the concept of Sabka Saath-Sabka Vikas-Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas, public satisfaction is our priority. We hope to achieve this by adopting the policy of 'simplification-solution-dissolution'. We will ensure that we work with Antyodaya as our goal. I have full faith that with your support and cooperation under the leadership of Prime Minister, Respected Narendra Modi ji, we will definitely be successful in fulfilling these resolutions.

No goal is big
if you commit to it.
No time to stop
Its time to grow together.

I earnestly call upon all of you to participate in this journey of Uttarakhand's development and take the state forward on the path of progress.

Bharat Mata ki Jai
Jai Hind - Jai Uttarakhand

Vikalp Rahit
Sankalp

Pushkar Singh Dhami
Chief Minister, Uttarakhand

6 IN PARLIAMENT

BUDGET SESSION

FROM THE GALLERY

FROM THE CHAIR

LOK SABHA

“Members sit late in the night to participate in the proceedings of the House. You sit and discuss demands for grants for hours. Now, let the Question Hour run.”

SPEAKER OM BIRLA

tells protesting Opposition MPs

5 QUESTIONS



MPs FROM ANDHRA PRADESH, CUTTING ACROSS PARTY LINES, EXPRESSED THEIR ANGUISH IN LOK SABHA OVER WHAT THEY CALLED THE CENTRE'S MOVE TO DISINVEST RASHTRIYA ISPAT NIGAM LTD (RINL). YSRCP MP MARGANI BHARAT SPEAKS TO LIZ MATHEW ABOUT THE ISSUE

What was the issue the MPs from Andhra Pradesh were agitated with?

The issue was about the privatisation of RINL as the government is planning 100 per cent disinvestment... The Centre has a stand not to privatise any PSU if its profit-making, but it is going against its own principle on this.

Why did you say that the government was going for 100 per cent disinvestment?

The RINL does not have any captive mines. Odisha has the iron ore which is next to Visakhapatnam. If the Centre is willing to give us a captive mine in Odisha, within no time, it can be profit-making. It has more than Rs 20,000 crore of debt on which RINL is paying highest interest rate of 14 per cent, which is not acceptable. No industry can survive with that. Why does the government have one stand for the South and one for the North?

Why did you say so?

SAIL has almost 14 captive mines and three iron ore ones. When it comes to RINL, there is none. Is this not a double standard?

Has the state government taken it up with the Centre?

Yes. The Chief Minister has given the suggestion to the Prime Minister to revive the plant. We have made a number of memorandums to the Centre over it. One has to remember the unscientific bifurcation of the state and the injustice that happened to the people in Andhra Pradesh...

Were you satisfied with the response given by the Centre?

The minister says that in the past decade, RINL has incurred Rs 7,300 crore losses, but he has forgotten the pandemic period when it made a loss of around Rs 3,900 crore only because the plant was shut for the entire one year. The Centre is forgetting that the RINL is paying an interest of Rs 3,000 crore per annum. Why cannot the government think of the option of going on equity in the lines of ONGC.

Nehru should not have taken Kashmir issue to the UN, says Sitharaman in RS

ANISHA DUTTA

NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

FINANCE MINISTER Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday accused the country's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of internationalising the Kashmir issue by taking it to the United Nations. She targeted the Congress on the issue while replying to a discussion on the Budget (2022-23) for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) in Rajya Sabha.

“It is an issue which should not have gone to a global forum. It is essentially an Indian issue. We could have handled it. We are handling it, and we are showing the difference now,” she said.

In response, Congress MP Anand Sharma said: “I would like to set the record straight. If the matter was taken to the UN Security Council, the issue was whether there would be a cessation of the military conflict or not. India did not accept the plebiscite.”

“The UN Observers' Office was never given that sanctity. India conducted elections. There were elected governments in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Not only that, we fought wars and we made it very clear re-



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Rajya Sabha. PTI

peatedly, and this has been India's consistent position, prior to 2014, that Jammu-Kashmir and Ladakh are an integral part of the sovereign state of India,” he added.

Sitharaman also said the terror activities in J&K have declined by 61% since the abrogation of Article 370. “In 2021, the kind of figures we have achieved, I want to show that there has been an overall decline in activities that disturbed peace. There has been a 33 per cent drop in infiltration attempts (51 in 2020 versus 34 in 2021), 90 per cent decrease in ceasefire viola-

tions (937 in 2020 versus 98 in 2021). Terror-related incidents came down from 244 in 2020 to 229 in 2021. There was 80 per cent decline in abductions by terrorists (from 10 in 2020 to two in 2021). The casualties involving police and security personnel saw a slide of 33 per cent (from 63 in 2020 to 42 in 2021). So, activities which have troubled Jammu and Kashmir for a very long time are on a decline,” she said.

She said the people of Union Territory were enjoying benefits of about 890 Central laws that have become applicable in J&K since the abrogation of Article 370. “As many as 250 state laws were repealed and 130 were modified. As we are discussing this, a delegation from the Gulf Cooperation Countries is exploring investment propositions in J&K. So, activities for bringing investment, creating jobs and also for providing political representation are going on,” she added.

The minister also rebutted the Opposition's charge that the BJP, too, shared the responsibility for the failure to check the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits in 1990 as it was supporting the then V P Singh-led government at the Centre.

She pointed out that terror killings were being carried out in Kashmir before 1990

when the National Conference was in power in J-K in alliance with the Congress and recalled the then governor Jagmohan's warning about dark clouds of terror overpowering the Valley.

She listed “seven major events” or killings of Hindus by terrorists in 1989 along with the related FIR numbers. “I just want to put the facts on record. The National Conference government with the support of the Indian National Congress was in power in J&K from November 1986 to January 18, 1990. And Governor Jagmohan reached J&K (on January 20, 1990) after the resignation of the then Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah... January 20, 1990, is when the Governor reached Srinagar,” she said.

When the Leader of Opposition in the House, Mallikarjun Kharge, asked her to focus on the budget, Sitharaman said “just like the entire conversation focused on The Kashmir Files (the movie) and not on the budget”, adding she had right to reply on all issues being raised by the Opposition.

The House later returned relevant Bills, completing the process of passage of the Jammu and Kashmir Budget that Lok Sabha had approved on March 14.



FRIENDLY FISTS

Rajya Sabha members Mary Kom and Rakesh Sinha at Parliament House complex on Wednesday. Amit Mehra

No disinvestment, we've only leased airports: Scindia in LS

LIZ MATHEW

NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

WITH CIVIL aviation becoming a key component of India's development and its economy, the country will have at least 220 airports by 2025, Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said even as he assured the Lok Sabha that the government is not on a “disinvestment path” but has only leased the airports. He said the move has brought additional revenue to the government, besides guaranteeing upgrade of the airports.

Scindia, while replying to an eight-hour debate on the demand for grants for the Civil Aviation Ministry in the Lower House, urged the chief ministers across the country to reduce the VAT on the Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) in their respective states, which, he said, would lead to increase in connectivity and the revenue.

“By now, 12 states and UTs have reduced the VAT on the ATF. Let me tell you the profit part of it: both Andhra Pradesh and Kerala have reduced the VAT and there is a 15 per cent increase in the connectivity in three months, more aircraft land and take off from these states. Jammu and Kashmir has reduced it



Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia in Lok Sabha on Wednesday. PTI

from 26 per cent to 1 per cent and the number of aircraft landing there for refuelling has gone up by 360 per cent,” the minister said.

Pointing out that the Covid pandemic had affected the otherwise-flourishing civil aviation sector in the country, Scindia said it has picked up now. “In the last seven days, 3.82-lakh passengers undertook air travel per day. We are now targeting to triple the passenger frequency to 50 crore in 2023-24. Our focus is going to be on inclusiveness, access and affordability,” he said.

He added that in 2018-19, it was 35.5 crore,

and it fell by 66 per cent during the Covid time to 11 crore. In the pre-Covid time, it was 4.15 lakh per day but the sector had made up and the difference was just 5 per cent, but the Omicron wave hit it again. “From 3.90 lakh (passengers per day), it fell to 1.60 lakh,” he said.

According to Scindia, who took over as the civil aviation minister in July last year, there were 74 airports in the country till 2014. “In the last seven years, 66 new airports have been constructed. We have doubled our capacity. By 2025, the number of airports will be 220. In the last one year, we have opened three new airports; there were three brown-field projects, too, and now we are going to have 13 new greenfield airports also.”

With several Opposition MPs slamming the government for “disinvesting” airports, Scindia clarified that it has not disinvested – which he said would get only one-time payment and would not get the assets back ever – but only leased them for 50 years. He said the Airports Authority of India receives Rs 904 crore every year as the lease fee and Rs 2,322 crore has already reached the GoI accounts with the leasing of six airports. “The airports will come back to us with the upgrade,” he said.

He also stressed on the need for the private participation in the developments in the

Opp protests fuel price hike for second day

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

THE OPPOSITION stalled the proceedings of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha over the fuel price increase for the second day on Wednesday.

In Lok Sabha, protests were led by Congress, which, along with other parties, blocked the Question Hour and later walked out. A miffed Speaker Om Birla asked members to “stop the pre-planned stalling of the House”.

Rajya Sabha, meanwhile, was adjourned till 12 pm amid protests. Chairman Venkaiah Naidu denied a discussion on the fuel price hike, saying it was a general discussion for demands for grants.

Opposition MPs including those from the Congress, DMK, Left parties and TMC came to the Well of the Lok Sabha when it convened and raised slogans against the price hike.

Congress president Sonia Gandhi, who was present at her front-row seat, was seen marshalling MPs from her party as well as other opposition parties.

On Tuesday, fuel prices were increased by 80 paise a litre. Liquefied petroleum gas prices were increased by Rs 50 per cylinder. The LPG rate was last revised on October 6. The fuel prices were again increased on Wednesday by 80 paise a litre each.

When National Conference MP Hasnain Masoodi stood up from his seat to ask a supplementary question to the question listed against his name, Gandhi was seen instructing him to sit down – and he did. She also discouraged IUML MP E T Mohammad Basheer from raising a question. Observing the Congress leader's move to stop Masood, Union Minister Piyush Goyal quipped that Gandhi's party was always trying to block Kashmir from development.

After taking up the Question Hour amid the chaos, the Speaker at 11.25 am, asked the MPs to go back to their seats. He said he would give them a chance to speak during the Zero Hour. “This is Question Hour and you are expected to raise questions on people's issues during this time”.

When the House met at noon, Congress's Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury wanted to raise the issue. The Speaker, however, did not allow him, saying the Opposition did not pay heed to his requests to let Question Hour run. Protesting this, the Opposition MPs from Congress, DMK, Left parties and NCP walked out.

In Rajya Sabha, Opposition members carried placards and shouted slogans following which the House was adjourned for the second consecutive day.

“I have received notices under Rule 267... regarding the issue of prices of cooking gas, petroleum, diesel and kerosene and also other essential commodities like pulses and edible oils. I have considered it and I find that this is not an issue to be discussed under Rule 267. It is a general issue... It has to be discussed during the discussion on Demands for Grants,” Naidu said as Opposition members protested.

As VIP chief says joining NDA was ‘mistake’, all his three MLAs seek to merge with BJP

SANTOSH SINGH

PATNA, MARCH 23

ON TUESDAY, Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP) chief and Bihar animal husbandry and fisheries minister Mukesh Sahani said his move to switch from the RJD-led grand alliance to the NDA camp ahead of the 2020 Bihar Assembly polls was a “mistake”. The EBC Mallah leader was perhaps anticipating a severe political blow the next day.

In a major setback for Sahani, all his three MLAs – Raju Kumar Singh (Sahebganj), Misri Lal Yadav (Alinagar) and Swarna Singh (Gaura Bouram) – met Bihar Assembly Speaker Vijay Kumar Sinha on Wednesday evening, seeking their dissociation with the VIP and merger with the BJP.

In the 2020 Bihar polls, the BJP had allot-

ted 11 seats to the VIP from its NDA quota. The VIP contested from these seats and won 4. The three VIP MLAs owed their allegiance to the BJP unofficially from the beginning.

Sahani, who had lost his own Assembly election, was made a Member of the Bihar Legislative Council (MLC) by the BJP to enable him to become a minister. The saffron party had however not given Sahani a full-term MLC berth. His MLC tenure is to expire this July. Now that his party is not likely to be part of the NDA, he could not get another MLC term from the BJP and may well have to resign as the minister soon.

The inclusion of the three VIP MLAs in the BJP Legislative Party would make the saffron party the single largest party in the Bihar Assembly with 77 seats – 2 more than the RJD's 75 seats. Though the BJP had won 91 seats in the 2010 Bihar Assembly polls, it

is going to be the first time when the BJP becomes the single largest party.

The rebel VIP MLAs' move will have no impact on the fate of the Nitish Kumar-led JD(U)-BJP government in Bihar, as the NDA's tally will stand at 126 in the 243-member House.

The development would, however, give the BJP a psychological edge over the JD(U), even though the former has all along remained the senior alliance partner.

With the BJP winning the recent Assembly elections easily in four states, including Uttar Pradesh, the party has further reinforced its advantage over the JD(U), with the latter appearing to have exhausted all its options except another switchover to the RJD coalition, which would be unlikely with Tejashwi Yadav, who is at the helm of the RJD, taking centre stage in state politics on his own.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Day after quitting LS, Akhilesh says will take people's struggle from *sadan* to *sadak*

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

LUCKNOW, MARCH 23

AFTER PAYING tribute to party ideologue Ram Manohar Lohia on his birth anniversary on Wednesday, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav said the people of Uttar Pradesh have “given a mandate to the party for continuing the struggle for them, and that the party will do so from *sadan* to *sadak*”.

Speaking with reporters in Lucknow on his decision to retain the Karhal Assembly seat after resigning his Lok Sabha membership from Azamgarh, Akhilesh on Wednesday said, “The SP has been given a mandate for struggle. We have been given a chance to stay in the state Assembly. From the *sadan* (Assembly) to *sadak* (roads), we will continue our struggle.”

Akhilesh was elected to the Uttar Pradesh Assembly from Karhal in the just-concluded elections. Before getting elected to the House, he represented Azamgarh as an MP in the Lok Sabha.

On Tuesday, Akhilesh had decided to retain the Assembly seat while giving up his Lok Sabha membership from the Azamgarh constituency.

Taking to Twitter on Wednesday, he said, “Crores of people of UP have given us a moral victory in the Assembly polls. To honour this, I will represent Karhal and always remain committed to the progress of Azamgarh.”

When asked who will the party field from Azamgarh Lok Sabha seat, which he vacated, Akhilesh said: “The workers and leaders of the SP in Azamgarh will decide who will contest the bypoll from there when it happens.”

Asked about Chief Minister-designate Yogi

Adityanath's oath-taking ceremony, Akhilesh said, “The SP has been given a mandate by the people to struggle. The SP has been given the mandate to struggle for the people. And, as far as the organisation (oath ceremony) is concerned, happiness is necessary and they should celebrate, too. But, this is a government of continuity. And, in five years, if the government could not build a place that could inspire them, then at least they will be inspired by the works of the Samajwadis.”

Talking about inflation, the SP chief said, “It is increasing constantly. The government says it has no control over the prices of petrol and diesel. But, the prices of diesel and petrol have constantly been increasing due to the flawed policies of the government. And, if you assess the situation, then you will see that companies selling fuel are making profits. Why is this happening?”

SHREE SOMNATH TRUST, Prabhas Patan - 362268			
SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS FOR END OF YEAR 31ST MARCH - 2021			
Income	Rs. (in Lakhs)	Expenditure	Rs. (in Lakhs)
Donation Income	581.55	Capital Expenditure	104.36
Interest Income	206.50	Revenue Expenditure	2055.96
Other Income	1536.94	Miscellaneous Expenditure	14.74
		Income Over Expense	149.92
Total	2324.99	Total	2324.99
Liabilities	Rs. (in Lakhs)	Assets	Rs. (in Lakhs)
Trust Funds	3728.13	Land & Buildings	25082.66
Reserves	30715.63	Capital work in Progress	571.69
Liabilities	1386.42	(CWIP)	
		Furniture & Equipments	4538.23
		Inventories, Investment,	5355.06
		Cash & Bank Balances	
		Loans & Advances	282.55
Total	35830.18	Total	35830.18

State Bank of India Employees' (M. S. Patel)
Co-operative Credit Society Ltd., Mumbai.
State Bank of India, Mumbai Main Branch Building,
Mumbai Samachar Marg, Fort, Mumbai - 400 023.

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that, **Special General Body Meeting of members of the State Bank of India Employees' (M. S. Patel) Co-op. Credit Society Ltd., Mumbai, will be held on Sunday, the 10th April, 2022 at 04.00 p.m. at Auditorium, SBOA Public School, Plot No. 10, Sector No. 5, Near D.Y. Patil Hospital, Nerul, Navi Mumbai - 400706.** All members are requested to attend the meeting. Notice is available on Society's Website www.sbmispatel.com and displayed at the registered office, for information. **Bank's Identity Card is compulsory to attend the meeting. All guidelines related to COVID-19 should be followed.**

By order of the Board,

MUMBAI
Date : 06.03.2022

MUKESH BHATIA
HON. SECRETARY & CEO

SBI STATE BANK OF INDIA

HIRING OF VEHICLES

State Bank of India having its Local Head Office at Chandigarh intends to hire three (3) New Hyundai Alcazar 1.5 MT Prestige 6 str (Diesel-Polar White Colour) and Fifteen (15) New Honda City ZXMT (Petrol-P White Colour) bearing taxi numbers on monthly hiring basis for the use of Senior Officials of the Bank posted at Chandigarh/Panchkula/Mohali for a minimum period of 3 years. Sealed Bids, alongwith earnest money vide draft/banker cheque favouring State Bank Of India (payable at Chandigarh) for Rs. 4,00,000/- (Rupees four lacs only) are invited from reputed/eligible/authorized taxi/tour operators having minimum 3 years' experience in the line having at least 25 taxi number vehicles owned by them (as on 28.01.2022) & Annual Turnover for the last 3 preceding financial years should not be less than Rs. 3 crores per annum. The sealed quotations should reach the undersigned on or before 16.04.2022 by 04:00 pm. The price bid would be invited from eligible bidders through e-tendering. Bank reserves the right to accept/reject any/all quotations without assigning any reason thereof and no correspondence in this regard shall be entertained. The Bank's decision in this regard shall be final.

The details of terms & conditions are available at Bank's website www.sbi.co.in → SBI in the news → Procurement News link or can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

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State Bank of India, Local Head office,
Ground Floor, Sector 17-A, Chandigarh - 160017
Telephone: 0172 - 4567136, 4567137, 4567037

प्रतिभूति कागज कारखाना, नर्मदापुरम-461005 (म.प्र.)
(माल प्रतिभूति मुद्रण तथा मुद्रा निगम लिमिटेड की इकाई)
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Email : hr.spm@spmcoi.com, Website : <http://spm.narmadapuram.spmcil.com>

No.: HR/1(33)/Doct/Advt.No.-115 Dt. 15.03.2022

RECRUITMENT

Security Paper Mill, Narmadapuram (MP) invites application for filling up the 01 post of full time Medical Officer on contract basis. The details are given below:-

Name of the Post	Qualification	Remark
Medical Officer	Essential : MBBS Degree from any institute recognized by the Medical Council of India with experience up to three years or above.	Duly completed application along with the attested copies of required certificate and latest photograph should be sent to the Chief General Manager, Security Paper Mill, Narmadapuram (MP) 461005 on or before date 20.04.2022 in prescribed form.

For details pl. view our website: <http://spm.narmadapuram.spmcil.com> under the page "Careers"
Human Resource Department

Varthana Finance Private Limited
(Formerly known as Thirumeni Finance Private Ltd.,)
Registered Office at: No. 58C-110, Varasiddhi, Outer Ring Road, Service Road, 3rd Block, HRBR Layout, Kalyan Nagar, Bangalore-560043. Website www.varthana.com, Email: care@varthana.com, Phone: 080-68455777, Branch Office : Block 57, Unit No-14, 2nd Floor, Kaveri Centre (LandMark Telephone Exchange Building) Sanjay Place, Agra - 282002.

POSSESSION NOTICE [Rule 8(1)] (For Immovable property)

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the M/s Varthana Finance Private Ltd., (Formerly Known as M/s. Thirumeni Finance Private Ltd.,) Agra, Under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice dated: 09-11-2021, calling upon the Applicants/ Co-Applicants/ Mortgagors, In Loan Account No. S17AGR-AGR-000226 and U21AGR-AGR-018651, 1). Durg Pal Singh Mahavidhyalya, Represented by Authorized Signatory, Village & Post Pinahat, Agra – 283123 (Uttar Pradesh), 2). Durg Pal Singh Shiksha Samiti, Represented by Authorized Signatory, Village & post Pinahat, Agra – 283123 (Uttar Pradesh), 3). Govind Singh, S/o. Dheeraj Singh, 47, Mar Muhalla, Pinahat Dehat, Agra – 283123 (Uttar Pradesh), 4). Munni Devi, W/o. Ram Kumar, Mar Muhalla, Pinahat Dehat, Agra – 283123 (Uttar Pradesh), 5). Ram Kumar Singh Chauhan, S/o. Durga Pal, Mar Muhalla, Pinahat Dehat, Uttar Pradesh, Agra - 283123, to repay the mentioned amount in the said notice being a sum of Rs. 1,11,65,657/- (Rupees One Crore Eleven Lakhs Sixty Five Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Seven Only) as on 10-11-2021, to pay agreed contractual rate of interest together with incidental expenses, cost and other charges etc., as details mentioned in the Demand Notice, till the date of payment, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

However the Applicants/ Co-Applicants/ Mortgagors herein above having failed to repay the full amount with interest/other charges, notice is hereby given to the Applicants/Co-Applicants/Mortgagors in particular and to the public in general that the undersigned being Authorised Officer of the M/s. Varthana Finance Private Ltd, Agra, Branch has taken SYMBOLIC POSSESSION of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said Act, read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on 21st March 2022.

The Applicants/ Co-Applicants/ Mortgagors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the M/s. Varthana Finance Private Ltd, Agra, for an amount of Rs. 1,11,65,657/- (Rupees One Crore Eleven Lakhs Sixty Five Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Seven Only) as on 10-11-2021, together with agreed contractual rate of interest, as mentioned herein above until the date of payment together with incidental expenses, cost and other charges. The Applicants/Co-Applicants/Mortgagors attention is invited to provisions of Section 13(8) of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured Assets.

Description of the Immovable Property : Schedule 'A' Property : All that piece and parcel of the property constructed over Khalsa No.1671, Totally Measuring 2.1680 Hectares, out of this 0.2940 Hectare ie.2940 Sq Mts, Situated at Mauza Vipravali Tehsil Bah, Dist. Agra, Bounded on : East By : Gata No.62,63,64,65, West By : Gata No.1707 & Gata No. 1708,1709,1710, North By : Collage Gate, South By: Gata No.1708,1709,1710.

Schedule 'B' Property : All that piece and parcel of the property Khalsa No.1707, Totally Measuring 0.7230 Hectare ie.7230 Sq Mts, Situated at Mauza Vipravali Tehsil Bah, Dist. Agra, property bounded on : East By : Gata No. 1671, West By:GataNo. 1714, Noth By : Gata No.1708, South By: Gata No.1706.

Memorandum of Deposit of Title Deed Executed by Durgpal Pal Singh, Mahavidhyalya Pinahat Tehsil Bah Distt Agra through Manager Shri Govind Singh S/o Shri Dhiraj Singh, R/o, Pinahat, Tehsil. Bah Dist. Agra dated 16-06-2017.

Date : 24-03-2022, Place : Vipravali. Authorised Officer, Varthana Finance Private Limited.

Natioanl Innovation Foundation - India
Autonomous Body of Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India
Grambharti, amrapur, Mahudi Road Gandhinagar, Gujarat-382650
Tel: 02764 261134/ 35/ 36/ 37/ 38; Web. www.nif.org.in

Advt. No. 03/2022

National Innovation Foundation - India (NIF) invites applications from highly motivated and eligible professionals for engagement as Research Associates/ Project Associates in the area of Engineering (Mechanical, Agricultural, Electronics, Mechatronics) Agriculture / Veterinary / Computer Applications/ Mass Communication/ Business or Entrepreneurship Development/ Intellectual Property Protection.

The engagement is purely on temporary and contractual basis. The detailed advertisement is available at http://www.nif.org.in/join_us. The last date for receipt of applications: 15 April 2022.

davp 36118/12/0006/2122 S/D Director

NORTHERN RAILWAY
NOTICE

WHERE AS, Shri Rahul Singh, S/o Sh. Dhanpal Sing, Village and post office-Jhaberara mohala - Kumaharan, Tahasil-Roorkee, Distt- Haridwar, Ultrakhand remained unauthorized absent duty from 01.08.2018 to till date and failed to report for duty at his working place.

WHERE AS, Rahul Singh, S/o Sh. Dhanpal Sing, has been inquiry letter vide no E/3/ADEN/JUDW DT 14.10.2021, 03.12.2021, 27.01.2022 and got served through registered letter. On the above noted address but it appears that Shri Rahul Singh, S/o Sh. Dhanpal Sing is evading the official letters.

This it is evident that said Rahul Singh, S/o Sh. Dhanpal Sing, is no more interested to serve the Railways and therefore by way of this publication is hereby informed to attend the Inquiry the office of ADEN/JUDW to report for dt 18.04.22 of the publication of the notice otherwise the Railway Administration shall proceed to take disciplinary action against said Shri Rahul Singh, S/o Sh. Dhanpal Sing.

L.NO-ADEN/JUDW/E/3/D&AR/SF-5/RAHUL SINGH Dt. 15.03.2022
Assistant Divisional Engineer
614/2022 N.Rly, Jagadhri Workshop, Inquiry Officer

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(Ministry of Education, Government of India)
Nelson Mandela Marg, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-110 070
Ph. No.: 011-29581000 Website: www.aicte-india.org

ONLINE APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS ON DEPUTATION BASIS IN AICTE

Sl. No	Name of the post	Pay Scale as per 6th CPC	Pay Matrix Level as per 7th CPC	No. of Posts (may vary)
1.	Advisor-II (Group-A)	PB-4, Rs. 37400 -67000 +GP Rs. 8900	13-A (Rs. 131100 -216600)	01*
2.	Director (Group-A)	PB-4, Rs. 37400 -67000 + GP Rs. 8700	13 (Rs. 123100 - 215900)	05*

*No. of posts may increase or decrease as per the requirement of the Council

All other details such as Eligibility Criteria, Qualifications, Experience, Procedure for online submission and General Terms and Conditions of appointments are available at AICTE's website (<https://www.aicte-india.org/bulletins/advertisements>) from 24.03.2022. Interested candidates may apply online for the above post on or before 11.04.2022 by uploading the requisite supporting documents. The Council reserves the right to increase or decrease the number of vacancies or to cancel the advertisement without assigning any reason thereto.

Member Secretary
AICTE

Advt. No: Estt./Admn./03(03)/2022

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For detailed information and application formats etc please visit "ENTRANCE" on IGRUA website <https://igrua.gov.in>

The last date of filling of ONLINE application is 18 May 2022 (fee payment by online mode)

The date of online examination 12 Jun 2022 (Sunday)

ENTRANCE 2022
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प्रारूप 28 (नियम 92 (1) (क) (ii))
ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना का प्रारूप
मध्यप्रदेश शासन, नगर पालिक निगम, ग्वालियर

जनसंपर्क RO क्रमांक 109 दिनांक : 22-03-2022 766 दिनांक : 21/03/2022

एन.आई.टी. क्र.	निर्माण	समय व दिनांक	संभावित राशि	पूर्णता अवधि (माह)
2022_UAD-191679_1	दक्षिण विधानसभा अन्तर्गत क्षेत्र क्र. 15, 16 एवं 19 में सी.सी. सड़क एवं नाली निर्माण कार्य।	प्रातः 10:30 बजे दिनांक 21.03.2022 से सायं 5:30 बजे दिनांक 18.04.2022 तक	4,20,40,192/-	12 माह
2022_UAD-191692_1	दक्षिण विधानसभा अन्तर्गत क्षेत्र क्र. 17, 18, 20 एवं 21 में सी.सी. सड़क एवं नाली निर्माण कार्य।	प्रातः 10:30 बजे दिनांक 21.03.2022 से सायं 5:30 बजे दिनांक 18.04.2022 तक	4,20,40,192/-	12 माह

1. इच्छुक बोली दाता वेबसाइट <http://gmc.mptenders.gov.in> पर एनआईटी देख सकते हैं।
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3. किसी भी स्पष्टीकरण की आवश्यकता हो तो कृपया नगर पालिक निगम, ग्वालियर में सम्पर्क करें।

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Average Unemployment Rate

Source - CMIE (Feb 2022)

(in percent)

Mar-21 Apr-21 May-21 Jun-21 Jul-21 Aug-21 Sep-21 Oct-21 Nov-21 Dec-21 Jan-22 Feb-22

National Average 7.4%

Chhattisgarh Average 1.7%

Consistency of Our Efforts

Shri Bhupesh Baghel
Honourable Chief Minister, Chhattisgarh

8 GOVT & POLITICS

Dhami sworn in as Uttarakhand CM

Eight ministers also take oath at ceremony attended by PM, several Union ministers and CMs

AVANEESH MISHRA
DEHRADUN, MARCH 23

PUSHKAR SINGH Dhami, 46, was sworn in as the 11th Chief Minister of Uttarakhand on Wednesday for the second term at a ceremony attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, several Union ministers and chief ministers of some BJP-ruled states.

Eight Cabinet ministers who also took oath along with Dhami are: Satpal Maharaj, Premchandra Agarwal, Ganesh Joshi, Dhan Singh Rawat, Subodh Uniyal, Saurabh Bahuguna, Rekha Arya and Chandan Ram Das. Agarwal, Bahuguna and Das are the new faces in the state cabinet that has an average age of 56 years.

Other than the Prime Minister, prominent among those who attended the event were Union ministers Amit Shah, Nitin Gadkari, Rajnath Singh, Prahlad Joshi; BJP presi-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Pushkar Singh Dhami who took charge as CM of Uttarakhand on Wednesday. PTI

dent JP Nadda, Uttar Pradesh CM-designate Yogi Adityanath; and chief ministers Shivraj Singh Chouhan (Madhya Pradesh), Manohar Lal Khattar (Haryana) and Himanta Biswa Sarma (Assam).

First-time minister Saurabh Bahuguna, 43, is the son of former Uttarakhand CM Vijay Bahuguna and grandson of former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna. He represents the Sitarganj seat and

is one of the two youngest ministers in the state.

Spiritual leader-cum-politician Satpal Maharaj, 70, had served as the Minister of PWD, Tourism, Cultural and Irrigation in the last cabinet. Maharaj was also an MP from the Congress before he joined the BJP in 2014. He is both the eldest as well as the richest minister in the state Cabinet.

A secretary of the party's state unit, Dhan Singh Rawat had the portfolio of Higher Education, Cooperatives, Disaster Management, Dairy Development, and Protocols in the previous Cabinet. He had defeated state Congress president Ganesh Godiyal from the Srinagar assembly seat by 587 votes.

Former Assembly Speaker Prem Chand Agarwal will be a first-time minister. He has been an MLA from Rishikesh for three consecutive terms since 2007. Agarwal was the only minister

on Wednesday who took the oath in Sanskrit.

Former soldier Ganesh Joshi was the Minister of Soldier Welfare, Industrial Development, MSME, Khadi and Village Industries in the last Cabinet. This is his fourth stint as a member of the legislative Assembly. A matriculate, Joshi is the least-educated member in the Dhami Cabinet.

Subodh Uniyal served as the Agriculture Minister in the previous government. This is his second stint as a legislator from the Narendra Nagar constituency in Tehri Garhwal district. Uniyal was also the spokesperson of the Uttarakhand government.

The only woman in the new Cabinet, Rekha Arya, 43, is an MLA from Someshwar constituency and she was also a minister in the previous Cabinet.

A four-time MLA from the Bageshwar (SC) constituency, Chandan Ram Das will serve as a minister for the first time.



POLL ARENA

Preparations at Lucknow's Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Stadium for Yogi Adityanath's swearing-in as CM on Friday. The BJP is going all out to make the event a stepping stone for its 2024 Lok Sabha campaign. PM Narendra Modi is scheduled to attend. Sources said invites have been sent to RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat and all Union ministers and chief ministers of BJP-ruled states. Bhagwat is unlikely to attend. Vishal Srivastav

President to address Gujarat House in special session today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GANDHINAGAR, MARCH 23

PRESIDENT RAM Nath Kovind will address a special session of Gujarat Assembly on Thursday. The address will be part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations and will be held between 11 am and 12 noon Thursday.

A senior official of Gujarat Assembly said that this will be the first address of the President to Gujarat Assembly ever.

An announcement of this

was made by Speaker Nimaben Acharya from the floor of the House after Question Hour Wednesday.

As per the Speaker, the President's address will be part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations and will be held between 11 am and 12 noon Thursday.

For the special occasion, the Speaker also gave out certain instructions to the Members of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Wednesday, and asked the members to take their seats by

10.30 am. The President will arrive at the Assembly at 10.45 am. After his arrival in the House, a police band will play the national anthem. All the members of the House have also been instructed not to leave their seats till the President departs.

The Speaker also announced changes in the schedule of the House proceedings owing to the President's address. It was scheduled to hold two sittings on Thursday, but now, the House will hold one sitting after the President's address.

MANN LAUNCHES ANTI-GRAFT HELPLINE



Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann pays tribute to freedom fighters in Hussainiwalla on Wednesday. Express

Can make Punjab graft-free in a month if people support: CM

RAAKHI JAGGA
LUDHIANA, MARCH 23

ON THE occasion of martyrdom day of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev, Punjab CM Bhagwant Singh Mann launched an anti-corruption helpline at Hussainiwalla on Wednesday morning. On the occasion, he said that Punjab can be made 'Bhrashtachar Mukh' (corruption free) if people will support him in this drive.

Mann gave this number to the people of Punjab after paying respects at Hussainiwalla. He said, "The anti-corruption helpline number is 9501200200. I had promised you to give you a number on March 23 which will be an 'anti-corruption action line'. There can't be a better tribute to the martyrs by launching this number on this day as it is a start to make India and Punjab of their dreams."

He added that if the people

support him, he will make Punjab corruption free within a month. "If anyone asks for bribe from you in lieu of any work, don't refuse him/her but make a video of that demand and send it at this number. I request you to send only corruption-related videos at this number. For the rest of the issues, there are many other departments as well for which you can get details on our website."

He added that regarding the video related to corruption, one staff will do a fair investigation in this matter and "if anyone is found guilty whether our officer, or our minister or even MLA, strictest possible action will be taken against them".

"I need the support of 2.75 crore Punjabis in this drive," he said, adding that "We are working hard day and night and we need your support to make Punjab once again a rangla Punjab. This will be an effort to pay tribute to martyrs by making Punjab 'corruption-free'."

MP IAS officer faces show cause notice for tweet on Kashmir Files

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BHOPAL, MARCH 23

MADHYA PRADESH Home Minister Narottam Mishra Wednesday said the government would serve a show cause notice to a PWD official who had tweeted on *The Kashmir Files* and suggested that a film should be made on the suffering of Muslims as well.

IAS officer Niyaz Khan, Deputy Secretary in the Public Works Department, tweeted: "Kashmir File shows the pain of Brahmins. They should be allowed to live safely in Kashmir with all honour. The producer must also make a movie to show the killings of large number of Muslims across several states. Muslims are not insects but human beings and citizens of country."

Medical Education Minister Vishvas Sarang accused Khan of "firqa parasti (sectarianism)" and called for his removal from the PWD. Following this, Mishra said: "He is violating the service conduct rules that bind officers. The government will issue a show cause notice."

In another tweet on Sunday, the IAS officer congratulated the film's producers on the movie touching the Rs 150-crore revenue mark, and said they should "transfer all earnings to Brahmin children's education" and build homes for them in Kashmir.

In response, *The Kashmir Files* director Vivek Agnihotri asked Khan for an appointment. "We can meet and exchange ideas how we can help and how you can help with the royalty of your books and your power as an IAS officer," Agnihotri tweeted Sunday.

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



MAKING A POINT

HEMA MALINI Wednesday raised the issue of artists from her Mathura constituency in Parliament, trying to wear it on her sleeve – literally. The actor-MP asked the government if it had any plan to encourage Sanjhi artists from the Mathura-Vrindavan area. Pointing out that artists from other parts of the country like the Madhubani artists from Bihar and Warli painting artists from Maharashtra are promoted through textile products, the Mathura MP wanted Sanjhi art on textile as well. After raising the issue in House, she met Union minister Smriti Irani, and wished her on her birthday. She appealed to Irani to extend support to artists from Braj region to get their art on the textile products. Hema Malini, who came in a sari with Madhubani art on it, said she wore that particular sari to explain her demand more effectively.

TWIN TROUBLE

WHEN SOMEONE told Union Minister SP Singh Baghel that he looked like a don on Wednesday, he shared an interesting story with a few fellow MPs at Parliament gate. According to Baghel, when Telugu actor-turned-politician Chiranjeevi was an MP, many had told both about the similarities in their appearance. One day, Chiranjeevi asked Baghel to accompany him to another MP's residence for dinner but on the condition that he should keep his mouth shut. Once there, Chiranjeevi introduced Baghel to the host as his twin who had come from abroad. Baghel claimed the host MP believed him as long as he remained silent. Later, when Chiranjeevi protested demanding a separate state, Baghel was flooded with questions in his home state Uttar Pradesh on why he wanted Andhra Pradesh to be bifurcated.

Aircel-Maxis case: Chidambaram, son get bail in cases by CBI, ED

New Delhi: A Delhi Court Wednesday granted regular bail to former Union minister P Chidambaram and his son Karti in corruption and money laundering cases filed by the CBI and ED respectively in relation to the Aircel-Maxis deal.

The court, which had earlier granted anticipatory bail to both the accused in the matter, accepted the bail bonds of Rs 1 lakh each in both the cases.

The accused had moved application after they appeared before the court in pursuance of



Chidambaram and son Karti

summons issued against them after it took cognizance of the charge sheets filed by the probe agencies. The case relates to alleged irregularities in the grant of FIPB approval in the Aircel-Maxis deal in the matter. PTI

Farm laws: Why SC panel report on 'silent majority' support does not add up

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

ON MONDAY, the report of the Supreme Court-appointed committee on the controversial farm laws was made public for the first time, and it talked about how the panel had recommended against their withdrawal, as a "majority" of the farm unions support them and a repeal would be "unfair to this silent majority".

However, a scrutiny of the report reveals that the consultation process through which the committee arrived at this conclusion was far from widespread, as it indicated. In fact, the committee "interacted directly", either through video conferencing or physically, with only 73 of the 306 farmer bodies (24 per cent) which it had invited for consultation.

The committee also claimed that of the 19,207 representation / suggestions it received as online feedback on its portal, two-third supported the farm laws. But the report shows that out of the 19,207 responses, only 5,451, or 28 per cent, came from farmers.

Of these, the maximum responses were from Maharashtra (2,000-2,500), followed by "Unspecified" location (a little over 2,000), and then Rajasthan, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. These states saw negligible protests over the farm laws.

From three states, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Haryana, between 1,000 and 1,500 responses were received. Less than 1,000 was the figure for other states and Union Territories, including Punjab, which saw the maximum protests against the three farm laws.

Similarly, of the total 142 representatives who participated in meetings of the committee, only 78 were from farmers' organisations, while 64 belonged to industry bodies and other organisations.

The 92-page report shows that the committee had invited 306 farmer unions and Farmer Producers Organisations (FPOs) for consultation. This list included the 41 farmers' unions spearheading the protest against the three laws, which boycotted the committee.



The committee 'interacted directly' with only 73 of the 306 farmer bodies it had invited for consultation. Express/File

"The Committee interacted directly with 73 Farmer Organizations, either through video conferencing or physically. These Farmer Organizations represented more than 3.83 crore farmers..." the report states.

While it adds that of these, 4 Farmers Organizations, representing 51 lakh farmers (13.3 per cent), did not support the Act, 7 representing 3.6 lakh farmers (1 per cent) supported with some suggestions for modifications, and 1 representing 500 farmers was not clear on the farm laws, the report says: "... 61 Farmer Organizations, representing 3.3 crore farmers, fully supported the Acts – a majority constituting 85.7 per cent of the total farmers."

However, as per various official estimates, the number of farmers in India is in the range of 9 crore to 15 crore. Even under PM-Kisan, the number of beneficiaries is 10.09 crore. The figure of 3.3 crore is hence about 30% or lower of the total farmers.

Besides, the committee says, it received feedback from 5,451 farmers, 929 FPOs, 151 farmers unions and 12,496 other stakeholders online. "This feedback on the portal showed that around two-thirds of the respondents supported the Acts," the committee said. However, 5,451 farmers add up to only 28 per cent of the responses.

The report says the commit-

tee held 11 meetings between January 21 and February 23, 2021, in which 142 people participated, 78 of them from farmers' unions and FPOs, 18 each from industry bodies and state governments, 7 who were professionals or academicians, 10 representing private markets and state agriculture marketing boards, and 11 government officials and procurement agencies.

Among the industry bodies that participated were Amul, ITC, FCI, Sugna Foods, Horticulture Produce Exporters Association, Venkateshwara Hatcheries, CII, FICCI, APEDA, Seafood, etc.

Staying the implementation of the three farm laws on January 12, 2021, the Supreme Court had constituted a four-member committee for "the purpose of listening to the grievances of the farmers relating to the farm laws and the views of the Government and to make recommendations". The committee was asked to submit its report within two months from the date of its first sitting.

Two days later after the committee was announced, one of the members, Bhupinder Singh Mann, had recused himself.

The committee submitted its report on March 19, 2021. It was under wraps since. On November 19, 2021, the government announced the repeal.

How Maharashtra govt sowed seeds of prosperity for soybean farmers

PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS
PUNE, MARCH 23

DATTATREYA DOKE is eyeing windfall gains from his soybean crop. This farmer from the village of Dokewadi in Bhim taluka of Osmanabad said this year along with the Kharif crop (sown in June-July and harvested after September), he would have another crop ready for the markets by next April. This was possible because Doke has taken a second soybean crop in the rabi season (sown in December-January and harvested after April) as well.

Doke credits the state agriculture department's extension services which encouraged him and other farmers in his area to go for a second crop of soybean.

Thanks to the second soybean crop, Doke today has 42 quintals of soybean to sell at a time when the wholesale market prices in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh – the two biggest soybean-producing states in the country – range between Rs 7,200-7,500/quintal. That's a sharp premium over the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of Rs 3,950/quintal.

The second soybean crop,

GOVERNANCE
AN EXPRESS SERIES
MAHARASHTRA

which Doke had grown in one-third of his three-acre landholding, has allowed him to have more than the usual quantity of soybean to sell this time around.

The government's move to incentivise an additional crop of soybean in the Rabi season has its roots in a crisis that unfolded two years ago when the state reported



Dattatreya Doke's rabi soybean crop. Express

a massive seed germination failure. The situation was so bad that according to the estimates of the Soybean Processors Association of India, which is the Indore-based soybean processor's association, around 20 per cent of the 43 lakh hectares under the crop required resowing. From sub-standard seeds to incorrect sowing to inadequate levels of moisture in the soil – there were several reasons for the germination failure. The failure led to the Bombay High Court passing strictures against the government.

This compelled the agriculture department to think of ways

to ensure the availability of good quality soybean seeds to farmers for the next season. They planned to promote the cropping of soybeans in the Rabi season. The fact that the past two years have seen good rain meant that groundwater levels were better and enabled farmers to act on this strategy.

The plan to sow an additional crop in Rabi had two primary goals. One, to compensate for any losses that a farmer may suffer during the routine Kharif season. Two, to supplement farmers' incomes, even if there were no losses during the Kharif season. The boost to farmers' income,

in turn, happened in two ways as explained by Dheeraj Kumar, the state's Agriculture Commissioner. At one level, the farmers had a soybean harvest when its prices were well above the MSP. This allowed farmers to earn a nifty profit. Two, the Rabi crop also saves the farmers from spending huge amounts on buying new seeds for the next Kharif crop. In other words, the Rabi crop is helping farmers to sell at a premium but also reducing their seed costs for the next season, according to Kumar.

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UPHOLD THE LAW

Rampurhat killings underline need for CM Banerjee to take steps for purging West Bengal of its toxic political culture

IN THE CRIME at Rampurhat, West Bengal, both the victims and the alleged perpetrators are reportedly associated with the state's ruling party, the Trinamool Congress. Bhadu Sheikh, deputy pradhan, was murdered in Botugi village, and in the hours after Sheikh's murder, a group of people set ablaze houses of the suspects' relatives, killing eight people — all of them belonging to the minority community, and including women and children. The Bengal police has said that Sheikh's murder did not have a political angle, but the killings appear to be part of a larger dismal pattern in the state: In West Bengal, the electoral dominance of the TMC in rural areas has been accompanied by violence, factionalism and a deterioration of the rule of law, in many ways mimicking and deepening the political culture that became entrenched during Left rule. For Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, fresh from the glow of her comprehensive victory over the BJP in the state last year, the killings are a call to take urgent steps to bring an end to the political culture of violence and impunity in Bengal.

In over three decades of Left Front rule, CPM workers came to dominate nearly every aspect of social and political life, and the political Opposition was all too often dealt with violently. Banerjee's party appears to have only strengthened this way of doing politics. "Syndicate" culture — initially limited to certain construction projects in urban Bengal — has become a catch-all phrase that denotes the entrenched nexus between politics, corruption, organised crime such as extortion and distribution of political patronage. The lack of a cadre-based Opposition in rural areas means that personal and business rivalries find expression as violent factional conflicts. In this setting, the police apparatus appears to take its cue from the political masters: In Rampurhat, for example, questions are justifiably being asked about the absence of police forces in areas where arson and violence took place after Sheikh's murder. Given that it is the Party that controls and circumscribes all factions and facets, it is from its leadership that the process of reform must also begin.

Speaking in the aftermath of the killings, Banerjee said that "... the possibility of a larger political conspiracy to malign the image of the State cannot be ruled out and the investigation will make all-out efforts to unearth all those who are behind the occurrence of the incident". That sounds suspiciously like spectre-mongering. The police must bring the perpetrators to book, no matter what their political loyalties. And the TMC must make a beginning towards dismantling the Syndicate culture, to purge the violence from the state's body politic that continues to take a toll on its men, women and children. In her third term, with an impressive mandate, touted as a leader who could play a leading role in the national Opposition space, CM Banerjee has the political capital to rescue her state by unambiguously upholding the rule of law.

CRUDE IMPERATIVE

Fuel prices need to be brought in line with market conditions. Elevated inflation will further restrict RBI's room for manoeuvre

AFTER KEEPING PRICES on hold since November last year, retail prices of petrol and diesel were raised on Wednesday by Rs 0.80 for the second straight day. However, considering that global crude oil prices have surged over the past few months — according to the Petroleum Planning & Analysis Cell, the price of the Indian crude oil basket stood at \$113 in the third week of March, up from \$80.64 in November — retail fuel prices will need to be hiked considerably to bring them in line with global market prices. As per Crisil, with crude oil having averaged around \$100 in the ongoing quarter, retail prices of petrol and diesel would need to be increased by Rs 9-12 to ensure a full pass through.

The decision to keep retail prices on hold, despite surging global crude oil prices, and leaving oil marketing companies to absorb the losses does suggest that fuel pricing decisions continue to be driven not by commercial considerations, but by political compulsions. After all, retail prices were kept on hold till the conclusion of elections in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Goa, Manipur and Uttarakhand. To limit the impact on the end consumers, governments, at both the central and state level, could have offset some part of the price hikes by cutting the taxes imposed on petrol and diesel — in Delhi, for instance, on March 16, the excise duty and VAT levied on petrol was around Rs 43.4 per litre.

Higher crude oil prices, even if partially passed through, will be inflationary. The decision of oil marketing companies to increase the price of bulk diesel by Rs 25 per litre, even as it distorts the market, will also end up being inflationary, as prominent buyers of bulk diesel include transportation companies and the Indian Railways. Considering this scenario, the Reserve Bank of India will have to revise its outlook on inflation in the next monetary policy committee (MPC) meeting. In the last MPC meeting, held just days after the Union budget was presented, the central bank had projected inflation at 5.7 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2021-22, trending downwards thereafter to 4.5 per cent in 2022-23. However, with the consumer price index having already breached the upper limit of the RBI's inflation targeting framework in both January and February, it is now unlikely to mirror the trajectory laid out by the central bank. Elevated inflation will further restrict the RBI's room to manoeuvre. The longer the conflict between Russia and Ukraine persists, the longer crude oil prices remain elevated, the more challenging the policy environment will be.

WHAT'S THE HURRY?

Apps promise the moon at our doorstep in 10 minutes. Can we be delivered of such insanity?

SO, YOU WANT a plate of momos from a restaurant 5 km away and you want it right now? In 10 minutes? Time was when this kind of bratty, entitled behaviour would invite the wrath of sensible parents, and a week of nothing but dal-sabzi. Now it gets rewarded by techbros out to make a million quick bucks. And so, app after app has been wooing customers with the promise of delivering anything — cigarettes, groceries, sanitisers, the moon — in 20 minutes or less. In this pointless game of fastest-orders-first, Zomato has rolled out an instant delivery service that promises hot meals, from kitchen to doorstep, in 10 minutes flat. Boss, who are you kidding? Even instant noodles take longer to make.

And really, what's the rush for? Why push underpaid, overworked gig workers to break speed limits to meet your unreasonable deadlines? Why burden rush-hour traffic with more frantic two-wheelers? We have heard the spiel, of course. The consumer is king, and companies are incentivised to serve their needs. But here's the thing: No one really needs to have stuff delivered to them in an instant. Ambulances, yes. Tomatoes and tortillas, no. This is a manufactured economy of instant gratification, aimed at soaking up venture capitalist funds. Surely, the best of Indian startup talent has better problems to solve and innovate.

So much frenetic activity in delivering anda-bread just underlines what we all know — speed is overrated, especially when it becomes its own intoxication. What the duede-bros of India's startup culture need is a lesson in slowing down, and not racing the herd. Perhaps, a stroll in the sabzi mandi, followed by some mindful time in the kitchen doing some actual cooking might do the trick. As for the customers being peddled the cult of hyperconvenience, they ought to know that the promise that apps will deliver us leisure is a lemon — it may arrive in 10 minutes, but they still have got to make their lemonade.

Changing face of money



MADAN SABNAVIS

Green bonds, digital currency hold promise. Groundwork will need to be done to fulfill it

THE COMING FINANCIAL year will be rather interesting as it might witness the fructification of several budget proposals. The most obvious one that comes to mind is the disinvestment of LIC which was supposed to have concluded in March but now looks likely to be completed in the next financial year. But the question is when will this be done?

The course of the war is not known and if this uncertainty has held back the IPO now, there is no guarantee that the situation will be better in April or May. In fact, as 2021-22 draws to a close, markets appear to have reverted to normalcy. In retrospect, the government could perhaps have launched the IPO.

The other two major budget announcements pertain to the issuance of sovereign green bonds and a central bank digital currency. These two launches will be a joint effort between the government and the RBI. While geopolitical turbulence might make the current moment inopportune for experimentation, the government seems firm on both the proposals and they will most probably be rolled out.

The sovereign green bond is a novel idea. It will be a part of the government's borrowing programme. The gross borrowing programme of the government is pegged at Rs 14.95 lakh crore. This money is raised by the government to finance the deficit which involves excess expenditure on both the capital and revenue accounts. But considering that money is fungible, it is hard to figure out where the borrowed money goes. In the case of sovereign green bonds, though, an exception has to be made. The SGB (sovereign green bond) raised will be part of the aggregate borrowing programme and has to be used for projects which are ESG (environment, social and governance) compliant. Hence, if the bond is being used to finance a power project or road, or in case it is used to finance revenue expenditure, it has to be ESG compliant. The groundwork for this should be done in advance.

The pricing of these bonds will be tricky.

Is a CBDC going to replace currency at some point in the future? Is this just another option for the public or will physical currency disappear? One must remember that there are several sections in India who are not conversant with technology.

As these bonds are different from G-secs (government securities), they may have to provide a better return as all ESG compliant companies have to make special investments that will push up costs. Or will it be the case of these bonds being priced at lower rates to aid ESG implementation? Further, given the low interest rates prevailing today — real returns on deposits are negative — the SGBs can be issued as tax-free bonds, open to the public. This will evince a lot of interest given that these are government-issued bonds. The RBI and the government have been trying to get retail investors to participate in the government's borrowing programme, and this move will expedite the process.

The central bank digital currency, also known as CBDC, is also an interesting concept. It seems to be an outcome of the proliferation of cryptocurrencies. This has pushed several central banks into developing their version of digital currencies. This reasoning could be misleading because cryptos are an investment option, unlike a CBDC which is a substitute for currency. For launching such a currency, the RBI has to address certain fundamental questions.

First, is a CBDC going to replace currency at some point in the future? Is this just another option for the public or will physical currency disappear? One must remember that there are several sections in India that are not conversant with technology.

Second, if it is going to coexist with currency, how different will it be for the public from the digital payments that are being made today? This is a pertinent question because there seems to be a large volume of cash in the system post demonetisation. Will people need to choose between a mobile wallet and a CBDC wallet?

Third, any issuance of CBDC on a voluntary basis also raises a question on the security of the owner's information. Aadhaar is supposed to ensure that an individual's information is confidential, yet there is scepticism.

cism. That's why CBDC has to be clear on the issue of confidentiality as it is bound to be a matter of concern. If it is not confidential, even a CBDC, given as a gift to a couple on their marriage will be tracked by the income tax department.

Fourth, what will be the future of the banking system as CBDC catches on? If people have to be incentivised to move voluntarily to the CBDC, the cash exchanged must earn an interest or else all money will go to bank accounts where a minimal interest rate can be earned. Will we require savings bank accounts with commercial banks in case all cash goes to the RBI? Will we then require ATMs for cash withdrawal? Will bank tellers become redundant? Will we need logistics companies that handle cash? These finer issues need to be addressed by the RBI as the widespread use of CBDC will progressively lead to lesser need for banks.

Fifth is the issue of security as any financial system that runs on technology can be hacked. It has to be foolproof and power-failure resistant. Such systems have to be created and tested before a CBDC is brought in. There is a real danger of cyber fraud increasing as the majority of the population is not tech-savvy. Similarly, there is always downtime for bank servers when banking transactions cannot be carried on. This cannot be allowed to be the case with CBDC as it has to be available on a 24 x 7 basis.

If they succeed at the central level, green bonds can be replicated by states. The arguments for CBDC are compelling on the grounds of keeping up with the central banks of other countries, and the possibilities of taking advantage of new technologies like blockchain. But before embarking on these measures, it might be useful to keep in mind the issues flagged above.

The writer is Chief Economist, Bank of Baroda and author of Hits & Misses: The Indian Banking Story. Views are personal



LANCELOT PINTO AND CHAPAL MEHRA

COVID LESSONS FOR TB

Disease surveillance and prevention strategies can be deployed for both

COVID-19 AND TUBERCULOSIS (TB) are remarkably similar. They are transmissible, airborne infections. Both are more likely to spread in crowded settings, and harm people with immuno-compromising conditions.

In the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic, 1.8 million people were reported to have succumbed to the virus. In the decade between 2010-20, 1.5-2 million individuals died every year because of tuberculosis. Yet, we seldom see the word "pandemic" used in the context of TB. The amount of money spent by governments for research and development in the first 11 months of the Covid-19 pandemic was 162 times the corresponding amount spent on TB in 2020. The difference in responses to the two pandemics can only be explained by the differences in the profiles of those who get infected. TB disproportionately affects people in low-income nations, the poor and the vulnerable.

The increased burden on healthcare to manage Covid has led to a serious setback in TB control. Before the Covid pandemic, it was assumed that a third of all individuals with TB were undiagnosed, and were likely spreading the disease in their communities. In the past two years, case detection has dropped, suggesting that the proportion of such "missing cases" is likely to have increased. Lockdowns, the fear of healthcare establishments and the stigma associated with respiratory symptoms have possibly contributed to the increase in "missing cases". For those diagnosed, access to medicines has not always been easy. The redirection of human resources within the health system during the three Covid waves has left TB facilities understaffed leading to poorer

quality and delayed care.

Studies have suggested that Covid may trigger pathways leading to reactivation of dormant TB bacilli. Historically, turmoil in society (such as wars), food insecurity, poverty and malnutrition have resulted in surges in the incidence of TB. We could, therefore, witness an increase in TB in the coming years.

On World TB day, we need to ask how best we can leverage the lessons learnt from Covid-19 to help gain a new momentum in TB control. We need to focus on the epidemiological triad: Agent, host and the environment.

Test, treat and track has been a strategy successfully employed for Covid. We need to aggressively scale up testing with innovative strategies such as active surveillance, bidirectional screening for respiratory tract infections using the most sensitive molecular diagnostics, and contact tracing. The biggest victory against Covid has been the speed with which vaccines were developed, scaled up and deployed. We need to replicate the same for tuberculosis, lobbying for funding from governments and industry to develop a successful vaccine for TB.

Malnutrition, poverty and immuno-compromising conditions such as diabetes are some of the factors strongly associated with TB. Over a hundred million Indians smoke tobacco — a strong risk factor for both developing TB, and dying from it. Social security programmes that work towards prevention of modifiable risk factors would possibly pay richer dividends than an exclusive focus on "medicalising" the disease.

Environmental factors which have been

neglected include ventilation of indoor spaces, educating individuals to avoid crowds when possible, and to encourage voluntary masking, especially in ill-ventilated and closed spaces. We must not lose this opportunity to invest in these measures, at a time when the sensitisation to their need is high.

Covid has been a stellar example of how investments and actions can be swift, and public education can transform behaviour. Similar aspirations for TB can help turn this crisis into an opportunity to re-imagine our overburdened and underfunded systems. We need to actively engage the private sector, build bridges and partnerships as we did in the case of Covid.

All this, however, is easier said than done. India needs to triple the funding not just for TB but for health, nutrition and preventive services. The country needs to invest in state-of-the-art technologies, build capacity, expand its health workforce and strengthen its primary care facilities. It also needs to consider telemedicine and remote support as important aspects of health services. Most importantly, before embarking on any of this, it needs to build an open and collaborative forum where all stakeholders, especially affected communities and independent experts, take a lead role.

We have ignored TB for too long. It's time we acknowledge the magnitude of the disease, and work harder at offering individuals equitable healthcare access and resources that the disease warrants.

Pinto is consultant pulmonologist at Hinduja Hospital, Mumbai. Mehra is a public health expert

MARCH 24, 1982, FORTY YEARS AGO

INDIA-CHINA TIES

CAUTIOUS INDIAN OPTIMISM about the prospects of improving relations with China is reflected in the annual report of the Ministry of External Affairs. Recalling the talks during the visit of the Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua in June last year and the visit of the Indian delegation led by Eric Gonsalves to Beijing in December, the ministry stressed that the boundary question is central to the relationship and an early settlement is desirable. "It is our hope that this dialogue will lead to the settlement of the outstanding problems which will enable full normali-

sation and further improvement in the ties between the two countries," the document states. Elsewhere, the report talks of the lack of substantive progress in the border talks.

CPI ON BJP

THE COMMUNIST PARTY of India (CPI) considers the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) more authoritarian than Mrs Gandhi, according to Indrajit Gupta who ruled out any alliance between the two parties. He was against the CPM's move to seek the BJP's help in the fight against the government because the BJP was more authoritarian in

addition to being communal. He said the BJP was not consistently anti-authoritarian in Kerala and in Baghwal by-election it had collaborated with Mrs Indira Gandhi's party.

ARRESTS IN PAK

CHAIRMAN FATEHYAB ALI Khan of the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy in Pakistan was arrested and authorities said about 20 Opposition leaders were being rounded up. Miraj Mohammad Khan, president of the Left Wing National Liberation Front was placed under house arrest.

THE IDEAS PAGE

A quota too many

Scheme that gives MPs power to recommend admission of students to Kendriya Vidyalayas undermines the quality of education, goes against constitutional provisions



SUSHIL KUMAR MODI

THERE ARE VERY few issues on which legislative and judicial positions have wavered with such frequency over the years as the Special Dispensation Scheme for admissions in the Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs). Introduced in 1975, the scheme has been in constant flux as a result of the frequent changes in the standpoints of the KV's board of governors, its joint action committees, the law ministry and the human resource development ministry. The measure was abolished thrice, but on each occasion it was reintroduced. That a discretionary provision has witnessed so many changes — the latest amendment to it was as recently as 2016-17 — speaks of its inherently flawed nature.

Currently, the scheme allows every MP to recommend 10 students for admission to the Kendriya Vidyalayas. The scheme was reintroduced in 1998 after its first withdrawal in 1997. It was scrapped on two more occasions, including once at the instance of the Delhi High Court just after it was re-introduced in 1998. The number of students an MP could recommend for admission was increased from two to five in 2011, after the quota was restored a second time in 2010. This was further increased to six in 2012 and then to 10 students per MP in 2016.

Given that there are 543 MPs in the Lok Sabha and 245 MPs in the Rajya Sabha, a total of 7,880 admissions are executed through this quota every academic year. Since the scheme facilitates admissions over and above the class strength of the KVs, it distorts the student-teacher ratio in these schools. It's well-known that maintaining a healthy pupil-teacher ratio, especially at the foundational levels, is critical to ensure desired learning objectives. This has been reiterated by the New Education Policy 2020 which recommends a student-teacher ratio below 30:1 for schools. The policy sets an aspirational target of below 25:1 in areas with large numbers of socio-economically disadvantaged students. The MP quota hinders these objectives as it dilutes educational standards in the KVs.

The MP quota is an anachronism in today's India and must be dispensed with at the earliest. Initially conceptualised as a means of enhancing democracy by providing discretionary power to MPs, the quota has served little purpose to that end. Such a discretionary provision in admission practices discounts quality and goes against the spirit of transparency, consistency, and meritocracy.

A discretion accorded to an elected representative is based on the premise that the people trust the politician to ensure its best use. An MP is approached by people several times more than the quota allotted to him/her. Evaluating each proposal to determine the most deserving and meritorious ones is practically unfeasible. The use of this power is, therefore, prone to arbitrariness. The 7,880 seats under the MP quota could have served a better purpose if they had been allotted to meritorious students in a transparent manner.

Moreover, even after selecting 10 stu-



APARAJITA SARANGI

THE ELECTION RESULTS from Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur have surprised many eminent commentators and experts. Their surprise is born out of ignorance of ground realities, both willful and unintentional. The fact that people re-elected their governments decisively, despite a once-in-a-century pandemic, has been quite difficult to absorb and digest for them. For anyone who has observed India's approach to the pandemic and the public feedback in the last two years with objectivity, the results do not offer any surprise.

The results are an outcome of the "mutual understanding" model in India where Prime Minister Narendra Modi understood the people's requirements and ground signals like no one else did and the people reciprocated with unprecedented trust.

When the pandemic reached India's shores in March 2020, we saw numerous suggestions and ideas on how the country should tailor its policy prescriptions to mitigate the impact of the lockdowns and the accompanying economic distress. They ranged from cash handouts to loan and utility bill waivers. There was also a lot of clamour for big packages to bail out corporations. To be fair, there were identical recommendations to policymakers across the world. The difference was that most governments across the world followed this approach,



CR Sasikumar

dents as per the limit, an MP is forced to turn down a large number of applicants. This provokes public anger in the constituency as a number of people get rejected without a rational justification. As evinced by the experiences of many fellow parliamentarians, this quota has become an unpopular power with MPs, one which has overstayed its welcome.

Allotment of seats under the MP quota is also an inconsistent practice if one looks at the other central educational institutions of the country. MPs are not given such discretionary quotas in the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas or for that matter other central educational institutes in the country. It goes against reason to have such a provision exclusively for Kendriya Vidyalayas, especially because parliamentarians have not been provided with any jurisdiction in recommending admission of students in other educational institutions.

With its flagrant disregard for reservation limits, this quota also undermines a constitutional provision. Admissions through it fail to maintain fidelity to the constitutionally-mandated 50 per cent reservation criteria for the SCs, STs and OBCs. It also deprives the economically weaker sections of the right to 10 per cent reservation and ignores the right of the differently-abled students to 3 per cent horizontal reservation.

Bereft of any allegiance towards reser-

Since the scheme facilitates admissions over and above the class strength of the KVs, it distorts the student-teacher ratio in these schools. It's well-known that maintaining a healthy pupil-teacher ratio, especially at the foundational levels, is critical to ensure desired learning objectives. This has been reiterated by the New Education Policy 2020 which recommends a student-teacher ratio below 30:1 for schools. The policy sets an aspirational target of below 25:1 in areas with large numbers of socio-economically disadvantaged students.

vation policies in the country, this quota has been depriving about 3,940 students of their constitutional right every year. As a result, it has undermined one of the principal reasons for establishing KVs: Giving admission to students from marginalised communities and disadvantaged sections. Abolishing it will be a welcome step towards respecting constitutional provisions and fulfilling the mandate of the KVs.

As our democracy has matured, we have done away with several discretionary powers given to political figures: These include scrapping the practice of allotting gas pumps and revoking the appointments and nomination powers of various ministers as recommended by the Group of Ministers in 2011. Even the Union education minister's discretionary quota for admissions was scrapped recently. Admissions through this quota had surged a staggering 27 times from 450 to 12,295 in 2020-21 until the Union Education Minister surrendered this quota. No admission under the minister's discretionary quota has taken place since then.

In view of these developments, it would therefore be proper to abolish the MP's discretionary quota under the Special Dispensation Admissions Scheme, this time for good.

The writer, a former Deputy CM, Bihar, is a Rajya Sabha MP

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"Cutting fuel duty flies in the face of the government's claim to be a green leader. It is also a regressive measure."

— THE GUARDIAN

The will of the age

Nation yearns for a break from politics that destroys collegiality, consensus.

It needs a leader to step up



ASHWANI KUMAR

IN A DEEPENING of India's electoral democracy, voters in the recently held assembly elections have scripted a new political narrative, catapulting Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) as the challenger to a resurgent Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The BJP's success in stitching cross-caste alliances across states, buttressed by the seductive pull of Hindutva and nationalism, enabled it to duck anti-incumbency sentiment against the Yogi Adityanath government. The "spell of an idea", presented as a promise of development and assurance of national security, and assiduously communicated and disseminated by the Prime Minister, added to the BJP's appeal as the voters' preferred choice in four of the five states, further cementing its position as the central pole of India's polity.

But it is the AAP's spectacular victory in Punjab that has caught the national imagination, alongside the stunning electoral defeat of Parkash Singh Badal, Sukhbir Badal, Amarinder Singh, Navjot Singh Sidhu and the then chief minister Charanjit Singh Channi from both constituencies. Their defeat represents a clinching denouement of the ancien regime and its politics. The AAP's Punjab victory has understandably fuelled its national ambitions. Its ability to lead or co-lead a possible alternative national coalition will test the sagacity of its leaders, their negotiating skills and the breadth of their vision over time. Clearly, the party's win in Punjab will endure only if it yields a stronger constitutional democracy in which the exercise of state power is accountable to the community's sense of justice and institutional constraints. And for the AAP to succeed as a party of change and renewal, it must embrace and broaden a politics of dignity that enables citizens to become moral agents of their freedoms and liberties.

The nation yearns for a break from the debilitating political discourse and affirmation of the inviolability of the testing standards of right and wrong. To recall Lord Hailsham, a former Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, in another context, "We have to face the questions, old and new, to which the prohibition and injunctions of conscience give rise, and we may note that new questions are constantly arising". The need to interrogate our democratic processes to ensure that the majority vote is a guarantee of freedom and fairness in a just society, rather than a legitimisation of the state's encroachment of fundamental freedoms, is self-evident. After all, elections are democracy's signposts, not its destination. It is imperative, therefore, to reject a "manipulative conversation about our future", affirm the centrality of idealism in the pursuit of politics and assert the power of truth as the ultimate vindication of democracy.

The moment is right and history is turning a page. The resilience of our democratic politics to deliver the larger national goals of unity and inclusion will define our trust with democracy. And electoral victories as a symbol of democratic resurgence must yield leadership defined by a largeness of vision and generosity of heart, befitting the challenges of our times. The discredited processes of political democracy that destroy collegiality and defeat consensus-building must yield to an overarching national aspiration for politics as a cooperative enterprise of national renewal. The end purpose of democratic politics is to create conditions for expanding the "circle of human dignity". A democracy in a state of perpetual conflict ill-serves this ennobling aspiration. The assault on individual freedoms spurred by intolerance, bigotry and fundamentalism, a weakening commitment to the constitutional ethic, diminishing empathy for the marginalised and a twisted definition of nationalism that pits freedom and dignity against national security as if these were mutually exclusive, challenge the fundamental assumptions of democracy. The nation needs an accommodative democratic politics, based on conciliation and consensus anchored in a constructive contest of ideas, as part of an ongoing national conversation. Securing a bipartisan commitment towards this end will be the test of leadership.

It is also incumbent upon the victors to recognise that "democratic triumphalism" is not an invitation to transgress constitutional constraints on the exercise of executive power. In the finer traditions of parliamentary democracy, the winners and the losers are both challenged to restore the credibility of a presently dysfunctional system and reinforce a larger construct of democracy in which people "construct their own ideal" and reject the personalisation of power. Those aspiring to lead the nation must recognise the non-severability of justice, freedom and dignity in the service of democracy. They must take the lead to invest politics with a larger moral compass and reverse the intellectual amorality that has robbed our democratic experiment of its elevating function. Nursing a flailing democracy to vigour is an "unending journey, guided by lights, warnings and insights", which will require a demonstrative commitment to man as "the measure of all things". Those who scoff at this "unrealistic utopian dream" may wish to remember that the truth of a conviction is best tested in its repeated assertion and that vindication of the ideal of democracy requires us to proclaim our convictions aloud.

Finally, leadership cannot be inherited or willed, nor can it rest on a flawed understanding of national sensitivities on issues that touch the nation's inner core. Compulsive cynicism and routine personal targeting of political adversaries diminishes leadership which, as Hegel reminded us, is about understanding the will of the age, telling the age what its will is and accomplishing it. Indeed, the leader of the nation must also be the leader of the times.

The writer is a former Union Law Minister. Views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WELL SAID

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'The new world disorder' (IE, March 23). Pratap Bhanu Mehta's brilliantly evocative article in today's IE is a must-read for all. I venture to predict that its opening sentence — "Even as Ukraine faces extraordinary devastation, a new world disorder is becoming apparent." — will be reckoned as the most quotable quote of the year!

Fali Nariman, Delhi

THE USUAL HYPE

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'How BJP won four states' (IE, March 23). The fulsome praise of Narendra Modi's policies by the Assam chief minister — both belong to the BJP — holding them responsible for winning the assembly elections recently held in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Manipur and Goa can be taken only with a pinch of salt. With Akhilesh Yadav going all guns blazing and the farmers exposing its wrong agrarian policies, the elections, especially in UP, seemed to be touch-and-go for a bit. This is why the whole top BJP leadership was camping in Varanasi — the PM's constituency. The BJP did win elections there but with a reduced no of seats.

Tarsem Singh, Mahilpur

RAPID REFORM

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'The real test' (IE, March 23). In an expected but still innovative education reform, the

Common University Entrance Test has been announced for admissions to undergraduate courses in all central universities. This will be a radical shift from an admission process that was based on board exam marks alone to one where these marks will have zero weightage. However, the UGC's surprise announcement to shift to CUET will dismay many Class XII students. With this year's CBSE board exam having been split into two terms, students face the heat of rules getting changed randomly. With CUET applications likely opening in April with the test itself taking place in July, the window for adapting the new system is very narrow.

Sanjay Chopra, Mohali

FALSE HOPE

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'War and prices' (IE, March 23). While we prefer to see the beneficial effects of the war for our farmers, the reality is that in the end, all this would lead to increased inflation and increasing input cost pressures for the economy as a whole. Higher prices are not enough to subsume the increased costs of fuel and fertilisers, thus upsetting the budgetary arithmetic. And it should be noted that higher prices are temporary but the crude and fertiliser costs don't seem to be going down in the near horizon. Let us not be disconnected from reality and live in our own bubble.

Gaurav Gupta, Gurugram

City	Not necessary	Yes, but not much	Yes, a little	Yes, a lot	Yes, very much
New Delhi	10%	10%	20%	40%	20%
Delhi	10%	10%	20%	40%	20%
Mumbai	10%	10%	20%	40%	20%
Kolkata	10%	10%	20%	40%	20%

No Covid curbs from March 31, but face masks to stay: Centre

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

THE CENTRE has decided to end all Covid containment measures under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, in view of the continuous dip in cases across the country. However, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare tweeted that the "use of face mask and hand hygiene will continue to guide Covid management measures".

The Centre first issued orders and guidelines under the Disaster Management Act for Covid containment on March 24, 2020, and these have been modified on various occasions.

"After taking into consideration the overall improvement in the situation and preparedness of the government to deal with the pandemic, the National Disaster Management Authority has taken a decision that there may not be any further need to invoke the provisions of the DM Act for Covid containment measures," Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla said in a letter sent to state chief secretaries on Tuesday.



A student gets inoculated at Bharati Vidyapeeth School in Navi Mumbai on Wednesday. Narendra Vaskar

Accordingly, he said, after the expiry of the existing order on March 31, no further order will be issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

"Over the last 24 months, significant capacities have been developed for various aspects of management of the pandemic, such as diagnostics, surveillance, contact tracing, treatment, vaccination, hospital infrastructure. And the general public now has a much higher level of aware-

ness on Covid-appropriate behaviour. The states and UTs have also developed their own capacities and systems and implemented their detailed specific plans for managing the pandemic," he said.

"Over the last seven weeks or so, there has been a steep decline in the number of cases. The total caseload in the country stands at 23,913 only (on March 22) and the daily positivity rate has declined to 0.28 per cent. It is also

worth mentioning that with the combined efforts, a total of 181.56 crore vaccine doses have been administered," he said.

However, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's advisories on Covid containment measures, including on the use of face mask and hand hygiene, will continue to guide the overall national response, he said. "In view of the nature of the disease, people still need to remain watchful of the situation. Whenever any surge in the number of cases is observed, states and UTs may consider taking prompt and proactive action at local level, as advised by the Ministry of Health from time to time. I would, therefore, advise all the states and UTs to consider appropriately discontinuing issue of orders and guidelines under the DM Act, 2005 for Covid containment measures," Bhalla said in the letter.

"The states and UTs may continue to follow the standard operating measures and advisories that have been or are being issued by the Ministry of Health from time to time for containment measures, vaccination and other related aspects," he said.

4 kids of family die after eating 'poisonous toffees' found outside their home

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, MARCH 23

FOUR CHILDREN of a Dalit family died after allegedly consuming poisonous toffees that were found lying outside their home at Sinsai village in the Kasya area of Kushinagar district on Wednesday. All the children — two sisters, their brother and a cousin brother — were below the age of seven, police said.

On a complaint lodged by the children's family, police have registered an FIR against three neighbours, also belonging to the Scheduled Caste. The three — identified as Prem, his brother Bala and a relative Chabas — have been booked for murder, poisoning and criminal intimidation, said police.

While the autopsy report is still awaited, police said they suspected that toffees were laced with some poisonous substance.

"Besides toffees and coins, vermilion was also there in the packet. Therefore, we suspect black magic could also be a reason behind the incident," said an officer involved in the probe.

The toffees and the wrappers are being sent to a laboratory for tests. "After we receive the re-

port, several things will become clear," Additional Director General of Police (Gorakhpur Zone) Akhil Kumar said.

The victims' family told the police that they suspected their neighbours to be involved in "poisoning" as they used to harass them and pick fights over trivial issues. "Two days ago, Prem and Bala allegedly abused me and threatened to kill our entire family," said Rasgulla, who lost two daughters and a son. His brother Balesar lost his three-year-old son.

Police said the children spotted a packet containing four toffees and some coins outside their house in the morning. The children brought the packet inside the house and their grandmother distributed toffees to them, according to the family.

"After consuming toffees, they suddenly fell unconscious. They were rushed to a hospital where they were declared dead on arrival," said a police officer.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directed Kushinagar police to provide all possible help to the victim's family. District Magistrate (Kushinagar) S Rajalingam said a proposal is being sent to the government to provide monetary help to the victim's family.

Constantly review data of new Covid cases: Centre to states

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

WITH THE country continuing to report a decline in Covid-19 cases, the Health Ministry on Wednesday directed the states for constant review of emerging data of new cases based on sustained testing at the district level.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan told chief secretaries of the states that restrictions and relaxations should be taken after proper analysis of the local situation, including emergence of new

clusters, case positivity, the geographical spread of cases, and hospital infrastructure preparedness.

Bhushan specifically reiterated to the states that they need to watch the trajectory of cases in areas reporting positivity rate above 10% and bed occupancy more than 40% on either oxygen support or ICU beds — and implement containment and restriction measures in these areas.

"Taking into account the sustained and steep decline in Covid-19 cases across the country, the states have been undertaking various measures to reopen social

and economic activities. There is a need to follow a risk assessment based approach on the opening of economic and social activities without losing the gains made so far in the fight against the pandemic," Bhushan wrote.

Bhushan reiterated the continued focus on the five-fold strategy of Test-Track-Treat-Vaccination and adherence to Covid Appropriate Behaviour.

With a continuous decline in cases, Bhushan asked the states to resume social gatherings and congregations and offline classes in academic classes.

Gujarat govt tables data on Covid deaths, Congress seeks 'correct figures'

PARIMAL DABHI & AVINASH NAIR
GANDHINAGAR, MARCH 23

THE CONGRESS demanded the Gujarat government put out correct figures of Covid-19 deaths in the state, when the former tabled data in the Assembly on Wednesday. The government said it had received 27,674 applications for assistance under the Mukhya-mantri Bal Seva Yojana (MBSY) meant for children rendered orphans during Covid-19 period of which it has sanctioned assistance to 20,970 of them.

Deputy Leader of Opposition Shailesh Parmar referred to the data and asked the government to reveal the exact number of Covid deaths in Gujarat. The official number of people who died of Covid as per the health bulletin on Tuesday was 10,942.

"On one hand, the government is saying that 10,942 people died (due to corona). On the other hand, 20,970 applications (under MBSY) have been sanctioned. In the Supreme Court, the government filed an affidavit on giving financial assistance of Rs 50,000 (to the families of those who died due to corona). That figure is 1.17 lakh. The government should tell the Gujarat Assembly how many people have died. Over 3 lakh people died due to corona in Gujarat," Parmar said.

Top sources told *The Indian Express* that, till Tuesday, the government had received 1,17,463 applications for ex gratia, of which 1,05,638 were approved and 10,654 were rejected. Later, in a press statement, the Congress alleged that the figures under MBSY exposed the fact that the figures of Covid-19 deaths were being concealed.

Under the MBSY, the Gujarat government is paying Rs 4,000 per month to each child that lost both parents during Covid-19 period owing to any medical condition and Rs 2,000 per month to each child who lost either parent for similar reasons, till they attain 18 years. It has defined the period from March 2020 till June 30, 2021, said a senior official of Social Defence division of Social Justice & Empowerment department.

APPLICATIONS INVITED FOR CELEBRATION OF BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF DR.B.R.AMBEDKAR

Government of NCT of Delhi is inviting applications for celebration of Birth Anniversary of Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar on 14/04/2022 under "Scheme for Celebration of Birth/Death Anniversary of Eminent personalities".

Government of NCT of Delhi will provide assistance through empanelled agencies to the Organizations desiring to celebrate the event in the form of arrangement for tentage, sound, system, lighting, banners, chairs etc.

Eligibility:- NGOs/Organizations involved in social activities are eligible for the assistance.

Procedure for applying:

The Organizations desiring to avail the assistance may submit their application duly recommended by area MLA submitted by the NGOs/Organization to the Department for the welfare of SC/ST/OBC, GNCT of Delhi, B Block, 2nd floor, Vikas Bhawan, I.P.Estate, New Delhi 02, by 31/03/2022 positively. Applications received thereafter will not be considered.

Selected NGOs/ Organizations have to provide photographs of the event organized by them and abide by stipulations of the department for proper organization of the event. Organizers will also be required to submit a declaration to the effect that Govt. guidelines/SOP applicable for organizing religious/cultural functions will be followed scrupulously to prevent spread of Covid-19.

DIP/SHABDARTH/0747/21-22

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER,
WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
ASSAM, GUWAHATI

No. CE/CC/WR/NIT/2019-20/1003/129
e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE FOR QUOTATION
REQUEST FOR QUOTATIONS (RFQ)

Chief Engineer, Water Resources Department, Guwahati, on behalf of Governor of Assam invites Quotation for the following works

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Lot/ Contract No.	Approx. amount in Lakh (Rs.)
1.	Supply & installation of Boundary pillars for demarcation of required land under Dibrugarh, Chirang & Barpeta Water Resources Division.	Lot 1 Lot 2 Lot 3	1.616 1.651 55.781

Details may be seen at website - <http://assamtenders.gov.in>

1. The Water Resources Department (WRD), ASSAM now invites online quotations from eligible Bidders for the lot/contract for the construction of works detailed above in the table. The bidders may submit quotations for any or all of the lots/contracts in these Requests for Quotations.

Sd/
Chief Engineer,
Water Resources Department Assam

Janasanyog/C/13807/21

GOVT. OF BIHAR
BIHAR COMBINED ENTRANCE COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION BOARD
I.A.S. Association Building, Near Patna Airport, Patna-14.

UNDER GRADUATE MEDICAL ADMISSION COUNSELLING
(UGMAC)-2021 for MBBS / BDS / B.V.Sc. & A.H. in Govt. Medical / Dental / Bihar Veterinary Colleges and Private Medical / Dental Colleges of Bihar

Adv. No.- BCECEB(UGMAC)-2021/17 Dated 23.03.2022
Website : bceceboard.bihar.gov.in

Important Notice for MOP-UP Round Counselling

Fresh Online Registration and submission of Application form are invited from such qualified, eligible & interested NEET(UG)-2021 candidates for appearing in the MOP-UP round Offline Counselling of Under Graduate Medical Admission Counselling (UGMAC)-2021, who are not admitted in any Medical/ Dental Colleges of India, on the vacant seats of Government / Private Medical / Dental Colleges of Bihar / Bihar Veterinary College after admission on the basis of UGMAC-2021 Online 2nd round counselling from 13.03.2022 to 16.03.2022.

2. Eligibility criteria and instructions and other details are available in the prospectus of UGMAC-2021 which can be downloaded from the Board's website bceceboard.bihar.gov.in.

3. Those candidate who are admitted in any Govt/ Pvt. Medical / Dental College of India are not eligible for MOP-UP round counselling.

4. Those candidates who have already duly submitted the online application form earlier for UGMAC-2021 and are not admitted in any Govt. / Pvt. Medical / Dental Colleges of India and are interested to take admission in Medical / Dental Colleges and Bihar Veterinary College on the basis of MOP-UP round counselling of UGMAC-2021 are also required to do fresh Registration and duly submit the application form with requisite fee.

5. Seat Matrix of vacancies after completion of 2nd Round Counselling will be available on Board's website from 24.03.2022 If any further vacancies arise, the Seat matrix of updated vacancies shall be uploaded on the Board's website on 05.04.2022 (10:00 A.M.) before starting of MOP-UP Counselling. The details of programme / process / fee etc. has been uploaded on the Board's website : bceceboard.bihar.gov.in vide adv. No. BCECEB(UGMAC)-2021/16 Dated 23.03.2022.

6. The concerned candidates are requested to download the details and go through it and complete the process accordingly as per the details of above advertisement for attending the MOP-UP counselling.

Controller of Examination

varthana

Varthana Finance Private Limited
(Formerly known as M/s. Thirumeni Finance Private Ltd.,)

Registered Office at : No. 5BC-110, Varasiddhi, 3rd Floor, Outer Ring Road, Service Road, 3rd Block, HRBR Layout, Kalyan Nagar, Bangalore-560043. Website www.varthana.com. Email: care@varthana.com. Phone: 080-68455777. Branch Office : No. 1162 & 1163, Tower B-1, 11th Floor, Spaze 1 Tech Park, Sector 49, Sohna Road, Gurugram – 122018.

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR AUCTION FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Asset under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, read with Rule 8 (6) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is here by given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Mortgagee(s) that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, Symbolic Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of M/s. Varthana Finance Private Ltd, Gurugram, (Formerly known as Thirumeni Finance Private Ltd), will be sold on 12-04-2022 (Tuesday) between 1-00 p.m to 2-00 p.m., "As is Where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis, for recovery of dues of below mentioned Loan Account. The details of the Borrower(s)/ Mortgagee(s) Secured Assets/ Dues/ Reserve Price/ Auction date & time, EMD & Bid increase amount are mentioned below.

Name of The Borrowers/Mortgageors : 1. M/s. Gautam Convent Middle School, Rep. by its Authorised Signatory, 2. M/s. Galaxy Educational Society, Rep. by its Authorised Signatory, 3. Lajpatwadi, B. W/o. Bhambili, 4. Dinesh Kumar, S/o. Bhambili, 5. Rajesh Kumar, S/o. Bhambili.

Loan A/c No. S19GUR-GUR-007873.

Details of Total Outstanding Amount in Rupees : Rs. 55,44,251/- (Rupees Fifty Five Lakhs Forty Four Thousand Two Hundred Fifty One Only) as on 19-03-2022, together with future agreed contractual interest plus legal costs/ charges, till Realisation of entire amount.

Details of the Immovable Properties : Schedule 'A' Property : All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing Khewat No. 78, Khata No.96, Mustaili No.38, Kda. No.2/1/1 (4-16), 9/2/2 (4-10), Kharsa No.453 (1-0) & 679 (0-2), land admeasuring 1 Kanal 5 marla (760 Sq.yds) Situated at Gahlab Village, Hathin Tehsil, Palwal District (Haryana) and bounded on, East By : Road, North By : Other Property, West By : Other Property, South By : Road.

The Reserve Price for Schedule 'A' Property will be Rs. 40,00,000/- and the Earnest Money Deposit will be (EMD 10% of Reserve Price) Rs. 4,00,000/-.

Known Encumbrances, if any : Nil.

Schedule 'B' Property : All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing Khewat/Khata No.769/829, Mustaili No.88, Kila No.18 (8-0) 19 (8-0) and 20 (8-0), Land area measuring 6 Marla that is 183 Sq.Yds. Situated in Bhamkhera Village, Palwal Tehsil & District (Haryana) and bounded on, East By : Road, North By : Road, West By : Other Plot, South By : Other Plot.

The Reserve Price for Schedule 'B' Property will be Rs.77,79,500/- and the Earnest Money Deposit will be (EMD 10% of Reserve Price) Rs.77,950/-.

Known Encumbrances, if any : Nil.

Intending bidders should submit their EMD amount along with KYC documents (PAN Card and Aadhaar/Voters ID/Driving Licence) and Rs. 1,000/- being Non-refundable Tender fee by way of Demand Draft/Pay Order drawn on a Scheduled Bank, favouring "M/s. Varthana Finance Private Limited", payable at Gurugram before 5.00 p.m. on or before 11-04-2022 (Monday).

The Auction will be held at : M/s. Varthana Finance Pvt. Ltd., No. 1162 & 1163, Tower B-1, 11th Floor, Spaze 1 Tech Park, Sector 49, Sohna Road, Gurugram – 122018, on 12-04-2022 (Tuesday) between 1-00 p.m to 2-00 p.m.

For detailed terms and conditions of the Sale, please refer to the link provided in Company's website i.e. : www.varthana.com

The prospective bidders may contact the Authorised Officer Mr. Mittin Kakkar – Phone No. 8685050505 and Mr. Raman Arora – Phone No. 7827926395 for further details/information.

Date : 24-03-2022, Place : Gurugram

Authorised Officer, Varthana Finance Private Limited



MEANWHILE

MORE WEAPONS NO SOLUTION TO WAR: POPE

Pope Francis on Wednesday said the war in Ukraine showed that humanity had to shed a strange instinct for “self-destruction” and that buying more weapons was not the ultimate solution to any conflict... “May the Lord send his spirit to make us understand that war is a defeat of humanity, that we have to defeat all those who make war...,” he said.

TOP OF THE WORLD



WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange

UK

WikiLeaks' Assange gets married in jail

London: WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange married his long-term partner Stella Morris inside a British high-security prison on Wednesday at a small ceremony attended by just four guests, two official witnesses and two guards. Assange is being held in jail while US authorities seek his extradition to face trial on 18 counts relating to WikiLeaks' release of vast troves of confidential US military records and diplomatic cables more than a decade ago. “I am very happy and very sad. I love Julian with all my heart, and I wish he were here,” Morris said outside the gates of Belmarsh prison following the ceremony. **REUTERS**

US

Wreck of sunken Gulf whaler discovered

Mississippi: A whaling ship from Massachusetts sank near the mouth of the Mississippi River about 15 years before Herman Melville introduced the world to Moby Dick. Nearly 190 years later, experts said, it was still the only whaler known to have gone down in the Gulf of Mexico, where the threat of enslavement at Southern ports posed a risk for Black and mixed-race men who often were part of whaling crews. Researchers checking out odd shapes during under-sea scanning work on the sandy ocean floor believed they had finally found the shipwreck about 113 kilometres offshore Pascagoula in Mississippi. **AP**

PAKISTAN

Man arrested for Hindu girl's murder in Sindh

Karachi: A man has been arrested for murdering an 18-year-old Hindu girl when she resisted a bid to abduct her in Pakistan's southern Sindh province, according to a media report on Wednesday. Pooja Kumari Oad was said to have been shot after she put up resistance to the attackers in Rohi, Sukkur in Sindh on Monday. The suspect, Wahid Bakhsh Lashari, was arrested and an FIR registered. **PTI**

SOMALIA

Somali forces repulse attack on airport

Mogadishu: At least three police officers were injured when a gunfire rang out on Wednesday as Islamic extremists attacked the international airport. Somali security forces repulsed the assault, killing two armed attackers, Somali Police Commissioner Gen. Abdi Hassan Hijar said. Al-Shabab, Somalia's Islamic extremist rebels, claimed responsibility for the attack inside Mogadishu's Aden Abdulle International Airport, saying its fighters attempted to invade a compound that is home to several diplomatic missions. **AP**

ZELENSKY SAYS HUMANITARIAN CONVOY ATTACKED

Mariupol in flames as Biden heads to Europe

1 lakh civilians trapped in port city; US President will press allies to help impose more sanctions

AGENCIES

LVIV, MYKOLAIV, KHARKIV, MARCH 23

US PRESIDENT Joe Biden flies to Europe on Wednesday for an emergency NATO summit on Ukraine, where invading Russian troops are stalled, cities are under bombardment and the besieged port of Mariupol is in flames.

Four weeks into a war that has driven a quarter of Ukraine's 44 million people from their homes, Russia has failed to capture a single major Ukrainian city, while Western sanctions have ostracised it from the world economy.

Moscow says its aim is to disarm its neighbour, and its “special military operation” is going to plan. It denies targeting civilians.

Worst hit has been Mariupol, a southern port completely surrounded by Russian forces, where hundreds of thousands of people have been sheltering since the war's early days, under constant bombardment and with food, water and heat supplies cut. More shelling and gunfire shook the city again Wednesday, with plumes of black smoke rising from the western outskirts, where the two sides battled for control of multiple suburbs. A shopping mall and buildings were hit, in-



A Ukrainian firefighter sprays water inside a house destroyed by shelling in Kyiv on Wednesday. **AP**

juring four people, the city administration reported.

During a brief exchange with reporters at the White House before departing for Brussels, Biden said possibility of Russia deploying chemical weapons “I think it's a real threat.” Jake Sullivan, Biden's national security adviser, said the president

would coordinate with allies on military assistance for Ukraine and new sanctions on Russia. One new sanctions option that Biden is looking at is to target hundreds of members of the Russian State Duma, the lower house of Parliament, according to a US official. The official added that a final decision hasn't been

made and that the new sanctions would be rolled out in co-ordination with Western allies.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy meanwhile said Russian forces not only blocked a humanitarian convoy trying to reach besieged Mariupol with desperately needed supplies on Tuesday but

took captive some of the rescue workers and bus drivers.

He said the Russians had agreed to the route ahead of time. “We are trying to organise stable humanitarian corridors for Mariupol residents, but almost all of our attempts, unfortunately, are foiled by the Russian occupiers, by

Kremlin veteran Chubais quits over war, leaves Russia



Anatoly Chubais

A veteran Kremlin envoy has resigned and left Russia with no intention to return, a source said on Wednesday, the first senior official reported to have quit since Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine a month ago. Anatoly Chubais was one of the principal architects of Boris Yeltsin's economic reforms of the 1990s and held senior business and political roles under President Vladimir Putin. He had been Putin's special envoy to international organisations since 2020. Chubais hung up the phone when contacted. The source did not say why he had quit or where he was. **AGENCIES**

Putin aide: Will use nuclear weapons if Russia's existence is threatened

REUTERS

MARCH 23

RUSSIA'S SECURITY policy dictates that the country would only use nuclear weapons if its very existence were threatened, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told CNN in an interview on Tuesday.

“We have a concept of domestic security and it's public, you can read all the reasons for nuclear arms to be used. So if it is an existential threat for our country, then it (the nuclear arsenal) can be used in accordance with our concept,” he said.

“There are no other reasons that were mentioned in that text,” he said in a further reference to the country's security concept.

Russia on Wednesday condemned what it called a “reckless” Polish proposal to send international peacekeepers into Ukraine and warned that it could lead to a direct clash between Russian and NATO forces. Asked about the initiative, Peskov said: “It would be a very reckless and extremely dangerous decision.” He told reporters on a conference call that any possible contact between Russian and NATO forces “could have clear consequences that would be hard to repair.”

EASTERN BORDER MAY GET MORE TROOPS

NATO: 7k to 15k Russian troops killed in Ukraine

AP & REUTERS

KYIV, MARCH 23

NATO ESTIMATED on Wednesday that 7,000 to 15,000 Russian soldiers have been killed in four weeks of fighting in Ukraine, where the country's defenders have put up stiffer-than-expected resistance and denied Moscow the lightning victory it hoped for.

A senior NATO military official said the estimate was based on information from Ukrainian officials, what Russia has released — intentionally or not — and intelligence gathered from open sources. The official spoke on condition of anonymity under ground rules set by NATO.

Meanwhile, NATO will likely decide on Thursday to ramp up military forces on its eastern flank, the head of the alliance said, while also warning Russia against using nuclear weapons.

NATO has sharply increased its presence at the eastern border of the alliance, with some 40,000 troops spread from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and is seeking to deploy four new combat units in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia.

“I expect leaders will agree to strengthen NATO's posture in all domains, with major increases in the eastern part of the alliance. On land, in the air and at sea,” NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg told a news conference.

Putin gets Chinese backing to stay in G20, may attend summit

ANGIE TEO & STANLEY WIDIANTO

JAKARTA, MARCH 23

RUSSIAN PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin plans to attend the next G20 summit in Indonesia later this year and received valuable backing from Beijing on Wednesday in a pushback to suggestions by some members that Russia could be barred from the group.

The United States and its Western allies are assessing whether Russia should remain within the Group of Twenty major economies following its invasion of Ukraine, sources involved in the discussions told Reuters. But any move to exclude



Vladimir Putin

Russia would probably be vetoed by others in the group, raising the prospect of some countries instead skipping G20 meetings, the sources said.

Russia's ambassador to Indonesia, which currently holds the rotating G20 chair, said Putin intended to travel to the Indonesian resort island of Bali for the G20 summit in November. “It will depend on many, many things, including the Covid situation, which is get-

ting better. So far, his intention is... he wants to,” Ambassador Lyudmila Vorobieva told a news conference.

Asked about suggestions Russia could be kicked out of the G20, she said it was a forum to discuss economic issues and not a crisis like Ukraine.

“Of course expulsion of Russia from this kind of forum will not help these economic problems to be resolved. On the contrary, without Russia it would be difficult to do so.”

China, which has not condemned Russia's invasion and criticised Western sanctions, defended Moscow on Wednesday, calling Russia an “important member” of the G20. **REUTERS**

Taliban cancel girls' higher education despite pledges

ASSOCIATED PRESS & PTI

KABUL, MARCH 23

AFGHANISTAN'S TALIBAN rulers decided against opening schools to girls above the sixth grade, renegeing on a previous promise and opting to appease their headline base at the expense of further alienating the international community.

The unexpected decision, confirmed by a Taliban official Wednesday, came at the start of the new school year in Afghanistan. It is bound to disrupt Taliban efforts to win recognition from potential international donors. The international community has been urging Taliban leaders to open schools and give women their right to public



Girls have been banned from school beyond class 6 in most of the country since the Taliban's return. **AP file**

space. A statement by the ministry earlier in the week urged “all students” to come to school.

The decision to postpone a return of girls going to school in

higher levels appeared to be a concession to the rural and deeply tribal backbone of the hardline Taliban movement, that in many parts of the countryside

EXPLAINED How will move affect Taliban?

THE MOVE is likely to deal a significant blow to the credibility the Taliban had been trying to build with international donors in recent months. And it could threaten the billions of dollars of humanitarian aid that have helped keep millions of Afghans from famine as the country grapples with economic collapse.

are reluctant to send their daughters to school.

The decision to cancel the re-

turn of girls to school came late in the night on Tuesday, Waheedullah Hashmi, external relations and donor representative with the Taliban-led administration, told *The Associated Press*.

“It was late last night that we received word from our leadership that schools will stay closed for girls,” said Hashmi. “We don't say they will be closed forever.”

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Wednesday regretted Taliban's announcement suspending education for young girls in Afghanistan, saying it is “deeply damaging” for the country. In a statement, Guterres urged the de facto authorities to open schools for all students without any further delay. “I deeply regret today's announcement by Taliban authorities,” he said.

Imran says won't resign as three allies indicate they will vote against his govt

SAJJAD HUSSAIN

ISLAMABAD, MARCH 23

PAKISTAN PRIME Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday said he will not resign at any cost and claimed to have a “surprise” up his sleeve for the opposition, even as at least three allies of the ruling coalition have indicated to vote against his government during a no-trust motion, which would come up for discussion in Parliament later this month.

“I will not resign under any circumstance. I will play till the last ball (...) and I will surprise them (opposition) a day before as they are still under pressure,” Khan said.

Talking to reporters, he said the Opposition has laid all of their cards, but the no-confi-



Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan

dence motion against him would not be successful. “My trump card is that I have not laid any of my cards yet,” he said.

Around 100 lawmakers from the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) submitted the no-confidence motion on March 8. Meanwhile, at least three allies, including the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan, the Pakistan Muslims League-Quaid and the Balochistan Awami Party with their 17 members have indicated to join the Opposition. **PTI**

Poll code breach: Pak EC slaps fine of Rs 50k on PM

Islamabad: Pakistan's top election body has imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 on Prime Minister Imran Khan for violating election code of conduct by addressing a rally in Swat ahead of the local government election in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.

The Election Commission of Pakistan had on March 15 barred him from visiting Swat to address a public rally, but the premier ignored the directives and addressed a rally a day later, the Express Tribune reported. According to the new ECP code of conduct, no public office holder can visit the districts where elections are being held. **PTI**

S Korea's total Covid cases top 10 mn; 500k cases in past 24 hours

HYONHEE SHIN

SEOUL, MARCH 23

SOUTH KOREA'S total coronavirus infections topped 10 million, or nearly 20% of its population, authorities said on Wednesday, as surging severe cases and deaths increasingly put a strain on crematoriums and funeral homes nationwide.

The country has been battling a record Covid-19 wave driven by the highly infectious Omicron variant even as it largely scrapped its once aggressive tracing and quarantine efforts and eased social distancing curbs.

The Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency (KDCA) reported 490,881 cases by Tuesday, the second highest daily tally after it peaked at 621,205 on March 16. The total caseload rose to 10,427,247, with 13,432 deaths, up 291 a day before.

The country's infection and death rates are still far below those recorded elsewhere, as almost 87% of its 52 million residents are fully vaccinated and 63% have received booster shots.

But the death toll nearly doubled in just about six weeks, with daily fatalities peaking at 429 last Friday, fuelling demand for funeral arrangements.

The health ministry on Monday instructed the 60 crematoriums nationwide to operate for longer hours to burn up to seven bodies from five, and the 1,136 funeral parlours capable of storing some 8,700 bodies to expand their facilities. **REUTERS**



The total caseload rose to 10,427,247, with 13,432 deaths, up 291 a day before.

WHO: Cases rise for 2nd straight week, deaths fall

Geneva: The number of new coronavirus cases globally increased by 7 per cent in the last week, driven by rising infections in the Western Pacific, even as reported deaths from Covid fell, the World Health Organization said.

There were more than 12 million new weekly cases and just under 33,000 deaths, a 23 per cent decline in mortality, according to the UN health agency's report on the pandemic issued late Tuesday.

Confirmed cases of the virus had been falling steadily worldwide since January but rose again last week, due to the more infectious Omicron variant and the suspension of Covid protocols in numerous countries in Europe, North America and elsewhere. **AP**



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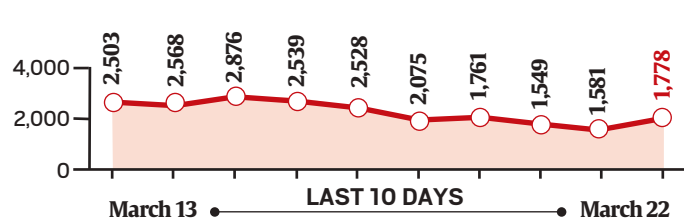
If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com

TRACKING INDIA'S COVID CURVE

DASHBOARD, AS ON MARCH 22

751
DAYS SINCE
PANDEMIC
BEGANNew cases
1,778Active cases
23,087Deaths
62Weekly CFR: **1.43%** | Overall CFR: **1.20%** | Total deaths: **5,16,605**

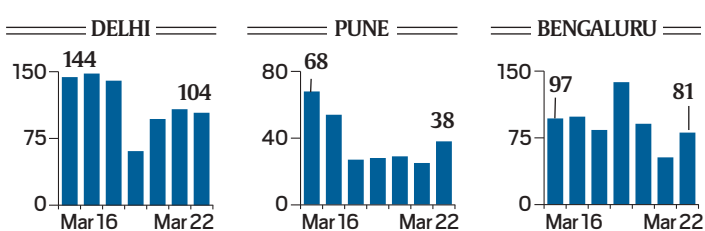
NEW CASES, DAILY



CASES IN THE STATES

State	ON MARCH 22			Weekly positivity
	New cases	Active cases	Deaths	
Kerala	702	6,180	52	3.43%
Mizoram	159	1,486	1	10.49%
Maharashtra	156	1,159	1	0.38%
Delhi	104	488	1	0.44%
Karnataka	92	1,880	2	0.39%

CASES IN THE CITIES, LAST 7 DAYS



TOTAL TESTS

78,42,90,846

TESTS ON MARCH 22

6,77,218

WEEKLY POSITIVITY

0.36%

OVERALL POSITIVITY

5.48%

INDIA TOTAL DOSES

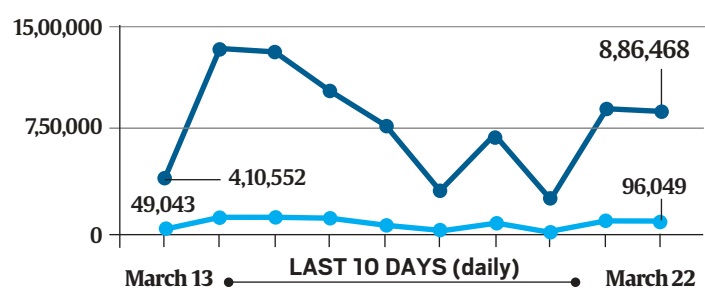
181,56,01,944

(Adults 1st dose: **91,20,63,635**; 2nd: **78,71,14,377**;
15-18 age group 1st dose: **5,63,96,784**; 2nd: **3,61,18,886**;
Age group 12-14 1st dose: **52,10,775**; Precautionary: **2,20,10,777**)

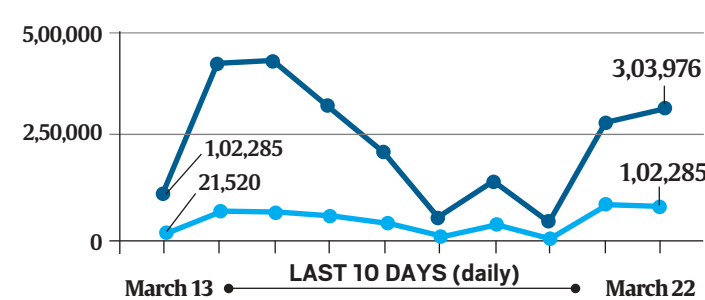
■ First dose ■ Second dose

March 22 total: **33,13,290**

ADULTS



AGE GROUP 15-18



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SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

The Ahir Regiment demand

The extraordinary bravery of the Ahirs in the Battle of Rezang La in 1962 gave a halo to the community. The demand for their own Regiment has found support from politicians seeking leverage with them.

MAN AMAN SINGH CHHINA
CHANDIGARH, MARCH 23

AN ONGOING agitation by members of the Ahir community disrupted traffic on a 6-kilometre stretch of the Delhi-Gurgaon highway on Wednesday. The protesters have been camping near Kherki Daula toll plaza in Gurgaon since February 4, demanding an Ahir Regiment in the Indian Army.

What is the genesis of the demand for an Ahir Regiment?

The Ahirwal region, which includes the southern Haryana districts of Rewari, Mahendragarh, and Gurgaon, and is associated with Rao Tula Ram, the Ahir hero of the revolt of 1857, has traditionally contributed soldiers to the Indian Army in large numbers. The region has seen the loudest clamour for the creation of an Ahir Regiment, even though the demand has also been raised in other states with sizeable Ahir populations.

The community was brought into national limelight after the story of the bravery of the Ahir troops of Haryana in the Battle of Rezang La in 1962 was widely known. Most of the soldiers of C Company of the 13th Battalion of the Kumaon Regiment perished fighting the Chinese onslaught, but broke the enemy's advance to Chushul.

Members of the community have long argued that the Ahirs deserve a full-fledged Infantry Regiment named after them, not just two battalions in the Kumaon Regiment and a fixed percentage in other regiments. The demand got a boost during the 50th anniversary of the 1962 War in 2012 when the saga of the Ahirs' heroism was recounted repeatedly, and has received renewed traction in the 60th anniversary year. Various political parties have thrown their weight behind the demand in recent years.

What is the history of the Ahirs in the Indian Army and Kumaon Regiment?

Ahirs are recruited in the Indian Army in various regiments including fixed class regiments (one or more castes in fixed numbers) like Kumaon, Jat, Rajput, and mixed class regiments (of all castes) like the Brigade of the Guards or The Parachute Regiment in the Infantry and various other regiments, and in Corps like Artillery, Engineers, Signals, and Army Service Corps.

Ahirs were initially recruited in sizable numbers in the 19 Hyderabad Regiment, which was the predecessor of the Kumaon Regiment. This regiment had earlier mainly recruited from Rajputs from Uttar Pradesh



Honorary Captain Ramchander Yadav and Havaldar Nihal Singh, two of the survivors of the Battle of Rezang La, at the war memorial in Rewari in 2012. Ravi Kanooja/Archive



and Muslims from the Deccan plateau among other castes.

In 1902, the regiment's links with the Nizam of Hyderabad were severed after Berar was converted into a permanent base for the British. In 1922, in another reorganisation of the Indian Army, the composition of the 19 Hyderabad Regiment was changed, and Deccan Muslims were removed from it. In 1930, the class composition was changed again to one company each of Kumaonis, Jats, Ahirs, and Mixed Class.

On October 27, 1945, permission was given to change the name of the Regiment, and it became 19 Kumaon. Following Independence, it was named the Kumaon Regiment.

The 13th Battalion of the Kumaon Regiment, which gained fame in Rezang La,

was the first battalion to be raised after Independence. It was raised in October 1948 with Kumaonis and Ahirs in equal proportions. In 1960, after the transfer of Ahirs from 2 Kumaon and 6 Kumaon, 13 Kumaon became the first pure Ahir battalion in the Kumaon Regiment.

What was the role of Ahirs in the Battle of Rezang La?

The Ahirs of 13 Kumaon deployed at Rezang La in Eastern Ladakh resisted the Chinese attack on them until almost the entire company of 120 troops had been wiped out.

The battle was fought on November 18, 1962 at a height of 17,000 feet. The ill-equipped troops of the Charlie Company of 13 Kumaon under the command of Major Shaitan Singh fought ferociously against hundreds of attacking Chinese soldiers. Out of the 117 troops killed, 114 were Ahirs, and only three survived with serious injuries. The killed Ahir troops belonged to the Rewari-Mahendragarh belt of Haryana.

When the winter ended and the bodies of the dead soldiers were recovered, many were found holding on to their weapons in the trenches after their ammunition had run out. Major Shaitan Singh was awarded the nation's highest gallantry award, Param Vir Chakra, posthumously, eight soldiers re-

ceived the Vir Chakra, and several others were awarded the Sena Medal and Mentioned-in-Despatches.

What position have political parties taken on the demand for an Ahir Regiment?

Over the past decade, support has come from parties across the spectrum, but especially from ones with a presence in Ahir areas of influence — in Haryana, UP, Bihar, and even Maharashtra.

In 2018, then Union Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilisers Rao Inderjit Singh had written to then Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman asking her to consider the demand for an Ahir Regiment.

On March 15, Congress MP Deepender Hooda told Rajya Sabha: "History of Yaduvanshi bravery does not need to be proven to anyone. The Ahirwal region of Haryana and Rajasthan have always been at the forefront of the defence of the nation..." Earlier on February 11, Shyam Singh Yadav, BSP MP from Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh, had raised the demand for an Ahir Regiment.

In Bihar, where the demand has been raised periodically, Raj Lakshmi Yadav, the daughter of Lalu Yadav and Rabri Devi, brought it up before the 2020 Assembly elections. The SP promised an Ahir Regiment in its manifesto ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

What has been the Army's response to the demand?

The Army has rejected the demand for any new class or caste based regiment. It has said that while the older regiments based on castes and regions like the Dogra Regiment, Sikh Regiment, Rajput Regiment, and Punjab Regiment will continue, no new demands on the lines of an Ahir Regiment, Himachal Regiment, Kalinga Regiment, Gujarat Regiment or any tribal regiment would be entertained.

Lt Gen R S Kadyan (ret'd), former Deputy Chief of Army Staff who served in the Rajputana Rifles, said there was no need to tinker with the existing system. "Why whip a running horse? The Army is doing well with the present composition and therefore there is no need to add new regiments based on class or caste," he said.

Gen Kadyan said that while the military does not subscribe to the colonial theory of 'martial races', which led to the creation of single class or caste regiments, the regimental system has stood the test of time, and has acquired an Indian nationalist character. Politicians should not pursue "narrow political gains" using the Army, he said.

Why Mariupol matters to Russia in the war

SONAL GUPTA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

THE RUSSIAN onslaught has turned Mariupol into "ashes of a dead land", the city council said on Tuesday, describing the stepped-up shelling and bombardment since the defenders of the city rejected Moscow's demand that they lay down their arms.

The port city on the Sea of Azov has been under siege by Russian forces for three weeks now. Between 100,000 and 200,000 people are believed to be trapped without water, electricity and heating, with about 80 per cent of the city's infrastructure destroyed. There is no definite count of casualties, but there have been reports of bodies in the streets and residents burying the dead in mass graves.

What is it about Mariupol that attracts such ferocious Russian attention?



Symbolic significance

Mariupol lies between Crimea, which Russia annexed in 2014, and the Donbas, the eastern Ukrainian territories that Russian-backed separatists have controlled since that year. The separatists, whose territory lie barely 100 km away, had tried and failed to capture Mariupol in 2014. Then President Petro Poroshenko had declared Mariupol the regional capital of the Donetsk oblast after

Donetsk itself fell to the rebels. In 2016, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees termed it a "city of solidarity" for welcoming people displaced by the war in the Donbas.

Economic importance

Capturing Mariupol will give Russia enormous maritime advantage. Having already seized Crimea and with Kherson having fallen, Russia now dominates the Black Sea coastline — and it has launched attacks on the port cities of Mykolayiv and Odessa.

The fall of Mariupol will mean Ukraine will lose control of its entire coastline, and its maritime commerce will be cut off. The grain trade through the Black Sea is the lifeblood of the Ukrainian economy. Before the Russian onslaught began, Mariupol accounted for a fifth of Ukraine's ferrous metal exports. Mariupol is also home to two of Europe's largest iron and steel plants — Azovstal and

Ilyich — whose fate is uncertain.

A prize for Putin

With the battlefield across northern Ukraine "largely static" according to Western military intelligence, a victory in Mariupol is important for President Vladimir Putin whose forces are estimated to have taken major and unexpected losses in the war so far.

US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan this week called Russia's invasion a "failure". "Russia intended to accomplish three basic objectives: first, to subjugate Ukraine; second, to enhance Russian power and prestige; and third, to divide and weaken the West. Russia has thus far manifestly failed to accomplish all three objectives," Sullivan said.

On Wednesday, the UK Ministry of Defence said, "Russian forces are attempting to envelop Ukrainian forces in the east...as they advance from the direction of Kharkiv in the north and Mariupol in the south."

In Karnataka, a 2015 caste census, SC order on OBC quota tie up local polls

JOHNSON TA
BENGALURU, MARCH 23

THE FINDINGS of an unpublished caste census carried out in Karnataka when the Congress was in power between 2013 and 2018 have assumed significance in the light of a recent Supreme Court order reiterating that reservations for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in local bodies should be based only on empirical data on the numbers and backwardness of caste groups.

Elections to the Bengaluru city corporation, and many zila panchayat and taluk panchayat seats in Karnataka have been due for over a year.

In January, the Supreme Court had directed the Maharashtra government to submit data on OBCs available with it to the State Commission for Backward Classes to enable the commission to assess its correctness and make recommendations for the representation of these classes in the state's local bodies.

The court had also directed that "similar

dispensation be followed including regarding the compliance of triple test (see below) by all States or Union Territories, if they intend to conduct election of local Government and provide for reservation for OBC category".

2015 Karnataka survey

In April 2015, then Chief Minister Siddaramaiah commissioned a socio-economic caste census to assess the status of various caste groups in the state. The census, the first such exercise in 84 years, was led by H Kantharaj, then chairman of the Karnataka Backward Classes Commission.

A leaked version of the report indicated that the politically powerful Lingayats and Vokkaligas constituted only 9.8% and 8.2% of Karnataka's 6-crore population respectively (instead of the 17% and 15% that is usually assumed).

The stakes in the state

The report was submitted in 2017, but Siddaramaiah's government did not release its findings, reportedly for fear of an adverse fallout in the Assembly elections scheduled

for the following year. The BJP had demanded the release of the report then and after H D Kumaraswamy's JD(S)-Congress government took over.

The Congress is now demanding that the Karnataka government should cite the Kantharaj committee in the Supreme Court, saying it meets the requirement of empirical data for reservation in local polls. Siddaramaiah, who belongs to the OBC Kuruba community, said recently: "The BJP government should use the report to argue before the Supreme Court and ensure social justice for the backward classes. There is no need for a separate survey."

OBCs are a key support group for the BJP in Karnataka. "Those who are elected in local polls tend to drive support for parties at the grassroots level," a government source said.

In elections to city and town municipal councils held in December 2021, prior to the Supreme Court's January 19, 2022 order in the Maharashtra application, the Congress had won 501 of the 1,884 wards in 58 municipalities, compared to the BJP's 433. In the two years prior to the order, elections were held

for city corporations in Belagavi, Dakshina Kannada, Kalburgi, Dharwad, Davangere, and Mysuru, in which the BJP did well.

The SC's 2010 order

Beginning with a 2010 Constitution Bench judgment in a case where the validity of reservations for OBCs under Articles 243D(6) and 243T(6) was challenged, the Supreme Court has emphasised the need for political quotas to be backed by empirical data, unlike reservation for OBCs, SCs, and STs in education and employment.

The court said in 2010 that "identification" of "backward classes" under Articles 243D(6) and 243T(6) should be distinct from the identification of SEBCs (Socially and Educationally Backward Classes) for the purpose of Article 15(4) and that of backward classes for Article 16(4). Both these Articles empower governments to make laws for the uplift of backward classes.

"In the absence of updated empirical data, it is well nigh impossible for courts to decide whether reservations in favour of OBC groups are proportionate or not," the

court said. (*KK Krishna Murthy & Ors vs Union Of India & Anr*, 2010)

The Maharashtra case

While the 2010 order was not acted upon by states, in 2019-20, Maharashtra's move to reserve over 50% seats in local polls was disputed in court. In March 2021, a three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court set out a three-step rule to empirically establish the need for OBC quota: (i) a state commission must "conduct contemporaneous rigorous empirical inquiry into the nature and implications of the backwardness qua local bodies, within the state"; (ii) specify the proportion of reservation required to be provisioned local body wise in light of recommendations of the commission; and (iii) total "reservation (must) not exceed the aggregate of 50% of the seats". (*Vikas Kishanrao Gavali vs The State of Maharashtra*)

The Shiv Sena-NCP-Congress government issued an ordinance to get around the order, and reserved 27% of local poll seats for OBCs. The matter again reached the Supreme Court.

On December 6, 2021, the court ruled out holding local elections without empirical data (*Rahul Ramesh Wagh vs The State of Maharashtra*). On December 15, it ordered that all seats declared OBC by the state government be declared general for local polls. And on January 19, 2022, it said all states must follow the triple test condition laid down by the court in the March 2021 order.

Situation in Karnataka

Karnataka's 33% reservation for OBCs in local bodies may now be under a cloud.

The terms of several local bodies ended over a year ago, including that of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) in September 2020. Elections for 1,083 zila panchayat seats in 30 districts, and 3,903 seats in 175 taluk panchayats have been due since March 2021.

The BBMP polls were initially delayed on account of the BJP government moving to increase the number of seats from 198 to 243 through delimitation. The state has now cited the Supreme Court order seeking empirical data as a block to holding polls.

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I,satbir yadav, s/o siri ram, r/o,house no-213 village nanahpur,sector-7 Rohini, delhi,have changed my name to satyavir yadav,for all future puposes. 0040607497-5

I,Vishnu,S/o Shyam Sunder Sharma,R/o 11A/11G/3A,Ram Nagar, Rambhag, Agra-282006, (U.P.)Have Changed My Name To Vishnu Sharma,For Future. 0040607510-5

I,Vandana Bagre W/o Pankaj Kumar Bagre R/o Flat No.A3,512 Block No.13 Kailash Dham Sector-50, Noida, Distt- Gautambudhnagar, have changed my name to Vandana Khinchi 0040607464-1

I,Tarun Kumar Saxena,S/o- Jangu Lal,R/o-A-27,Street No.4,Chandan Vihar, Mandawali,Delhi-110092,have changed the name of my minor son from Tanishk Kumar Saxena to Tanishg Saxena,for all future purposes. 0040607508-6

I,TAHZEEDA PRAVEEN,W/O M SALIM JAWED,R/O IDGAH MOHALLA RAJGANGPUR, ODISHA-770017,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME,FROM TAHZEEDA PRAVEEN TO TEHZEEDA PARVEEN,VIDE- AFFIDAVIT, DATED-22/03/2022, BEFORE NCT-DELHI. 0040607516-5

I,Shazia W/o Anasuddin R/o,G-30, second floor Nizamuddin West,New Delhi-110013,have changed my name to Shazia Mohd. 0040607513-4

I,Sharanjit Singh, S/o Late Mohan Singh, R/o Flat No.-A-84, Vishrantika Appt. Plot-No.5A, Sec-3, Dwarka, New Delhi-110078 have changed my name to Sharanjit Singh Sodhi. 0040607437-1

I,Shailesh Kumar,S/O-Devender Kumar Sharma,R/O-H.No. 232/21,B-Blk, Hanuman Kunj, Sant Nagar,Burari,Delhi-110084,have changed my name Shailesh Kumar Sharma for future. 0040607508-1

I,Sakshi Taneja W/o Akhil Maadaan,R/o 240, GF-Block, Vikasपुरi, Delhi-110018,have changed my name to Sakshi Tanuja Maadaan. 0040607497-3

I,SURESH KUMAR S/O SHIV CHARAN R/O HNO.132,II-FLOOR ANAND VIHAR, PITAMPURA,DELHI-110034. HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SURESH KUMAR BANSAL. 0040607497-8

I,SHWETA SINGH,W/O-PRANAV OJHA, FLAT.No.06111 TOWER-7 MAHAGUN MYWOODS GAUR CITY-2 SECTOR-16C GREATER NOIDA-WEST U.P-201306, Changed my name to SHWETA SINGH OJHA. 0040607463-3

It is for general information that I,Krishna Kumar,S/o Late, Shatrudhan Mahto R/o T-1,New Block-38,Kalyanvas,Delhi-110091,declare that name of my father has been wrongly-written as Shatrughan Mahto in my X,XII-Educational Documents.The actual-name of my late father is Shatrudhan Mahto,which may be amended accordingly. 0040607497-9

It is for general information I,Mohammed Usman,R/o-Qtr.No.861,3rd Floor, Sector-5,Pushp Vihar,M.B.Road, near Delhi-110017,inform that in my,minor son's(Mohammed Mo'in),school certificate my,name wrongly-written as Md.Usman.My correct,name is Mohammed Usman,for all,future,purposes. 0040607510-3

It is for general information I,Gurpreet Singh,S/o Kuldeep Singh,R/o-WZ-27,Sant-Nagar, Tilak-Nagar,Delhi-110018, declare that name of mine,my minor daughter and my wife has been wrongly-written as Gurpreet Singh Saathi, Tamanpreet Kaur Saathi and Mandeep Kaur Saathi in my minor daughter Tamanpreet Kaur aged-17-years in her educational-documents.The actual name of mine,my minor daughter and my wife are Gurpreet Singh, Tamanpreet Kaur and Mandeep Kaur respectively,which may be amended accordingly. 0040607516-6

I,No-9113610N,NK Arun Sharma, S/O Shri Krishan Lal Sharma, P/O Tehsil/District- Udhampur. In my service records the name of my son has been wrongly mentioned as Reyansh Sharma instead of Bhavik Sharma. It Needs Correction. Objections be filled to concerned authorities within seven days. 0020436333-1

I,Mohd Waseem/Wasim S/O,Islamuddin R/O,1212, Gali.No-14,Rajeev-Gandhi-Nagar New-Mustafabad Delhi-110094,have changed my name to Mohd Ashraf. 0040607513-9

I,Saswade Mahendra Mohan S/O, Mohan Gajanan Saswade R/o100, Jawan Co-housing Society, Sainik Nagar, Sadar Bazar, Satara, Maharashtra have changed my name to Mahendra Mohan Saswade for all purposes. 0040607442-1

I,Saurabh Anand S/O Sh. Suresh Kumar Anand R/O B-323, New Friends Colony, New Delhi-110025 have changed the name of my minor son from Shhaurya Anand to Shaurya Anand for all purposes. 0040607397-5

I,Devender Prakash S/O-Karan Lal,R/O-H.No-2232-1,B-Blk, Hanuman kunj,Sant Nagar, Burari,Delhi-110084, have changed my name Devender Kumar Sharma. 0040607508-2

I,Balvinder W/O Parkash Singh,R/O-79 Radhey-Shyam Park,Parwana Road,East Delhi-110051, have changed my name to Balvinder Kaur.Balvinder & Balvinder Kaur is one & the same person 0040607497-10

I,Ashish Agarwal,S/o Shri.Punam Chand Agarwal,R/o.H.No.IX/6269-A,Mukherjee Gali,Gandhi-Nagar,Delhi-110031,have changed my minor sons's name,from Vedansh Agarwal to Hemant Agarwal,for all purposes,in future. 0040607510-6

I,Ankur Agarwal,S/o Shri.Punam Chand Agarwal,R/o H. No.IX/6269-A,Mukherjee Gali,Gandhi-Nagar,Delhi-110031,have changed my minor daughter name,from Maahi Agarwal to Maahie Agarwal,for all purposes,in future. 0040607513-3

I,Anita Goyal Bela,W/o Shyam Goyal R/o WZ-106/114-115 (SF)/Rajouri-Garden Extn.,New-Delhi, have changed my name to Anita Goyal. 0040607513-6

I,Amit Kumar Sharma,S/o Chander Shekar Sharma,R/o Quarter.No.60B,1st-Floor,Type-II,Police-Colony, Model-Town-II,Delhi-110009,have changed the name of my minor son Akshat Kaushik aged-06-years and he shall hereafter be known as Ashish Singh. 0040607513-1

I,MUKESH KUMAR, S/O. BISHAMBER, ADD-1/7228,K SHIVAJI PARK SHAHDARA ,DELHI 110032,CHANGED MY NAME TO POONAM MISHRA. 0040607497-7

I,Neetesh Kumar Singh, S/o-Jai Prakash Singh,R/o-Block No-20,Flat No-5-F,Sushruta Nagar,Shantiniketan Apartment,Kalam Jote,Kalam Darjeeling,West Bengal-734012,inform that in my driving Licence my name has wrongly mentioned as Neetish Kumar Singh instead of Neetesh Kumar Singh. 0040607508-4

I,Neeru Singh W/o Suresh Singh R/o Flat-No.-603, Sector-37, Noida(U.P.) have changed my name to Sarita Devi for all future purposes. 0040607420-1

I,NARESH KUMAR S/O.RAM KISHAN R/O. DD-20 KALKAJI EXT.N,NEW DECHI- 110019,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO NARESH KALSHI. 0040607463-1

I,Shayam Lal S/o Ram Kumar R/o WZ-106/114-115 (SF) Rajouri-Garden Extn., New-Delhi,have changed my name to Shyam Goyal. 0040607513-5

I,Meera Devi,W/O-Ganga Dass Tanwar,R/O WZ-2,Nangli Jalib,Janak Puri,B-1,New Delhi-110058,That is Meera Devi and Meera Tanwar both Names belong to one and same person. 0040607508-3

I,Manjeet Kaur W/o Mandeep Singh R/o 145,Pocket-22, Sector-24, Rohini, Delhi-110085, changed my name to Simrandeep Kaur. 0040607497-4

I,JAPJII KAUR W/O SH.AMRIT SINGH, R/O,H.N.13 WEST GURU-ANGAD-NAGAR, GALLI.NO.2, DELHI.110092,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO JITENDER KAUR,ALL FUTURE PURPOSESE. 0040607516-3

I,JAGJEET SINGH BHAMRA,S/O HARJINDER SINGH BHAMRA R/O WZ-10C,NEW SAHIBPURA, MBS-NAGAR,TILAK-NAGAR, DELHI-110018. CHANGED MY NAME TO JAGJEET SINGH. 0040607513-7

I,Heera Mani Verma,W/o Munesch Chand,Add-RZ-866, Gali no17, Sadh Nagar, Palam Colony, New Delhi-110045, changed my name to Neelam Verma. 0040607497-2

I,Faridan Begum W/O, Mohd Hanif R/O,RZC-49, Nihal-Vihar Nanloi Delhi-110041, have changed my name to Faridan. 0040607510-3

I,Anjali Gautam,D/o Subhash Chand,R/O-RZ-84/397 Gali.No.1B,Shiv Puri,West Sagarpur, South West,Delhi-110046,declare that name of my father has been wrongly-written as Subhash Chand Gautam in my educational documents.The actual-name of my father is Subhash Chand. 0040607463-4

I,Rekesh Kumar S/O Naresh Kumar, R/O Patti Runga, Qilla Raipur, Ludhiana, Punjab-141201, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Rinku Dishawar. 0040607416-1

I,Salim Saifi S/o Mr.Asghar Ali R/o/H.No N-18, Jagat Ram Park,Laxmi Nagar Delhi-92 have changed my son's name from Muhammad Zahoor to Muhammad Zahoor Saifi Forever. 0040607416-2

I,Salim Saifi S/o Mr.Asghar Ali R/o/H.No N-18, Jagat Ram Park,Laxmi Nagar Delhi-92 have changed my daughter's name from Maryam Fatima to Maryam Fatima Saifi Forever. 0040607416-1

I,Aditi Tiwari D/O Chandra Mohan, R/O 1371, Urban Estate Phase-2, Patiala, Punjab-147002. Declare that Name of Mine & My Father and My Mother has been wrongly written as Aditi & Chandra Mohan Tiwari and Usha in my Birth Certificate Registration No-11. The actual name of Mine & My Father and My Mother are Aditi Tiwari & Chandra Mohan and Usha Tiwari, which may be amended accordingly. 0070778057-1

I, Pankaj Raja S/O Satendr Kumar, R/o 102 Aster 4, Supertech Emerald Court, Near G.Noida Express Way, Sector 93A, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Pankaj Raja. 0070778073-1

I,Parma Nand Goel@PN Goel@Parmanand Goel, S/o Late Shri.Rameshwar Das,R/O-A-6, Sector-53,Noida,Uttar-Pradesh-201301,state that I,have been known as P N Goel, Parmanand Goel and Parman Nand Goel. These are the name of one and the same person.That from today and in future I shall be known with the name of Parma Nand Goel, for all legal, and other purposes. 0040607411-1

I,Sultana Tarunnam W/o Army No 14640390K Hav Shekh Akram Mansoori R/o Ward No-74,Aayesha Nagar Khajri Khiriyar,Word No.74 New Ward Jabalpur City,Jabalpur Madhya Pradesh-482002,Have changed my Date of Birth From 20/09/1978 To 20/12/1978,for all Future Purpose vide affidavit dt.07/03/2022,before Notary Public Delhi. 0040607519-2

I, Hajira W/o Ghulam Nabi Teli R/o 19/21, 2nd Floor, Old Rajindar Nagar, New Delhi-110060 have changed my name to HAJIRA TELI. 0070778074-1

I, Kulwant Singh S/O Joginder Singh, R/o Village Nawam Qilla, Tehsil Shakhot, Jalandhar, Punjab-144703, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Balvir Singh. 0070778053-1

I, Divya Shekhawat,W/O Vishal Singh,R/O WZ-741,Devkunj Dada Dev-Road,Near-Bata-Chowk Palam,Delhi-110045, have changed my name,from Divya Shekhawat to Divya Bisht,VIDE-AFFIDAVIT, DATED. 23/03/2022,BEFORE NCT-DELHI. 0040607516-4

I, Bhaskar Kumar Jha S/o Sharvan Kumar Jha S/o Shiv colony, near Sai Mandir, Machli Gali, Raja Bazaar, B.V. College, Patna, Bihar-800014 declare that correct name of my father is Sharvan Kumar Jha and my correct name is all future purposes. 0070778082-1

I, Avinash Abhimanyu Agrawal, S/o Abhimanyu Kumar Agrawal, R/O 414, Munshipura, Near Old Sales Tax Gali, Mau, Maunath Bhajanjan, Uttar Pradesh-275101, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as HARSH AVINASH AGRAWAL. 0070778048-1

I, Ankit Jain S/O Sunder Lal Jain, R/o 706, West Guru Angad Nagar, Shakar Pur Barnad, East Delhi-110092, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Ankit Kumar Jain. 0070778071-1

I, Navneet D/O Sohan Lal, R/o Post Office Ibrahimpur Tehsil Garhshankar Bagwain Hoshiarpur Punjab-144527. have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Navneet Kaur. 0070778054-1

I, JAIBEER, S/O JAI BHAGWAN, R/O- H.No-1515, Sector-52, Gurgaon, Haryana-122001, have changed my name to JAIBEER MALIK for all purposes. 0070778056-1

I, Mahendra Mohan Saswade R/o 100, Nakshatra, Jawans Co-housing Society, Sainik Nagar, Sadar Bazar, Satara have changed my minor son's name from Adwait Mahendra to Adwait Mahendra Saswade 0040607440-1

I, Ishwar Singh Sharma S/o Sh.Kam Singh R/O-H.No.Q-159, South City-1, Sector-40, Gurugram, Haryana,have changed my Name from Ishwar Singh Sharma to Ishwar Sharma vide Affidavit-dated.22-03-2022 at Gurugram. 0040607411-3

I, Himani Lohani, W/O Pankaj Kumar Kapri R/o Plot No-38, Upper Ground Floor Front Side, Aparaj Vihar, Uttam Nagar, Delhi-110059, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Himani Lohani Kapri. 0070778043-2

I, Mahender Prajapati, S/o Hardev Prajapati, R/o 35-S, D.D.A. Flats Sarai Phosque, Near Green Maryy School, Tis Hazari, Delhi-110054, that name of mine and my father has been wrongly written as Mahender Parajapati and Hardev Parajapati respectively in my Educational Documents. The actual name of mine and my father is Mahender Prajapati and Hardev Prajapati respectively. 0070778078-1

I, Meena Mishra@Dave Mani, and Dave Mani@Meena Mishra, W/O Late Shri.S.C Misra, R/O-259,Sidharth Enclave,New-Delhi-110014, state that I,have been known as Dave Mani,Meena Mishra and Dave Mani@Meena Mishra.These are the name of one,and the same person. That from today and in future,I shall be known only with the name of Meena Mishra,for all legal,and other purposes. 0040607411-2

I, Aditi Tiwari D/O Chandra Mohan, R/O 1371, Urban Estate Phase-2, Patiala, Punjab-147002. Declare that Name of Mine & My Father and My Mother has been wrongly written as Aditi & Chandra Mohan Tiwari and Usha in my Birth Certificate Registration No-11. The actual name of Mine & My Father and My Mother are Aditi Tiwari & Chandra Mohan and Usha Tiwari, which may be amended accordingly. 0070778057-1

I, Pankaj Raja S/O Satendr Kumar, R/o 102 Aster 4, Supertech Emerald Court, Near G.Noida Express Way, Sector 93A, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Pankaj Raja. 0070778073-1

I,Parma Nand Goel@PN Goel@Parmanand Goel, S/o Late Shri.Rameshwar Das,R/O-A-6, Sector-53,Noida,Uttar-Pradesh-201301,state that I,have been known as P N Goel, Parmanand Goel and Parman Nand Goel. These are the name of one and the same person.That from today and in future I shall be known with the name of Parma Nand Goel, for all legal, and other purposes. 0040607411-1

I,Sultana Tarunnam W/o Army No 14640390K Hav Shekh Akram Mansoori R/o Ward No-74,Aayesha Nagar Khajri Khiriyar,Word No.74 New Ward Jabalpur City,Jabalpur Madhya Pradesh-482002,Have changed my Date of Birth From 20/09/1978 To 20/12/1978,for all Future Purpose vide affidavit dt.07/03/2022,before Notary Public Delhi. 0040607519-2

I, Hajira W/o Ghulam Nabi Teli R/o 19/21, 2nd Floor, Old Rajindar Nagar, New Delhi-110060 have changed my name to HAJIRA TELI. 0070778074-1

I, Hersimaren W/O Surinder Pal Singh R/O J-3096 Ground Floor Sainik Colony Sector 49 Faridabad, shall henceforth be known as Harsimran Kaur affidavit no 47AA-270291 sworn before notary Faridabad dated 21/03/2022 0050194144-1

I Vanya D/o Sh Chander Prakash Verma R/O 812, Desire Residency, Ahimsa Khand 2, Indrapuram, Ghaziabad-UP-201014 have changed my name to Vanya Verma 0070778004-1

I Shraddha Kumari D/o Yogendra Pal Singh R/o Gaon Chuharpur, Post Perali, Tehsil Gabhana, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh-202136, have changed my name to Shraddha Thakur 00778075-1

I,VIRENDER KUMAR MALHOTRA S/O OM PARKASH MALHOTRA R/O F-203, WINTER-HILLS APARTMENTS,SEWAK PARK, DELHI-110059. CHANGED MY NAME TO VIRENDER MALHOTRA. 0040607497-6

I,VINEY PAWAR, S/O,RAJENDER PAWAR, ADD-1/7227 C MOHAR SINGH GALI SHIVAJI PARK SHAHDARA DELHI-110032, Changed my name to VINAY KUMAR PAWAR,permanently. 0040607463-8

I,Preety Gehlot w/o Shivam Vaishya R/o GF-2 Ahlcon Apartment, Sector-3, Vaishali, Ghaziabad UP-201010,have changed my name to Preety Vaishya Permanently. 0040607463-9

I,Nethi Malathi M Mani, D/o,Lakshmi Satyanarayana Murthy,Nethi,W/o-Raja Vetcha,R/o-1726,3rd-Floor, Sec.-52,Ardee City-Gate No.2, Gurgaon (Haryana)-122001, have changed my name to Malathi Vetcha. 0040607463-5

I,Lalita W/o Anil Ahuja,R/O E-19/352, Second-Floor, Sector-3, Rohini,Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Lata Ahuja,for all purposes. 0040607463-6

I, A. Ali Nizam, R/O 46, Park End, Main Vikas Marg, Delhi-110092, have changed my minor Daughter's name from Ansha Nizam to Ansha. 0070778064-1

LOST & FOUND

I Kanta Rani W/o Mohan Lal Flat-124 Pocket-F Sec-B2 Ground Floor DDA LG Flat Narela Delhi-40 have lost above Property All Document (Description No.-L-339(2740)2006NPRS/NA). It any person found please inform. Mobile:9810066211 0040607461-1

I, Shashi Kant Aggarwal, owner of Plot No.31/C Shed No.3, DLF Ind. Area Phase-1, Faridabad (HR), has lost the Sale Deed (Buildwell Corporation to Bhupender Singh), Title Document Copy and GPA copy. An FIR has also been registered in this respect bearing No.201881/2022, at Police Station, If any one found the said deed is requested to inform the undersigned and will get appropriate reward. Thankyou Shashi Kant Aggarwal Ph:9811776479 0040607441-1

I,Rajeev Gopalanl,S/o-Sh. Lakshman Gopalanl,R/O-W-167,GK-2,Delhi has lost my BBA(Builder Buyer Agreement in the name of me,Ashok Harbux Dudani and Sandeep Mohandas Sabnani)and possession Letter of Flat H-1103 in godrej submit, Gurugram,Haryana-122006,finder contact- 9810166900. 0040607508-5

PUBLIC NOTICE

Re: Entire Ground Floor, without roof, situated in Western Half Portion (Front Portion) said floor of built on Property bearing No-2842, area measuring 570.25 Sq Yds, out of total plot area measuring 1440.89 Sq Yds, in Class-B-8, Situated in the area of village Madapur and the colony known as Punjabi Bagh (West) New Delhi, hereinafter referred to as the said property", Notice is hereby given to the General Public including Banks, Financial Institutions, etc. that, as informed by our clients M. Poonam Goel W/O Shri Vikas Goel R/O Nc-28, Road No-42, Punjabi Bagh West, Punjabi Bagh 50, West Deh-110026 and Shri Vikas Goel S/o Shri Suresh Kumar Goel R/O H Nc-28, Road No-42, Punjabi Bagh West, Punjabi Bagh 50, West Delhi-110026, they are the joint owners and in possession of the said floor by virtue of Partition Deed executed between (1) Mr. Giani Sham Dass late Mr. Chander Bhas and (2) Mr. Ashok Kumar Goel and (3), Mrs. Lata Goyal & Mrs. Poonam Goel and (4), Mrs. Uma Goel & Mr. Vineel Goel in respect of the said property and registered with the concerned Sub-Registrar of Assurances, to the Document No. 2021, in Addl. Book No. I, Volume No. 349, on pages 138-145, registered on 12/04/2006. According to the said Partition Deed, the Entire Ground Floor which roof rights of Western Half Portion (Front Portion) of the said property fell to the share of Mrs. Lata Goyal and Mrs. Poonam Goel. Subsequently, Mrs. Lata Goyal expired and her share devolved on her only surviving legal heir viz., Shri Vikas Goel. Thus, Mrs. Poonam Goel and Shri Vikas Goel became the joint owner of the said floor without any objection/s or claims by any person in general. In this connection, our clients have also informed us that 5th each of the said undivided property was purchased by Mrs. Poonam Goel and Mrs. Lata Goel from Mr. Anil Goyal vide two separate sale deeds registered as Document No.1630 and 1629 dated 23/03/2006 in the office of concerned Sub-Registrar of Assurances and that Shri Anil Goyal became the owner of the 1/4th of the said property after expiry of his mother, Smt. Vidya Devi alias Smt. Vidyawati in terms of her Will dated 10/01/1983. Smt. Vidya Devi alias Smt. Vidyawati had purchased the 1/4th of the said property vide sale deed registered as Document No.1588 dated 23.11.1986 from Mrs. Prakash Kaur. Our clients now intends to mortgage the said floor with Deutsche Bank AG, for availing loan facility. If any person, society, bank, financial institution or other institution or any other party having any valid claim, right, objection, title, demand and interest in virtue of any sale, gift, inheritance, possession, i/s-pendence, stay order or otherwise or any other right of whatsoever nature against the above ownership of our clients on the said floor and subsequently rightful mortgage of the said floor in favour of Deutsche Bank AG by our clients are requested(upon to convey their objection/s) in writing by Registered Ad post, to the undersigned, within 7 days, on address mentioned below along with all the supporting documents relating to such claim, failing which our clients will proceed with the publication of this notice, it shall be presumed that there is/are no claim/s) and such claim/s if any, shall be considered to be waived and abandoned and will be accepted in respect of the mortgage and ownership of the said floor.

Amli Kumar Khurana, Advocate M/s Intelective Law Offices A-74, LOF, Defence Colony, New Delhi-24

PUBLIC NOTICE

"Be it informed to the general public that my clients Shri Rajinder Kaur S/O Late Smt. Sukhvinder Kaur in respect of Third Floor with roof rights of Property No. A-504/1, Shastri Nagar, Delhi-52, vide Sale Deed Registration No. 1792, in Addl. Book No. I, Volume No. 5663, at Pages 113 to 119, on 07/03/2015, with SR-1, Delhi and Sale Deed executed by Smt. Sukhvinder Kaur in favour of Smt. Rajni Rajput in respect of above said property, vide Sale Deed Registration No. 2363, in Addl. Book No. I, Volume No. 5685, at pages 166 to 173, on 25/03/2015, with the SR-1, Delhi and Sale Deed executed by Smt. Rajni Rajput in favour of Smt. Kamla Devi in respect of above said property, vide Sale Deed Registration No. 2004, in Addl. Book No.1, Volume No. 6115, at Pages 185 to 192, on 02/03/2016, with the SR-1, Delhi vide NCR Lodge LR No. 242816/2022, dated 23/03/2022. If any person found the document, Contact to :- Kamla Devi, M.No. 9868448728

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all that my clients Gulshan Suneja S/o Sh. Sai Ditta Mal Suneja and Smt. Seema Suneja, S/o. Gulshan Suneja born R/o H.No. 86A, Gali No. 8, Ajay Park, Visha Bazar, Near BVM Public School, Najafgarh, New Delhi-110043, have severed all relations with their son namely Mohi Suneja & his wife Smt. Sonam W/o Sh. Mohi Suneja and have divorced & disinherited them from all their movable and immovable property due to unruly behaviour and out of control of my clients. Whatever deals with him in any manner, shall do so at his/her own risk and consequences and my clients shall not be held liable for that. Sd/- SAHIL SHARMA (Advocate) Ch. No. 440, Lawyers Chamber, District Court, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Bank of Baroda having its Sector-7 Branch, Rohini, New Delhi-110065 has sanctioned Housing Loan of Rs.23,00,00,000. (Rupees Two Crore Fifty Lacs only) to Mr. Palraj Pradyumn Narang S/o Mr. Rakesh Kumar Narang and Mrs. Rupal Narang W/o Mr. Rakesh Kumar Narang both R/o House No.57, Block E-4 Sector-7, Rohini, Delhi-110085. To secure the said housing loan, Mrs. Rupal Narang W/o Mr. Rakesh Kumar Narang propose to equitably mortgage with the Bank, property bearing A-1/20, entire first floor (without roof rights), addressing 500.69 sq.yards, Block A-1, situated at Safdarjung Enclave, Delhi-110023. Anyone claiming an interest in the said property or any part thereof by way of sale, gift, lease, inheritance, exchange, mortgage, charge, lien, trust, possession, easement, allotment or otherwise however is hereby requested to make the same known to the Senior Manager, Bank of Baroda, Sector-7 Branch, Rohini, New Delhi-110065 and the undersigned at the below given office address within 10 days from the date hereof, failing which if any, shall be considered as waived.

O.P. Tanwar (Advocate) B-7/74, Sector 4, Rohini, Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE

IT IS HEREBY DECLARED THAT MY CLIENT MRS. MONIKA SINGH W/O SH. SARGENT, TITLE DEED, INTEREST, CLAIM IN ABOVE PROPERTY OR HAS OBJECTION TO ABOVE TRANSACTION THEN HE IS FREE TO CONTACT MS. RIEMA CHADHA W/O AMIT CHADHA R/O 149, 2nd Floor, PATEL NAGAR, DELHI 110067, OR 14-1489, INDRA NAGAR, LUCKNOW (UT) AADHAR NO 45046458000 (3) MS. MANISHA OBEROI W/O SH. PRASHANT OBEROI R/O 14-A/38, W.E. CHINA MARKET, KAROL BAGH, NEW DELHI-110002, OR 21744569977 ARE OWNERS AND IN POSSESSION OF PROPERTY NO. L-8, KETTI NAGAR, NEW DELHI BY VIRTUE OF WILL OF SH. BRJ MOHAN SETHI S/O SATE HIRU SETHI, SATE HIRU SETHI NAGAR, NEW DELHI WHICH IS DULY REGISTERED WITH SR I JANAK PURI NEW DELHI WITH REGISTRATION NO. BOOK 3 VOL NO 7489 PAGE 18 TO 21 ON 18/01/2007. MY CLIENT ARE LEGAL HEIRS OF SH. BRJ MOHAN SETHI AND KAMAL, SETHI WHO ARE THEIR FATHERS. MY CLIENT ARE SELLING THEIR SHARES TO MS. RISHU MANOCHA W/O NITIN MANOCHA R/O A-308 GROUND FLOOR, DEWALU NAGAR, GURUANWALLA, COLONY, OR 908 KHEEREE NAGAR, TOWN DELHI 110009 AND OTHERS, AADHAR NO 702897829093. IF ANYONE HAS AN OBJECTION, INTEREST, CLAIM IN ABOVE PROPERTY OR HAS OBJECTION TO ABOVE TRANSACTION THEN HE IS FREE TO CONTACT MS. RIEMA MANOCHA, MOBILE NO. 9811723736 OR VY. RAJEEV SAINI, MOBILE NO. 9818177533 WITHIN 15 DAYS OF PUBLICATION ONLY.

Sd/- RAJEEV SAINI Enrl. No. D100208, ADVOCATE B-1/13, SECTOR-16, TIS HAZARI COLONY, NEW DELHI-110058

PUBLIC NOTICE

17 ECONOMY



GOLD

₹51,401



RUPEE

₹76.30



OIL

\$113.41



SILVER

₹67,822

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of March 22

SENSEX: 57,684.82 ▼ 30448 (0.53%) NIFTY: 17,245.65 ▼ 69.85 (0.4%) NIKKEI: 28,040.16 ▲ 816.05 HANG SENG: 22,154.08 ▲ 264.80 FTSE: 7,489.29 ▲ 12.57 DAX: 14,352.72 ▼ 120.48

International market data till 1900 IST

INDUSTRY WATCH
PRODUCTION LINKED INCENTIVE

‘PLI to account for 13-15% capex in key sectors in 3-4 years’

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

INDIA IS likely to see an incremental revenue addition of Rs 30-35 lakh crore over the next 3-4 years of Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes announced for various sectors, Crisil Research said in an analysis.

“The implementation of the PLI scheme will lead to a potential capital expenditure (capex) of Rs 2.5-3 lakh crore over the scheme period and will account for 13-15 per cent of average annual investment spending in key industrial sectors over the next 3-4 years,” the global analytics company said in a note.

The Central government’s flagship PLI scheme, which was announced in March 2020, is operational for 15 sectors such as electronics and mobile manufacturing, solar equipment, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, automobiles and auto components, among others. Of these, the capital investment in sectors such as mobile, pharmaceuticals, and telecom manufacturing has already started, while the rest of the sectors could see these investments starting April 2022, Crisil Research noted.

“PLI will spur green investments in India, with (nearly) 55 per cent of the scheme expected to be green, in sectors

Incremental revenue addition of up to Rs 35 lakh cr likely under PLI scheme sectors, says Crisil Research

such as auto for electric vehicles/fuel cell electric vehicles, solar photovoltaics, and automotive cell company (ACC) batteries. The incentive-to-capex ratio varies among sectors... is particularly attractive for mobile phones, electronic components, telecom equipment, and IT hardware, which have high dependence on imports across value chains and relatively lower domestic base,” said Hetal Gandhi, director, Crisil Research.

Though some of the sectors under PLI such as batteries and speciality steel will require greater commitment from the companies, if successful, these investments will ensure an overall development of the ecosystem even after the PLI scheme ends, it said. “Aside from supply-chain integration, PLI will aid exports, too. Of the 15 sectors, nine show an export potential, ranging from 20-80 per cent of the incremental revenue generated. This, in turn, can create an annual export potential of Rs 2 lakh crore, or 6 per cent of the total exports of calendar 2021,” it said.

SHARES CLOSE AT ₹3,708.25 ON THE BSE

TCS’ ₹18,000-cr buyback oversubscribed 7.52 times

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
MUMBAI, MARCH 23

THE RS 18,000-crore share buyback programme of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) was subscribed over 7.52 times.

According to data provided by stock exchanges, 30.11 crore shares were tendered against the offer size of 4 crore shares.

Tata Sons is likely to get around Rs 12,960 crore from the buyback as it holds 72.19 per cent stake in TCS. TCS will extinguish 1.08 per cent of its equity under the buyback programme.

The buyback is being done at Rs 4,500 per share, a 21 per cent

EXPLAINED

Parent Tata Sons to get around ₹12,960 crore

TATA SONS is likely to get around Rs 12,960 crore from the buyback as it holds 72.19 per cent stake in TCS, which will extinguish 1.08 per cent of its equity under the buyback programme. The buyback is being done at Rs 4,500 per share, a 21 per cent premium to the last close of the TCS stock.

premium to TCS’ last close.

Shares of the leading Indian tech company on the BSE closed at Rs 3,708.25, rising more than 0.2 per cent over the

previous day’s close.

“The estimated acceptance ratio is 12 per cent, which indicates that if you request 100 buyback shares, the corporation will con-

Over 10L registered EVs, 1,742 charging stations operational

More than 10 lakh EVs were registered till last week, while over 1,700 charging stations (PCS) were operational in the country, Parliament was told

THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF FEE PLAZAS ARE IN:

Rajasthan	122
Uttar Pradesh	90
Madhya Pradesh	77



Source: Government data/PTI

As per Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), a total of 1,742 public charging stations (PCS) are operational in the country as on March 21, 2022

816 fee toll plazas are operational on national highways across the country as on March 21, 2022, Gadkari said replying to a separate question

IN A WRITTEN REPLY IN THE RAJYA SABHA, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said electric charging stations are to be provided by developers on national highways as part of the wayside amenities (WSAs)

ACCORDING TO VAHAN 4 DATA, the number of electric vehicles (EVs) registered in the country is 10,60,707 as on March 19

sider around 12 shares for repurchase at the \$4,500 buyback price,” said Anuj Gaur, director of financial market training and education body IBBM.

Earlier, companies used to focus more on dividends than buybacks, but the government has started charging a 30 per cent tax according to the slab on dividends. Hence, companies have started giving benefits to their investors through buyback offers.

Taxation on buyback profit is lower than dividend taxation.

In 2020, TCS made a Rs 16,000-crore buyback where the acceptance ratio was 100 per cent for retail and 10 per cent for non-retail investors.

I-T searches Hero MotoCorp offices, Pawan Munjal’s residence

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

THE INCOME Tax Department on Wednesday conducted search operations on multiple premises of two-wheeler manufacturer Hero MotoCorp. Tax officials said the search operations were part of a tax evasion investigation against the company. The operations started in the morning hours.

The company, however, issued a statement later in the day, terming the exercise a “routine inquiry, which is not uncommon before the end of the financial year”.

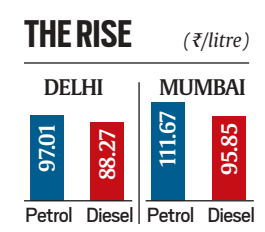
Fuel prices rise for second straight day

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

PETROL AND diesel prices on Wednesday were hiked by 80 paise a litre each for the second straight day since the ending of an over four-and-half month hiatus.

Petrol in Delhi will now cost Rs 97.01 per litre as against Rs 96.21 previously, while the diesel rate has rose from Rs 87.47 per litre to Rs 88.27, as per a price notification of state fuel retailers. In Mumbai, petrol price has been increased by 85 paise to Rs 111.67, while prices in Chennai went up by 75 paise to Rs 102.91. In Kolkata, rates increased to Rs 106.34 from Rs 105.51. The diesel price hike in Mumbai was 85 paise per litre. Rates differ from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes.

Prices of the two auto fuels differ state-to-state depending on the incidence of local taxes. On



Tuesday, a record 137-day hiatus in rate revision ended, with an 80 paise per litre increase in rates.

Meanwhile, as per a Reuters report, oil prices rose about 5 per cent to over \$121 a barrel on Wednesday as disruptions to Russian and Kazakh crude exports via the Caspian Pipeline Consortium pipeline added to worries over tight global supplies. As of 1755 GMT, Brent crude rose \$4.83, or 4.2 per cent, to \$120.3 a barrel, and US West Texas Intermediate crude rose \$4.39, or 4 per cent, to \$113.70. WITH REUTERS & PTI

Sebi bars DCHL promoters, others

New Delhi: The Sebi has barred the promoters of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Ltd (DCHL) from the securities market, for a period varying from 1-2 years, and levied fines totalling Rs 8.20 crore for various violations. The directions, passed through an order on Tuesday, are for fraudulent activities, understatement of loans by DCHL in its financial statements for the fiscal year 2008-09 to 2011-12 and violations of regulations. The Sebi imposed a fine of Rs 4 crore on DCHL. Rs 1.30 crore each on T Venkattram Reddy, T Vinayak Ravi Reddy, Rs 20 lakh on N Krishnan and Rs 10 lakh on V Shankar. ENS, WITH PTI

HDFC home loan approvals cross ₹2 lakh cr in FY22 so far

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
MUMBAI, MARCH 23

HDFC LTD has approved retail home loans of over Rs 2 lakh crore during the period April 2021 to March 21, 2022, the highest ever in any fiscal, despite the challenges posed by the Covid pandemic.

The mortgage firm said its thrust on digital initiatives and the inherent demand for housing helped it get back to normalcy

Over 89% of retail loans are sourced online up from less than 20% pre-Covid, the company said

faster than expected, adding, “Over 89 per cent of retail loans are sourced online up from less than 20 per cent before Covid-19.”

Renu Sud Karnad, MD, HDFC, said, “In the past one year we have

seen strong pipeline of new launches surpassing pre-pandemic levels. The demand for housing continues to be from first-time homeowners as well as those moving up the property ladder, generally into larger homes.”

“We are seeing healthy demand across metros and non-metros and demand is prevalent in affordable as well as high-end markets. The sweet spot for housing is still in the price range of Rs 50 lakh to Rs one crore,” she said.

Digital currencies will require new regulations: Powell

Washington: US Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said new forms of digital money like cryptocurrencies and stablecoins present risks to the financial system of the United States and will require new rules to protect consumers.

Speaking Wednesday on a panel organised by the Bank for International Settlements, Powell also said new technologies will likely make electronic payments cheaper and faster. But they could also destabilise existing financial institutions, he added.

“Our existing regulatory frameworks were not built with a digital world in mind,” he said. “Stablecoins, central bank digital currencies, and digital finance more generally, will require changes to existing laws and regulation or even entirely new rules and frameworks.” AP



US Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell APfile

UK inflation hits 30-yr high of 6.2%

London: British inflation shot up faster than expected last month to hit a new 30-year high. Consumer prices rose 6.2 per cent YoY in February after a 5.5 per cent rise in January. REUTERS

BRIEFLY
ONDC stake

New Delhi: HDFC Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Axis Bank bought 7.84% stake each in open public digital infrastructure framework entity ONDC, investing Rs 10 crore each in the entity.

Uber council

New Delhi: Uber launched its National Driver Advisory Council to facilitate dialogue with drivers to address critical issues and improve their platform experience.

SOP by CBIC

New Delhi: The Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) has issued a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the scrutiny of Goods and Services Tax (GST) returns for financial years 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Trade union

New Delhi: The Joint Platform of Central Trade Unions gave a call for a nationwide strike on March 28 and 29, to protest against government policies affecting workers, farmers and people.

RSE fellow

New Delhi: Biocon Ltd executive chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw has been elected as a fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE), Scotland’s National Academy, the company said on Wednesday. PTI

RailTel
(A Government of India Undertaking)
CIN No. U62202DL2006PLN0265

EOI No. REL/EOI/Empanelment of Partners/2021-22/04 Dated: 21.03.2022

RailTel invites e-Tenders from eligible bidders for “Expression of Interest (EOI) for selection of Partners for Supply and Execution to Signalling and Telecommunication work for Customers of RailTel Enterprises Ltd.” EOI Notice & EOI document are available on www.relindia.in and www.railtelindia.com. Addendum/Corrigendum will be uploaded in REL and RailTel website both.

DELHI JAL BOARD
OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER(M)-7/EE(T)
H-BLOCK UDYOG NAGAR
PEERA GARHI CHOWK NEW DELHI-110041

NIT No. 123/EE(T)/ACE(M)7/(2021-22)/ Short Press Notice Tender

S. N	Name of Work	Amount put to tender (Rs.)	EMD	Tender Fee's	Dt. of release of tender procurement solution/L.O. No.	Last dt./time of receipt of tender through E-procurement solution
1.	Providing/ laying water carrying pipe line for tubewell installations and making platform & hoisting arrangements at Karala UGR and Filling point in Mundka AC-08 under AEE(M)-08.	40,80,695/-	81,700/-	500/-	23/03/2022 2022_DJB_219402_1	30-03-2022 at 3:00 P.M.
2.	Construction of room and toilet block and renovation of BPS at Punjabi Basti Mangol puri, feeding to water OHT Sultan puri under AEE(M)-10/ ACE(M)-7	35,09,065/-	70,200/-	500/-	23/03/2022 2022_DJB_219407_1	30-03-2022 at 3:00 P.M.

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

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)
Advt. No. J.S.V. 1296 (2021-22)

“STOP CORONA: Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene”

Sd/-
(SATISH KUMAR GUPTA)
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER(T)

DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT OF NCT OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE ADDL. CHIEF ENGINEER(M)-2
2142 JANTA FLATS G.T.B. ENCLAVE DELHI-110093

PRESS NIT NO- 94 (2021-22)

Sl. No	Name of Work	Amount put to tender	Date of release of tender in E-Procurement solution	Last date/ time of receipt of tender through E-Procurement solution
1	Engagement of 10 nos S.G. Beldar for on contract basis for maintenance of sewerage system in Gokalpur AC-68	Item rate	22-03-2022 2022_DJB_219318_1	01-04-2022 2:10 PM
2	Engagement of 10 nos S.G. Beldar for one year on contract basis for maintenance of sewerage system in Seemapuri Constituency (AC-63) under AEE(M)-63 Re-invited	Item rate	22-03-2022 2022_DJB_219318_2	01-04-2022 2:10 PM

PRESS NIT No - 95 (2021-22)

Sl. No	Name of Work	Amount put to tender	Date of release of tender in E-Procurement solution	Last date/ time of receipt of tender through E-Procurement solution
1	Engagement of 10 nos unskilled workers for one year on contract basis for maintenance of water supply network of Seemapuri Constituency (AC-63) under AEE(M)-63	Item rate	22-03-2022 2022_DJB_219346_1	01-04-2022 3:10 PM

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

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)
Advt. No. J.S.V. 1299(2021-22)

“Stop Corona: Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene”

Sd/-
V.K CHAUHAN
Ex. ENGINEER (T)-2

BANARAS LOCOMOTIVE WORKS, VARANASI-221004

Tender Notice No.-PCE/BLW(ET)/Publish/2021-22/16 Dated-22.03.2022
E-TENDER

Dy Chief Engineer, Banaras Locomotive works, Varanasi on behalf of the president of India invites “Open” Tender through E-Tendering from the contractors. **S.No.:- 1, Tender No.:-** BLW-WAT-ET-011-21-22. **Name of work:-** Provision of rain water harvesting by providing deep recharge bore well in Design office & Adm area under SSE/W/Adm. and Provision of rain water harvesting bore well in workshop & provision of water PVC tank, water booth, Grills for windows in New LFS and provision of canopy on north wall of new Paint booth under SSE/W/WS & SSE/Br. and up gradation of main gauge room & RI ward. **Tender cost (Rs):-** 11582311.77. **Earnest money (Rs.):-** 207900. **Time of completion:-** 9 month. **Closing Date time of tender:-** 13.04.2022 at 15:00 pm. **Date of opening of tender:-** 13.04.2022 at 15:30 pm. **S.No.:- 2, Tender No.:-** BLW-WAT-ET-014-21-22. **Name of work:-** Repairing of damage Heavy duty flooring in TMS & LAS in workshop under SSE/W/WS. **Tender cost (Rs):-** 8438467.55. **Earnest money (Rs.):-** 168800. **Time of completion:-** 8 month. **Closing Date time of tender:-** 13.04.2022 at 15:00 pm. **Date of opening of tender:-** 13.04.2022 at 15:30 pm. **Special Notice:-** To see the detailed terms & conditions of tender and for submission of tender, please visit website: <http://www.lreps.gov.in>. **PRO/BLWC-16** Dy. Chief Engineer

[f t.me/banaraslocowork](https://t.me/banaraslocowork) “Website : <http://blw.indianrailways.gov.in>”

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Executive Engineer-1 (Lakes), Division, Room No. 306, 3rd Floor, Annex-3 Building, BBMP Head Office, N.R. Square, Bengaluru - 560 002.

No: EE-1/Lakes/TEND/30/2021-22 Date: 22.03.2022

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)
(Through e-Procurement Portal only) (Two Cover Tender)

The Executive Engineer-1(Lakes), BBMP Invites tenders from eligible tenderers for the works detailed in the table below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Estimate Value of work (Rs. in Lakhs)	EMD (in Rs.)
1	Providing Chain link fencing to Balance reach at Ramapura Lake- Call-2.	99.00	1,98,000/-
2	Emergency Work at Sarakki Lake - Call-3.	100.00	2,00,000/-

(1) Tender documents may be downloaded from GOK e-Procurement portal <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in>
(2) Tenders must be submitted online: 04.04.2022 upto 4:00 p.m. 3) Opening of Technical bids: 05.04.2022 at 4.30 p.m. Further details can be obtained from the above office during office hours & also from website: www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/- Executive Engineer-1 (Lakes).

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19. NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.

Wear Mask 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing Maintain Hand Hygiene

GUJARAT METRO RAIL CORPORATION (GMRC) LIMITED
(SPV of Govt. of India and Govt. of Gujarat)
Block No.1, First Floor, Karmayogi Bhavan, Sector 10/A, Gandhinagar: 382010, Gujarat. (CIN): U60200GJ2010SGC059407

IFB No: GMRC/HH Rail/Ahmedabad/Ph-2/2022
Date: 24.03.2022

Bids are invited from reputed and experienced Contractor for the following tender:

Tender Name	Tender Fees
Supply of 9116 MT UIC 60/60E1, 1080 Head Hardened Grade Rails as per the specifications for Ahmedabad Metro Rail Project Phase-II"	INR 25,000/-

Interested bidders are requested to visit <https://gmrc.nprocure.com>, www.gujaratmetrorail.com, <http://afid.dgmarket.com> and GTAI for eligibility criteria, applying/ downloading the Bid document. **Last date and time for Bid Submissions is 15:00 Hrs. on 10.05.2022.**

Any alterations in Eligibility Criteria cum Qualification Requirements, and terms of the Tender Document, or any amendment to the Tender Document, etc, will be uploaded on <https://gmrc.nprocure.com> and GMRC's Website www.gujaratmetrorail.com without any obligation or press notification or other proclamation.

Sd/-
Managing Director,
GMRC, Gandhinagar

‘SPEECHLESS... WILL MISS YOU ON TOUR’

Reactions after Ash Barty announced her retirement

“I’m so supportive of Ash, and making a decision that is best for her and makes her happy. I can’t wait to see what the next chapter brings, and to watch Ash achieve her dreams post-tennis.”

EVONNE GOOLAGONG CAWLEY, AUSTRALIA GREAT AND LONG-TIME FRIEND

“Dear Ash – you are leaving the tennis and sports world quite speechless and full of praise at the same time. Enjoy this chapter of your life after tennis – we will miss you, your smile and your beautiful game. Be happy champ, the Hall of Fame is waiting!”

MARTINA NAVRATILOVA, 18-TIME GRAND SLAM WINNER

“Since I never trust a tennis retirement, does anyone else think @ashbarty will be back and what year? AO (Australian Open) 2024 is my guess.”

PAM SHRIVER, FORMER WORLD NO.1

“Ash, what can I say, you know I have tears right? My friend, I will miss you on tour. You were different, and special, and we shared some amazing moments. What’s next for you? Grand Slam champion in golf?!”

SIMONA HALEP, TWO-TIME GRAND SLAM CHAMPION

“I particularly want to say ‘thank you’ to you, Ash, for inspiring a generation of young people and particularly a generation of young indigenous people in this country.”

SCOTT MORRISON, AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER

‘I don’t have physical drive, emotional want... I am spent’

World No.1 women's tennis player Australian Ashleigh Barty retires at 25

CHRISTOPHER CLAREY MARCH 23

AT THE top of her sport, Ashleigh Barty is retiring from tennis.

In a stunning move, Barty, the No.1-ranked women’s player who won her country’s major tournament, the Australian Open, in January, announced on Wednesday that she was leaving tennis for other pursuits.

“It was hard,” she said of her decision. “But it’s right and I know, and that brought me a lot of comfort knowing that this is right for me. But I’m very excited.”

Barty, who turns 26 next month, posted a video to Instagram announcing her decision through a conversation with her compatriot Casey Dellacqua, a retired player, one of her closest friends and her former doubles partner. Barty said she also would hold a news conference.

“I’m so grateful to everything that tennis has given me — it’s given me all of my dreams, plus more — but I know that the time is right now for me to step away and chase other dreams and to put the rackets down.” It was the third time that Barty had stepped away from professional tennis but the first time that she had announced her retirement.

In 2014, at age 17, when she already was one of the top doubles players, she took an indefinite break from the tour. She was depressed and weary of the travel and the pressures generated by early success. During that 17-month hiatus, she played professional cricket, but with encouragement from Dellacqua she returned to tennis in early 2016 reinvigorated and began her climb to the summit under the guidance of a new coach, Craig Tyzzer, an experienced and unflappable Australian.

Barty also took an 11-month break from the tour at the onset of the pandemic, remaining in Australia instead of traveling to tournaments abroad even after the tour’s five-month hiatus ended in August 2020.

But her surprise retirement announcement, coming with the tour back in full swing and shortly after her triumph in Melbourne, is clearly a decision that she has considered at length and made from a position of strength.

“There was a perspective shift in me in the second phase of my career that my happiness wasn’t dependent on the results and success for me is knowing that I’ve given absolutely everything, everything I can,” Barty told Dellacqua. “I’m fulfilled. I’m happy.” Barty’s victory at the Australian Open was a tour de force. She did not drop a set in seven matches, coolly navigating the pressure to



Barty is the No.1-ranked tennis player and won the Australian Open in January AP

Barty has spent a total of 119 weeks at No. 1, placing her seventh on the career list. She is the first women’s player to retire while on top of the singles rankings since the Belgian star Justine Henin unexpectedly announced her retirement in May 2008.

become the first Australian to win the Australian Open singles title in 44 years. Typically poker-faced on the court, Barty made it clear just how much the achievement meant to her by howling with delight after finishing off her victory in the final against Danielle Collins of the United States.

“I know how much work it takes to bring the best out of yourself,” she said to Dellacqua in the video posted Wednesday. “It’s just I don’t have th at in me anymore. I don’t have the physical drive, the emotional want and kind of everything it takes to challenge yourself at the very top level anymore and I think I just know that I’m absolutely, I am spent.”

Barty has spent a total of 119 weeks at No. 1, placing her seventh on the career list. She is the first women’s player to retire while on top of the singles rankings since the Belgian

star Justine Henin unexpectedly announced her retirement in May 2008. Henin, like Barty, was just 25 years old and the reigning champion at two Grand Slam tournaments: the French Open and the U.S. Open in Henin’s case. Henin later returned to the tour in 2010, although she never won another major title.

If Barty sticks with her decision, she will be the first player to win a Grand Slam singles title in her final match since Pete Sampras, the American star who did not play on tour again after winning the 2002 U.S. Open at age 31, announcing his retirement nearly a year later. Marion Bartoli of France retired at age 28 little more than a month after winning Wimbledon in 2013; Flavia Pennetta of Italy retired at age 33 in 2015 at the end of the season after winning the 2015 U.S. Open. Bartoli returned briefly to the tour; Pennetta did not.

For now, and perhaps for eternity, Barty has finished her career with \$23.8 million in prize money and 15 career singles titles, including three at Grand Slam tournaments. She won the French Open in 2019, Wimbledon in 2021 and the Australian Open this year, meaning that she won major singles titles on all three of tennis’ primary surfaces: clay, grass and hardcourt. With her versatile game and tactical acumen, she was an all-court threat and also won the 2019 WTA Finals, the tour’s lucrative year-end championship, on an indoor hardcourt in Shenzhen, China.

—NYT

Ronaldo’s World Cup future on the line

ASSOCIATED PRESS MARCH 23

AT 37 YEARS old, it’s no secret time is running out for Cristiano Ronaldo.

Playing at a high level is not getting any easier, and the opportunities to compete in top tournaments are becoming scarce. Missing out on the World Cup, at his age, could mean he’s never playing in soccer’s showcase event again.

Portugal faces two must-win games in the European qualifying playoffs, beginning Thursday when it hosts Turkey. The winner then plays next Tuesday against the winner of European champion Italy vs. North Macedonia for a ticket to Qatar. Although no one knows if Ronaldo would still play in the next World Cup at age 41, not qualifying for this one would be one of the biggest setbacks of his career.

Ronaldo tried not to think past the task at hand, though. “Totally focused on the 2022 World Cup,” he said this week on Instagram.

“As always, I’m proud to represent Portugal. We know it won’t be easy. We have the maximum respect for the opponents that we will face and they have the same goals as us. But together we will fight to put Portugal where it deserves to be. Let’s do it!” Ronaldo is trying to make it to his 10th consecutive major tournament. He is the only player to have scored at least once in the finals of nine top tournament in a row, a streak that started at the 2004 European Championship and includes four other Euros and four World Cups.

He is the active Portugal player with the most World Cup goals with seven, two shy of Eusebio. Portugal was relegated to the playoffs after a heartbreaking 2-1 loss to Serbia at home in the final Group A game in November, when the hosts opened the scoring but conceded the



Cristiano Ronaldo. AP

deciding goal in the 90th minute. A draw would have been enough for Portugal, which is trying to qualify for the World Cup for the sixth straight time. Only two consecutive victories will do now.

“It’s not the ideal situation, but it is what it is and we have to face it with responsibility,” Liverpool forward Diogo Jota said. “We can’t make too much drama about it. It’s a soccer match and I believe we can win and make it to the World Cup.” To make it harder for Portugal, coach Fernando Santos has a depleted squad heading into the game against Turkey because of injuries, suspensions and the coronavirus. His regular-starting defenders are both out — Pepe because of COVID-19 and Rúben Dias because of an injury. Santos also won’t be able to count on goalkeeper Anthony Lopes, defender Nelson Semedo and midfielders Renato Sanches and Rúben Neves because of injuries, while defender João Cancelo is out because of a suspension.

Failure in the playoffs could also mean the end of the road in the national team for the 39-year-old Pepe, and maybe even for coach Santos, who has been at Portugal’s helm since 2014.

QUALIFYING HIGHLIGHTS

AS IT STANDS, only 15 of the 32 finalists have been determined for the Nov. 21-Dec. 18 tournament. They are: Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Croatia, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Iran, Netherlands, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, South Korea and Qatar as host.

THE START OF Africa’s World Cup playoffs on Friday sees Mohamed Salah’s Egypt face Sadio Mane’s Senegal in the first leg in Cairo. It’s a rematch of the African Cup of Nations final last month that saw Senegal win on penalties. It’s one of five home-and-away contests determining which teams go to the World Cup.

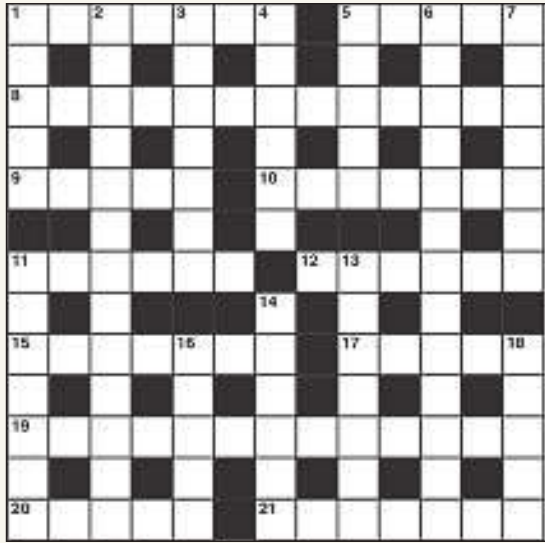
RUSSIA WAS banned from competing in the playoffs, so Poland was awarded a

bye into Tuesday’s final, where the team will host either Sweden or the Czech Republic. Ukraine had been drawn to play Scotland but that match has been postponed until June. The other two teams in that bracket — Wales and Austria — will meet in Cardiff, with the winner having to wait up to three months before taking part in the playoff final.

CANADA CAN clinch a spot at the World Cup for the first time since 1986 if it wins at Costa Rica on Thursday at the start of a triple-header.

CANADA LEADS North and Central America and the Caribbean with 25 points and the U.S. is four points behind in second place, ahead of Mexico on goal difference.

CROSSWORD 4696



ACROSS

- 1 Vague idea linking differences (7)
- 5 An unusual term I deserve (5)
- 8 Is it used for playing currently popular tunes? (8,5)
- 9 Natural outburst (5)
- 10 Unusually thin, I am getting Vitamin B (7)
- 11 Reluctant as ever perhaps (6)
- 12 British admiral joins the staff with French marshal (6)
- 15 Monks and nuns may dwell this way (7)
- 17 One who has no place in a ship (5)
- 19 Demolition of homes is a crime (13)
- 20 They may be caught by crooks (5)
- 21 Signs I’d put out for track runners to rest (7)

DOWN

- 1 Wrong times for such pieces of news (5)
- 2 Offer hospitality to all though cold in winter (4,4,5)
- 3 This turns out to sum up Panama for example (7)
- 4 It may be pronounced with conviction (6)
- 5 I wander up to the New Zealand (5)
- 6 Possibly get into and remain in tight control (13)
- 7 A temporary occupation (7)
- 11 Gets off with a slight upset (7)
- 13 Apparent but not in a hospital room (7)
- 14 Jumps at openings (6)
- 16 Call for a doctor maybe (5)
- 18 Leaves young attendants (5)

Solutions Crossword 4695: Across: 1 Spiel, 8 Pleasure, 9 Given, 10 Disorder, 11 Steep, 12 Sea, 16 Snatch, 17 Crop up, 18 Yet, 23 Leant, 24 Purchase, 25 Throw, 26 Live wire, 27 Stern. Down: 2 Pointing, 3 Eyeteeth, 4 Sluice, 5 Rayon, 6 Guide, 7 Heart, 12 Shy, 13 Act, 14 Somewhat, 15 Turn sour, 19 Ensure, 20 Apple, 21 Brave, 22 Shown.

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

___ is the attempt to form a friendship inspired by ___. - Marcus Tullius Cicero (4..6)

IRAAEE



CLMPUY



IPILOT



AEEHBV

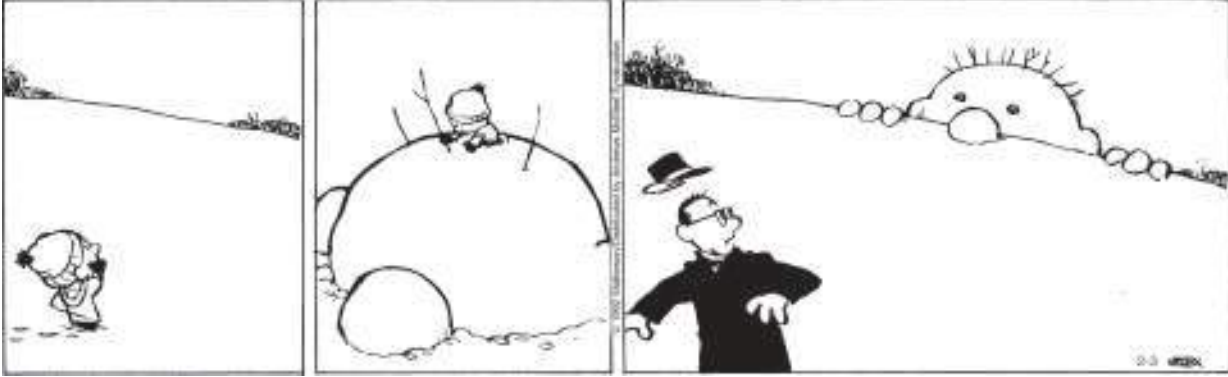


SOLUTION: AERIE, PILOT, CLUMPY, BEHAVE - Marcus Tullius Cicero Answer: Love is the attempt to form a friendship inspired by beauty.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



SUDOKU 4783

Difficulty Level 1s Instructions

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius



SOLUTION SUDOKU 4782



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

You cannot go wrong if you stick to an individualistic path. Only if you push your own interests to one side and conform to a routine that doesn’t suit you, will the planets kick up a stink. Romantic partners are keeping their secrets, so if you’re anxious to know their intentions you may have to be patient.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

It’s not surprising that Taurus often don’t see eye to eye with other people. After all, this is one of the famously obstinate fixed signs. However, if anyone is genuinely trying to reach agreement, do make allowances for them. You might even want to set a good example.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

There are certain complications or drawbacks relating to a financial matter but, on the whole, I think it is safe for you to proceed. Happily, you’re heading for a windfall within a few weeks. However, its size cannot be predicted, so don’t get too excited.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

Don’t let anyone persuade you to forego certain benefits or rights. If you’re going to give something up, and you probably will, it must be in a manner and at a time of your own choosing. That much is clear. I don’t think other people will agree.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

You may enjoy laying down the law over personal issues, but you must allow other people their say. Nobody will thank you if things that go wrong are your responsibility, so share the burden, and then others will share the blame. And this is, by the way, a time when even the best plans might come unstuck.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

The Moon, emotional as ever, is about to increase its role in your financial affairs. This is astrological jargon for saying that domestic costs are likely to rise, but that money invested in the fabric of your home should be well spent. Good news from far away should cheer you up.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

The odds now seem to be definitely on your side, though the outcome is not assured. You should now decide what’s right for you and then carry it through with the courage of your convictions. If money is involved then take every possible precaution to make sure that you are insured.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)

The Sun’s current magnificent position plays a powerful role in the Scorpicion psyche yet, bearing in mind that nothing in astrology comes without effort, you must expect someone in authority to disagree with your plans, so get your arguments ready.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)

It would be the easiest thing in the world to refuse to have anything to do with people who are in trouble or otherwise in need of assistance. Yet can you really stand and look the other way? It doesn’t look as if you can, so lend whatever help is necessary.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

The relationship between Venus and Neptune is a lively one, and full of promise for pleasant social and romantic encounters. Therefore, please do your best to keep the peace, and see to it that other people benefit from your sense of cosmic goodwill.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

Nobody should expect you to play a secondary role, not when you have so much to give. However, I must say that all your planets are lined up in regions of your chart that are putting charity, idealism and philanthropy before self-interest.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

Your chart is in a profoundly powerful position, but you don’t always make the most of your many talents. As a Piscean, you know that you are a born worrier, but this may not be the best time to dwell on the future. Please live for today and stop thinking about what might happen tomorrow. Oh, and relax.

Bangladesh clinched their first one-day series in South Africa with a nine-wicket win in the deciding game. Bangladesh won the series 2-1 after bowling South Africa out for 154 and reaching 156-1 in only 26.3 overs. Captain Tamim Iqbal saw his team home with an unbeaten 87 not out. **BRIEF SCORES:** Bangladesh 156 for 1 (Tamim 87*, Litton 48) beat South Africa 154 (Malan 39, Maharaj 28, Taskin 5-35) by nine wickets **AP**

A 10-team contest, 70 games, two host cities, changing corporate interest, T20 World Cup audition for players and the growing aura as the cricket world's most-important tournament. As a countdown to the start of cricket's richest league, *The Indian Express* brings together the varied threads of this unique reset season of reshuffled squads. Today: How IPL performances could dictate World Cup selection

From RAC to confirmed seat

With T20Is at a premium & places up for grabs, several players will look to impress selectors ahead of the T20 World Cup

SRIRAM VEERA
MARCH 23

CONSIDERING THAT India's T20 team is a far-from-finished product in this World Cup year, the IPL presents a great opportunity for a number of players to stake their claims. From the opener to partner Rohit Sharma to finishers and spinners, not many spots are cemented yet. The management and selectors would have to not only assess performance but take judgement calls on whether performers in India can succeed on larger grounds in Australia.

Is Kohli the best No.3 for India?

So far, **Virat Kohli** has been an anchor batsman in his T20 avatar. A touch old-fashioned in this frenetic format, he prefers to start slowly, build up, and then open up. The likes of him, Kane Williamson and Dawid Malan are a good fit in certain teams; but what about India? There is a sameness, a stale similarity, in the top order with Rohit Sharma, KL Rahul and Kohli. Some teams have musclemen to follow, but India are still on the lookout for them. There is no Andre Russell (in his pomp). Even Hardik Pandya seems to be on the fringes. Without an explosive finisher and more importantly, the sameness at the top, Kohli will have to change his game a touch.



In another team, he could continue to do what he does but in this Indian team, perhaps the time has come for Kohli to show us his version 2.0.

Rohit Sharma is the captain and a proven success in T20s; there is no point in the opener changing his game drastically. Rahul can hit from the start when specifically given that role, but Kohli would still have to adapt and tweak his game a bit. Else, particularly if Rohit doesn't fire, they can meander a touch and flounder later in the absence of proven power-hitters. Rishabh Pant is there, but most teams have a few and India might still get there by the World Cup, but as of now it isn't clear who those batsmen will be. If Kohli can tweak and start stronger then he usually does, it can work in his and the team's favour. Else the pressure of run-scoring falls on Shreyas Iyer and Suryakumar Yadav — which isn't necessarily bad. But if Kohli can take up the role, the youngsters can sail along with him. Is Kohli the best No.3 for India?

The pressure on Kohli stems from those around him, from the combination of this Indian team, and it's time for him to show he can rise above all that. The Australian grounds might throw up batting-friendly pitches for the T20 World Cup but there would be more bounce than most other places and Kohli can prosper (more than others) in theory. This IPL offers him the opportunity to try to get into that role. Would he rise to the challenge?

Who will partner Rohit Sharma?

As the last T20 World Cup showed, India tends to sink or swim with Rohit's form. Considering his last one year or so, India will twiddle their thumbs over his fitness. That leaves them with the question about his partner. Rahul has shown in the past in IPL, par-



The IPL presents a great opportunity for a number of players to stake their claims for the T20 World Cup in Australia later this year. AP

ticularly when not the captain, that he can don the all-out attacking role. When the team has depended heavily on him, as Punjab Kings did, he has had to temper his approach after the Powerplay. In an Indian team environment, he can carry the role of the enforcer.

The other option is Rohit's IPL opening partner, Ishan Kishan. He has shown he can be a frenetic hitter but it remains to be seen how effective he can be on the larger grounds in Australia, and against good pacers who can use that extra bounce on offer. The first choice for Australia is likely to be Rahul, unless Kishan dazzles in this IPL to stake his claim. Until a year back, Prithvi Shaw was in contention but he would need outstandingly consistent performances in the IPL to make a dent.

Swing option: Bhuvneshwar or Chahal?

Since India are blessed with Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami, they can zoom in on one swing bowler and going by the events of the recent past, it seems they are thinking about Chahal. He has dazzled for Chennai Super Kings with the new ball, often bowling three overs at least at the start and has shown he can get the ball to curve away under lights. His batting too has come on really well. That leaves Bhuvneshwar with a lot of catching up to do in this IPL. He was the original swinger who was good enough to do the job in Tests before his fitness and India's requirements changed that equation. He has the skills to succeed in Australia: the

swing, the surprise bouncer and willingness to use it, and the ability to drag back his length and nip the ball back into right-handers when he wants to keep them quiet. But of late, the consistency has slipped a touch, and he would require a bumper IPL to move past Chahal, who also needs a good IPL to stay ahead in the race.

Shardul Thakur too can break through in this field if he has a stellar IPL. It will come down to how CSK uses him, but if he can perform with bat and ball, he can make a case. As yet, he hasn't inked himself as the swinging new-ball bowler or the consistent death bowler. He would need to somehow create a niche for himself to have a shot at the World Cup. With the lack of big hitters, his batting can then push him ahead of a few contenders.

The spin puzzle

On paper, there are a lot of choices, but first India would have to determine what they need from the spinner. Someone who can slip in a few relatively quiet overs or someone who can take out a couple of wickets. Most spinners going around try to get wickets by keeping the run rate down, hoping the batsmen's rash urges nail them down. In his pomp, **Ravichandran Ashwin** can do both and has the confidence of the captain as well but in T20s, he also can settle into a containing role



a tad too quickly. (Not that runs are really contained by most spinners, but the approach solely becomes that). That was one of the reasons the likes of Yuzvendra Chahal and Kuldeep Yadav were given a long run in white-ball cricket. Chahal has shown even in Australian conditions (on previous tours) that he can wrinkle out wickets with his skill but of late, his confidence seems to have ebbed a bit.

It would be a credit to Rohit's captaincy - and his one real challenge, in fact - if he can get Kuldeep in groove. But in the IPL, it's not in his hands, and Kuldeep's fortunes depend on Pant and Delhi Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting. It remains to be seen if they give him enough opportunities and whether he cashes in.

That leaves us with the highly-likely scenario of Ravi Bishnoi pushing past the contenders. India dabbled with the likes of Rahul Chahal and Varun Chakravathy in the previous T20 World Cups and this IPL presents a great opportunity for Bishnoi to stake his claim. If he can consistently show that he can be trusted to not leak runs and take wickets, then with his wrist spin and extra bounce, he can find himself with a shot at that World Cup spot. Hence, this IPL is also extra crucial for Ashwin to keep performing and showing his worth as someone who can bowl at any stage in a game to retain Rohit's trust. In the end, it will come down to what Rohit wants in a spinner and if he has communicated that to the contenders, this IPL will allow us a glimpse.

Who is the power-hitter?

Apart from Pant, who have India got? Going by recent selections, it seems that the selectors will only punt on Hardik Pandya, the allrounder, and not Pandya, the finisher. In that case, this IPL will give us a verdict on him. There is Deepak Hooda but the decision on him would come down to his potential to succeed on large Australian grounds. Shahrukh Khan has been the other dazzler in town and this IPL is huge for him to impress the wise men. With India playing **Venkatesh Iyer** as a finisher and seemingly loath to try out his bowling skills, he finds himself in a dicey position. KKR too may not be willing to feature in the role the national team uses him, and so, he will have to depend a lot on the imagination of the selectors and team management to visualise him as a finisher. Unless, he uses this IPL to create welcome headaches for the management by excelling as a maverick attacking opener. So will Pant, but the dearth of finishers has perhaps forced Pant's fate.



Who partners Bumrah in the end overs?

Shami and Harshal Patel are the chief contenders but it can change this IPL. Either through success or through failure. If Patel can't reprise his magic from earlier seasons and if someone else bursts through, that slot can be up for grabs. The management/selectors would also factor in Australian conditions to back up their choices.

Cummins, Starc spark Pakistan batting collapse

REUTERS

LAHORE, MARCH 23

AUSTRALIAN FAST bowling pair of Pat Cummins and Mitchell Starc carved through the Pakistan batting late on Wednesday, sharing nine wickets between them to hand the touring side a first-innings lead of 123 in the deciding third and final Test.

Captain Cummins bowled an impeccable line and length to pick up his seventh five-wicket haul in Tests while Starc spewed fire with his pace and reverse swing to take four as Pakistan were all out for 268, replying to Australia's total of 391.

The hosts lost their last seven wickets for 20 runs in a dramatic collapse in the final session of the third day at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium.

Australia openers Usman Khawaja and David Warner managed to see through three overs before stumps to take their side to 11-0, extending the lead to 134 overall.

"It's all a bit of a blur the last couple of hours," Cummins told the broadcaster. "We'll sit back and bat tomorrow. A lot like last game, we've given ourselves a good opportunity here, really in front of the game, so hopefully bat well and then try to take those last 10 wickets."

With Pakistan appearing comfortable at

248-3, left-arm Starc triggered the collapse with a double strike to remove Fawad Alam and wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan and then also picked up the prized wicket of Pakistan captain Babar Azam for 67.

Cummins, who had taken the only wicket to fall on Tuesday, ran through the lower order to leave the sparse crowd stunned in silence.

Wicketless session

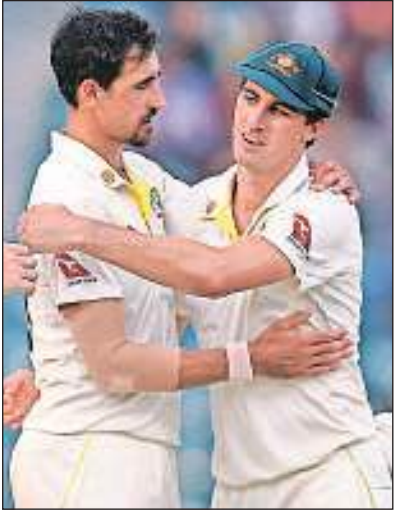
The collapse looked even more unbelievable after Abdullah Shafique and Azhar Ali struck resolute half-centuries, leaving Australia wicketless in the first session, to set up a good platform for Pakistan to post a sizeable total.

"I think we have to give credit to them. We always knew how good they are, especially Starc when it comes to reverse swing. Cummins is an all-round good bowler, he's a top bowler in the world right now," Azhar told reporters.

"They kept bowling at the right areas, they kept asking questions even of set batters. It was lovely to see good, fast, reverse-swing bowling. Unfortunately we were on the receiving end."

The 37-year-old Azhar, playing his 94th Test but the first at his home ground, made 78 and added 150 for the second wicket with Shafique.

The 22-year-old Shafique, playing only



Captain Pat Cummins (right) picked up his seventh five-for in Tests while Mitchell Starc took four as Pakistan lost their last seven wickets for 20 runs. AP

his fifth Test, was out for 81, becoming the first wicket to fall in the second session of the day. The pitch offered some variable bounce but did not pose too many problems for the batters till the final hour of play.

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD

FORECAST: DARK CLOUDS

In a display of untempered ambition, Sunrisers seemed to go after every other player at the auction, only to be often outbid at the very last instant. They still managed to get a lot of their old squad back, plus some typically counter-intuitive buys, but minus Rashid Khan and David Warner, how far can Kane Williamson take them with his dodgy elbow?

THE PAST

The franchise has tasted ultimate IPL success twice, in 2009 as Deccan Chargers and in 2016 as Sunrisers Hyderabad. The latter avatar has made the playoffs six times in nine seasons but reached the final only twice. A decent bowling unit short on batting depth was propped up over the years by Warner's immense productivity, until it all came apart last year. Aided by Shikhar Dhawan, Jonny Bairstow and then Williamson, Warner would drag Sunrisers into the playoffs, where they would crumble against evidently better sides. The likes of Rashid and Bhuvneshwar Kumar could defend even 140 but the brittle middle order could as easily fail to chase the same target if the big guns at the top didn't fire.

THE PRESENT

Warner's history, so are Rashid, coach Trevor Bayliss and assistant coach Simon Katich in plenty of pre-season flux at the franchise. In the auction, Sunrisers bought back spin allrounder Abhishek Sharma for Rs6.5 crore and splurged Rs 10.75 crore for keeper-batsman Nicholas Pooran. But yet again, despite the opportunity of a full auction to repair past mistakes, the batting familiarly appears thin on options while the bowling looks relatively well-stocked. The Rashid-sized hole anyway would be hard to fill for any team. It can't even be said that the only way from a last-place (eighth) finish in 2021 is up as the number of teams has now increased to 10.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Sunrisers need their Indian batting talent to fire, especially with Williamson's suspect fitness and some injury concerns among the main bowlers. For far too long, their domestic batsmen have put in mediocre performances, and undone the good work of the overseas batting stars. They almost never fire as a collective batting unit.

Sunrisers have retained Abdul Samad, repurchased Priyam Garg and spent Rs 8.5 crore to get Rahul Tripathi. The runs have to come from them, and Pooran has to quickly turn it around after his horror previous IPL, else Williamson has another long season of rebuilding from collapses ahead of him.

BRIEFLY

Shetty-Rankireddy stun All England champions

Basel: Seventh seed Kidambi Srikanth and Saina Nehwal made a winning start in the singles competition while Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy battled past All England champions Muhammad Shohibul Fikri and Bagas Maulana to progress in the Swiss Open on Wednesday. Srikanth defeated Mats Christophersen 21-16, 21-17. Parupalli Kashyap cruised to a 21-17, 21-9 win over France's Enogat Roy. In the women's singles, Nehwal beat Yaelle Hoyaux 21-8, 21-13. Third seeds Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy got past Indonesia's Fikri and Maulana 17-21, 21-11, 21-18. **PTI**

Athletics: Sable betters steeplechase record

Thiruvananthapuram: Avinash Sable set a men's 3000m steeplechase national record with a timing of 8:16.21, shaving off 1.91 seconds from his own record set in Tokyo, to headline a string of good performances in the Indian Grand Prix 2 Athletics competition. **PTI**

Football: Bahrain score late winner vs India

Manama: Bahrain scored an 88th-minute goal as they defeated India 2-1 in a friendly football match in Manama on Wednesday. After Gurpreet Singh Sandhu saved a penalty from Mahdi Humaidan, Mohamed Harden opened the scoring for Bahrain in the 37th minute with a volley from inside the box. Bahrain continued to pile pressure on India, who were playing their first match since October last year, but second half substitute Roshan Singh delivered a cross near the hour mark that was headed home by Rahul Bheke. Two minutes before the end of regulation time, Humaidan made amends for his missed penalty. India will play Belarus next on Saturday. **ENS**

GM Gukesh shocked by Lankan Liyanage

Manama: India's youngest Grandmaster D Gukesh suffered a defeat at the hands of Ranimdu Liyanage of Sri Lanka in the second round of 19th Delhi International open chess tournament on Wednesday. Top seed Arjun Erigaisi recorded his second straight win, beating GM P Karthikeyan. **PTI**