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PLACE: MODI

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Freedom struggle begins again against foreign conspiracy: Imran

> **SAJJAD HUSSAIN** ISLAMABAD, APRIL 10

PAKISTAN'S OPPOSITION leader Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday nominated himself for the post of prime minister after the ouster of Imran Khan, whose party threatened to withdraw its lawmakers from Parliament if the former Punjab chief minister was allowed to contest the election on Monday.

The process of electing the new leader of the House began on Sunday after Khan was removed from office through a noconfidence vote, becoming the



Opposition supporters celebrate in Karachi on Sunday. AP

first prime minister in Pakistan's history to be sent home after losing the House's trust.

HOUSE LEADER ELECTION TODAY

While the joint Opposition a rainbow coalition of socialist, liberal and radically religious parties - agreed on 70-year-old

Sharif for the prime minister's post, Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) named ex-foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi as its candidate.

Shehbaz Sharif set to be Pakistan PM.

Imran party members may quit House

The nomination papers of CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

India-Pak ties may see 'diplomatic opening'

SHUBHAJIT ROY NEW DELHI, APRIL 10

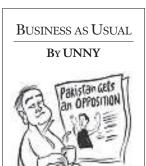
HBAZ Sharif set to be the next Pakistan Prime Minister, New Delhi is watching the developments in

Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Lahore with "cautious optimism" about a headway in bilateral ties. Top sources said the change

in regime may offer a "diplomatic opening". According to sources in the strategic establishment, the implications may be far-reaching.

■ Known to be the Pakistan

REPORT, PAGE 11



Army's candidate, Imran Khan's government was widely referred CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Ukraine & 2+2 in background, Modi and Biden to hold virtual meet today

SHUBHAJIT ROY NEW DELHI, APRIL 10

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi will hold a virtual meeting with US President Joe Biden on Monday, the Ministry of External Affairs said even as the White House stated that Biden will continue "close consultations on the consequences of Russia's brutal war against Ukraine and mitigating its destabilizing impact on global food supply and commodity markets"

The meeting is expected to take place at 8.30 pm IST, which will be followed by the 2+2 meeting between the Foreign and Defence ministers of the two countries in Washington DC at 11.30 pm IST.

After the 2+2 meetings, involving Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and their US counterparts, Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin and

Panel fixes maximum

and minimum fee for

engg, tech institutes

For engineering, Rs 1.89 lakh max,

lower limit fixed at Rs 79,000



by the 2+2 dialogue.

Secretary of State Antony J Blinken, the two sides are likely to sign pacts on cooperation in the education and space sectors.

The two Union ministers will also hold separate bilateral meetings. Jaishankar is also likely to meet Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo and US Trade Representative Katherine Tai, while Rainath Singh will travel to Hawaii, the headquarters of US Indo-Pacific Command after his visit to Washington DC.

In a statement issued Sunday on the Modi-Biden meeting, the **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

2 LeT militants behind attack

on CRPF men

killed: J&K cops

Govt plans database to mark countries with overstaying nationals

ANISHA DUTTA NEW DELHI, APRIL 10

THE UNION government wants to identify countries whose residents tend to overstay in India and is considering creating a database of foreign visitors to help with this process, The Indian Express has

According to sources, the government is planning to use Artificial Intelligence to analyse this database: the resulting list of countries is expected to help Indian Missions put in place checks while issuing visas to foreign citizens. The Home Ministry's Foreigners Division, the External Affairs Ministry, and the Intelligence Bureau (IB) are to be involved in the exercise, it is learnt,

had brought up the idea during a conference of Director Generals of Police (DGPs) and Inspector Generals of Police (IGPs) in Lucknow in November 2021, an of-

Last month, this plan was again discussed with DGPs and IGPs in a meeting called by the Ministry of Home Affairs, according to officials aware of the development. The action points for this meeting came from the Prime Minister, they said.

"(At last month's meeting), it was discussed to create a database for superior monitoring of people overstaying in India past their issued visas and identifying the regions where they come from. In countries like Bangladesh, India has more than a dozen visa facilitation centres but biometric scanning has to be strengthened across all centres for sufficient monitoring so that the information can be shared with our Indian Missions and other agencies," said an official, requesting anonymity.

In December 2021, the arnataka High Court had gested to the Centre to make changes in the law governing grant of visa to foreign nationals to check instances of foreigners staving in India despite expiry of visa.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Anger in Rajapaksa stronghold:

Voted for them, see what they did

whenever Prime Minister

"In 2009, when he finished

Mahinda Rajapaksa visited.

The mood has changed.

the war against the LTTE and

came here, we were proud. We

went to Carlton and like we do

for the Buddha, we did the same

for him," said Roshan, a tuk-tuk

driver waiting for passengers in

say, 'thank you very much for fin-

ishing the war, but if you can't do

"But if I meet him now, I will

the local market.

thronged by adoring visitors anything now, ple

Sri Lankans protest in Colombo on Sunday. AP

EXPRESS IN

SRI LANKA

NEW DELHI, APRIL 10

THE CAP on tuition fee charged by engineering and technical institutes are set to change, with the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) sending a revised fee structure, including a proposed minimum fee limit, to the Ministry of

SOURAV ROY BARMAN

The revision comes seven years after an expert committee first recommended an upper limit that the institutes can charge as tuition fee, but there was no lower limit, or minimum

On March 10, the executive committee of the AICTE ap-

that in case of undergraduate engineering disciplines, the annual minimum fee cannot be below Rs 79,000 while the maximum has been capped at Rs 1.89 lakh. In its previous report, submitted in April 2015, the committee had suggested that the maximum fee for UG four-year engineering courses be fixed at Rs 1.44 lakh to Rs 1.58 lakh per annum.

proved the report of the National

Fee Committee chaired by Justice

(retd) B N Srikrishna and for-

warded it to the Ministry of

Education, which is examining it.

The committee has proposed

The revised fee slabs need the Ministry's as well as the state

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

WORLD



U.S. COMMITS TO ARMS **SUPPLY AS BATTLE** LOOMS IN EAST UKRAINE 'THE EAGLE HAS LANDED' AUTHOR JACK HIGGINS DIES AT 92

Security personnel during the shootout. Shuaib Masoodi

BASHAARAT MASOOD SRINAGAR, APRIL 10

FIVE DAYS after a CRPF man was killed and another injured in Srinagar, police said two Pakistani Lashkar-e-Toiba militants involved in the attack were killed on Sunday.

Two policemen and a CRPF

Police said investigations into Tuesday's attack on the CRPF personnel led them to the house where the LeT operatives were hiding, in Bishembernagar-Dalgate neighbourhood of Srinagar.

On Sunday morning, as a joint team of J&K Police and **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

Two out of five new companies opted for 15% tax in 2019-20

1,244 new firms that took concessional tax regime earned just Rs 35 cr in FY20

AANCHAL MAGAZINE & PRANAV MUKUL

NEW DELHI, APRIL 10

TWO OUT OF every five new domestic manufacturing companies incorporated in 2019-20 (April-March) opted for the 15 per cent concessional corporate tax rate announced by the Union government in September 2019. These companies, numbering 1,244 in 2019-20, cumulatively accounted for just Rs 35,13 crore in total income, government data showed.

For 2019-20, the number of new manufacturing companies that filed corporate tax returns has been taken as 3.219 (the difference between 1,36,909 manufacturing companies that filed corporate tax returns for 2019-20 and 1,33,691 companies that filed returns for 2018-19). The regime was introduced

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



NIRUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN

TANGALLE (HAMBANTOTA),



COMMUNAL CLASHES IN GUJARAT, BENGAL. **MP TOWNS**

'STIFLES CRITICISM OF GOVT': 14 QUIT **AUSSIE CENTRE**

Maharashtra govt hospitals run out of basic, vital drugs as non-Covid footfall rises again

RUPSA CHAKRABORTY MUMBAI, APRIL 10

ON MARCH 25, Kaliprasad Ramlakhan, 36, was rushed to Mumbai's JJ Hospital, the largest hospital Maharashtra, after being bitten by a dog. As it did not have even basic medicines like TT injections and antibiotics like Amoxicillin, his brother had to

go and queue up at a private chemist shop nearby.

the job to someone better'," said the 39-year-old father of one.

that has led to crippling short-

ages of essential commodities

Explaining the dollar squeeze

"There were no medicines in the hospital. It refused to give me even a rabies injection from their stocks, although they obliged when I pleaded," said Ramlakhan, who was running a high fever and had to wait outside the hospital. It is another matter that JJ Hospital gets over 30 dog bite cases daily for treatment.

Ramlakhan's case is not an

isolated one. With the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020, the footfall of patients in the OPD and emergency sections of government hospitals across Maharashtra dropped by nearly 70 per cent, as per the state's public health department. Now, with the flattening of the pandemic curve, these hospitals are flooded with non-Covid patients. For instance, the number of patients visiting JJ hospital

daily has almost doubled to 1,100 since February this year from 600 during 2020-21. A senior hospital doctor said, "Most patients refrained from visiting hospitals during the pandemic. Now, the patients with more severe complications are rushing to hospitals. To meet the demand, we have also added beds." Maharashtra's nodal official

body for centralised purchase of CONTINUED ON PAGE 2





'Everybody can be instigated...people haven't shifted, the lid has been lifted' **ARUN SHOURIE**

PAGE 10

Dado is ball, vruksh is tree: Tribal schools shift from Gujarati to English PAGE 1 ANCHOR

RITU SHARMA AHMEDABAD, APRIL 10

"THIS IS a ball... that is a tree," Pooja Goyal explains, holding up a picture book for her students. Himanshi Ninama, 12, looks on quizzically. For the Class 7 student of the Ekalayvya residential school in Ambaji, Gujarat, and her friends, the shift from the Gujarati dado to ball and from vruksh to tree is as exciting as it is baffling.

Himanshi, a Bhil tribal from Bhiloda taluka of Sabarkantha district, joined the school a year ago, when she was in Class 6. "I

speak Bhil at home, but I learnt Gujarati after I came here. Now we are learning English. It's scary, but also a lot of fun... Sometimes I wonder if I can learn all of this," she says.

The transition that Himanshi is part of is on account of the Centre mandating all 375 tribal schools in the country — also known as the Eklavya Model Residential Schools — to switch from regional state school boards to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

"The idea behind asking all Ekalavya schools to compulsorily affiliate to CBSE is to help them adhere to common norms and

academic standards," said Asit Gopal, Commissioner of the National Educational Society for Tribal Students or NESTS, an autonomous body set up by the Centre in 2019 to facilitate a more centralised system of administration for the Eklavya schools.

Ekalavva schools are funded by the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs, but administered locally by state governments and affiliated to the state school boards, with the regional language as medium of instruction.

Of the 35 Ekalavya schools in Gujarat, 25 are migrating to CBSE, while the others are relatively new and already affiliated



Students during an additional English class at the Eklavya Model Residential School in Ambaji. Nirmal Harindran

to the board. Gujarat has the third highest number of Ekalavya schools, only behind Chhattisgarh (71) and Madhya

Pradesh (63). As a result of this board migration, most Eklavya schools also have to change their medium of instruction since the CBSE allows its affiliated schools to only use Hindi or English as medium of instruction. All Ekalavya schools in Gujarat have opted for English medium from the new academic year, an official said. To begin with, the transition will be implemented in

Classes 6, 7 and 8. Back at the Ambaji school. teacher Goyal is now translating simple sentences from Gujarati to English. Every day, her batch of 58 students waits eagerly for Goyal, their new English teacher hired specifically to handhold the students through this transition.

The school, located on a hillock nearly 3 km from the temple town of Ambaji, has 448 students enrolled from Classes 6-12, most from underprivileged families.

So far, the transition from Gujarati medium to English has had its fair share of challenges. When Goyal was hired in December, she was told that the students did not know English

with the alphabets. "I had to begin with A-B-C-D and cursive writing. I would bring kindergarten-level books for students of Classes 6 and 7," she says.

and that she would have to start

With preparations for the switch initiated only late November, school principal Girish Patel has had to hit the ground running. He has divided the daily schedule into two halves - the first when regular classes in Guiarati are held, and the second for the English bridge course.

been some progress. Goyal's students, a total of 113 in Classes 6 **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

Two months on, there has

FROM PAGE ONE

India-Pak ties

to as a "hybrid regime". His ouster, after falling out of favour, is a clear signal that the Pakistan Army is in "complete control". It has shown that the power to change the prime minister still lies in Rawalpindi — the Pakistan Army's headquarters

■Emerging out of the shadow of his elder brother and former Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Shehbaz, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) president, is known to be close to the Army — he was chief minister of Pakistan's Punjab province (equivalent to Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra put together in terms of its importance in national poli-

The Sharif family has always been an advocate of better ties with India. Shehbaz's last India visit was in December 2013, when he met then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Commerce Minister Anand Sharma, visited Metro stations and solid waste management plants in Delhi, and a power plant in Haryana. He also visited Puniab and held meetings with then Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal and Deputy Chief Minister Sukhbir Singh Badal, where he worked on a roadmap for cooperation between the two Punjabs.

"Our records suggest that he was very focused and result-oriented in his meetings, and really wanted to build on the ties between the two countries," said a source who was part of some of the meetings in 2013.

While interacting with a select group of journalists including The Indian Express then, Shehbaz had said that "war is not an option". and had pitched for the resumption of "peaceful dialogue" on all issues including "Sir Creek, Siachen, water and Kashmir".

On his meeting with Singh, he had said: "I told him that both trade and commerce have to be combined with strategic issues... only exchange of cultural troupes is not enough...We have to resolve problems through talks... not an option to brush problems under the carpet... have to address them (problems)."

Officials pointed out that the core concerns of the two countries remain the same over the last decade, and Shehbaz is well placed to take forward the bilat-

■ Better trade ties with India could provide the much-needed boost to Pakistan's economy. Known to be focussed on infrastructure projects – he is credited for many roads, bridges, flyovers and transport projects in Punjab province – Shehbaz may be keen to deliver before the next elections

in 2023. Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif is believed to have handpicked Pakistan Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa for his "pro-democracy views". Known to be liked by the military - the Pakistan Army has repeatedly tried to field him for the prime minister's post in the past -Shehbaz may find an ally in Bajwa.

■There are some green shoots in the otherwise fractious India-Pakistan ties at present. First, the ceasefire, as agreed upon in February last year, has largely been adhered to. This builds confidence that the understanding at the higher political-military level as well as the ground level has been observed and they are broadly in sync. Second, the situation in Afghanistan, and India's humanitarian help – transportation of wheat via Pakistan – has shown that there is scope for cooperation for "limited purpose", sources said.

■A major irritant between the two countries, especially after the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, has been Imran Khan's strong language against the Indian government including personal attacks on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and the BIP-RSS. Sources said that with Khan's departure, such attacks, at least at the highest political level, are likely to end.

However, there are challenges to this relationship. While Pakistan Peoples Party, helmed by Asif Ali Zardari and his son Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, is also positive about ties with India, it may be politically difficult for the Sharifs and Bhutto-Zardaris to open a diplomatic dialogue, in view of India's position on Kashmir as well as Pakistansponsored terrorism.

Zardari's ambitions for his son, Bilawal, will also pose a challenge for Shehbaz. With Khan's exit, the two political rivals — Sharifs and Bhutto-Zardaris – will be contesting for the prime spot, especially with an eve on elections next year. And the PTI, led by Khan, will oppose the ruling coalition's every

While New Delhi has been in and out of Islamabad's political discourse, Khan praised India for its foreign policy this time, as he targeted Pakistan's military establishment. This is viewed by many in Delhi as his regime's "scorched earth policy", making it difficult for his successor to move on.

Shehbaz may be in the driver's seat for now, but the leadership battle in the Sharif family is far from over, with Nawaz Sharif's daughter Maryam said to be the heir apparent.

"While the broad signs are positive, the relationship with Pakistan is very unpredictable... and it takes just one terror attack or a black swan incident (like the lawyers' agitation against General Pervez Musharraf) to change the discourse. We will wait and watch every move closely," a senior official told The Indian Express.

Shehbaz Sharif

Sharif, who is the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) president, were accepted by the National Assembly Secretariat after objections raised by the PTI were rejected. Qureshi's nomination papers were also accepted.

But senior PTI leader Babar Awan challenged Sharif's candidature, saying that the PML-N chief faced several court cases. The PTI has decided to withdraw its lawmakers from the National Assembly and launch a movement against the new upcoming government, if it is headed by Sharif who has served as the chief minister of Pakistan's Punjab province three times.

"Pakistan became an independent state in 1947; but the freedom struggle begins again today against a foreign conspiracy of regime change. It is always the people of the country who defend their sovereignty & democracy," Khan tweeted in his first comments since his ouster.

Khan's successor will be elected in the National Assembly on Monday, and a special session has been summoned.

In 2019, the National Accountability Bureau had arrested Shehbaz and his son, Hamza Sharif, accusing them of money laundering.

Addressing the National Assembly early Sunday, Sharif said, "Idon't want to go back to the bitterness of the past. We want to forget them and move forward. We will not take revenge or do injustice; we will not send people to jail for no reason, law and justice will take its course."

Ex-president and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) co-chair Asif Ali Zaradri had proposed Sharif's name for prime minister in a joint opposition's meeting. Zardari's son Bilawal Bhutto is likely to be appointed as the new foreign min-

According to media reports, in the run-up to the no-trust vote, Khan made a botched attempt to replace Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa in order to bring someone more pliant and sympathetic to his idea of "foreign conspiracy" and cling on to power.

Khan told a group of his journalists that there was no truth in the "rumour" that he was trying to replace the Army chief. PTI

Rajapaksa

impossible, to find anyone with a bad opinion of the Rajapaksas in this family pocket borough. In 2015, after Mahinda's shock defeat in the presidential elections, tearful supporters greeted him in this village and pledged to bring him back to power. But it seems that even here, people have run out of

of rice.

thinking their choice.

"This is their stronghold. There

will always be supporters of the

Rajapaksas here. But now, with the

country in this situation, they are

seeing the anger of the people, and

they don't want to be seen on the

wrong side. We can't predict how

they will vote if an election is held,

but the Rajapaksas are not as pop-

ular at this moment," said Hareem,

who belongs to the Malay Muslim

community, a small ethnic group

with a significant presence in

stood that you cannot run a coun-

try by dividing them over lan-

guage, race and religion," she said.

Unlike some other parts of the

country with a sizeable Muslim

population, Hambantota had not

seen any communal incident, she

from Tangalle, is the district head-

quarters, where the Rajapaksas

first displayed their partiality for

big-ticket infrastructure projects

that would turn into white ele-

phants and drain the country's re-

Hareem recalled how

Mahinda Rajapaksa had said that

he would build a city that would

be "no less than Colombo", but

ended with wasteful expenditure.

sial Hambantota international

port, which the government

ended up leasing to its Chinese

builders to repay the construction

loans. Also on that list is the

Mattala airport and a convention

centre, which was built to host of-

ficial functions but is now being

Perhaps, the most used of all

these infrastructure projects is the

Chinese-built four-lane express-

way from Colombo to

Hambantota, and the international

cricket stadium, where matches

Sithy Sabeena Rezik, a mem-

ber of Sri Lanka Freedom Party,

which contested the 2019 presi-

dential and 2020 parliamentary

elections as alliance partners of the

Rajapaksas, said she is now telling

supporters that SLFP is no longer

thing for the people at this mo-

ment. I feel really guilty about that.

We can hardly show our faces to

In Tangalle, in response to the

protests, some Rajapaksa support-

ers have been seen near Carlton.

holding placards that say: "We

want Gota". But Roshan, the tuk-

tuk driver, is not impressed: "They

are people who have been given

jobs by the Rajapaksas. They have

no choice but to come and show

As per the current norms, over-

staying on an Indian visa can lead

to heavy penalties, a ban from en-

tering India and even imprison-

their support."

Foreigners

our supporters," she said.

"We are helpless to do any-

are held regularly.

part of the tie-up.

hired out mostly for weddings.

Among them is the controver-

Hambantota town, 40 km

"The people have now under-

Last week, around 200 local students were not as polite as Roshan in expressing their discontent. Shouting "Go Gota Go" against Mahinda's brother President Gotabaya, they marched down the road towards Carlton. They broke through the yellow barricades and rushed towards the house until the police used teargas and water cannons to disperse them.

Today, Carlton is guarded by a posse of armed policemen, as well as the Special Task Force, an elite anti-terrorist paramilitary, with barricades at the ready.

Hambantota district, which includes Tangalle, sent three Rajapaksas to Parliament – Mahinda's son Namal, his brother Chamal and nephew Ajith — and three others from the same party. It gave Gotabaya 66% of votes in the 2019 presidential election. But today, the discontent with the first family is all too evident.

"I also voted for the Rajapaksas," said a woman who was standing in a queue outside the government-run Sathosa fair price shop in Hambantota town in



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a brave attempt to stock up for the ment. A foreigner is classed as an local new year on April 14. "We illegal immigrant upon the expiry have to manage with what little

we get," she said. The quantum of the monetary "No feeling for New Year," said penalties, meanwhile, depend on a teenaged girl at the shop. Her the duration of the illegal stay. mother's face wrinkled at the In a response to a written guesmention of Rajapaksa. "It's sad. I tion in Rajya Sabha on February 2,

voted for them and look at what Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai had clarified: "In they have done to us," she said, pointing to her meagre purchase genuine cases, where the overstay is unintentional or because of ig-Milani Hareem, who contested norance or under compelling circumstances, the period of overstay the Hambantota municipal council elections as an Opposition canis regularised and visa extension didate, said large numbers of fee is charged for the overstay pe-Rajapaksa supporters were re-

The government's bureau of immigration also tracks visa details of all foreigners visiting India under the Immigration, Visa and Foreigner's Registration Tracking project.

Tribal schools

and 7, can now write simple sentences. But there's still a lot of ground to be covered -- they cannot speak or respond to their teacher in English, yet.

"First we focused on reading. Children had trouble writing too, but they have gradually picked up -- from writing sentences, they can now write poems and longer passages," says Renu Sharma, who is today using a Class 1 textbook to teach students of Class 7.

But it's not just the students who are making the transition -all the teachers had to be trained to teach in English.

Recently, four teachers of the Ambaji schools, along with 110 other Ekalavya teachers, took part in a 21-day bridge course in 'English language and NCERT curriculum' at the Indian Institute of Teachers Education, Gandhinagar.

The shift to English medium has come in for criticism given that it is seen to be at odds with the new National Education Policy that recommends that "wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond, will be the language/mother tongue/local language/regional

Central officials, however, deny that the transition will be forced on children. "Please remember, this change is not going to happen overnight. It's going to be very gradual because we are mindful of our catchment area and the fact that students coming to Eklavya schools sometimes don't even speak the regional language," said an official.

Despite the challenges, students are excited about the shift since an English-medium education is often perceived as a ticket to a better life.

"After Class 12, college will anyway be English-medium. It's good that we learn English now so that we do not face problems later on," savs Himanshi.

2 LeT militants paramilitary forces cordoned off

the area, they came under fire, leading to a gunfight.

"Two Pakistani terrorists have been killed in the gunfight," Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kashmir, Vijay Kumar said. "Both were involved in the recent attack (on CRPF personnel) in Maisuma".

He identified the duo as Adil Bhai and Mubashir Bhai, both residents of Pakistan. He said Adil was a Lashkar commander for central

In the gunfight that lasted for several hours, two policemen and a CRPF personnel were also injured. They are said to be stable.

On Tuesday, in a shoot-andrun case, two CRPF personnel were fired upon from point blank range, at Maisuma neighbourhood of Srinagar. While one died, the other was injured. The attackers escaped after the shootout.

Maharashtra

medicines, Haffkine Bio-Pharma Corporation, Mumbai, however, failed to foresee the sudden surge in requirement of medicines and delayed the annual procurement of over 2,500 types of non-Covid medicines, which has resulted in the 18 state government hospitals affiliated with the government medical colleges (GMCs) now running out of even basic, life-saving

Consequently, the hospitals are

diabetes and hypertension.

refusing to treat even patients with

The Maharashtra Association of Resident Doctors' unit in Yavatmal's government medical college has already submitted to the Shri Vasantrao Naik GMC's Dean on March 22 a list of 34 vital medicines that have gone off the

The plight of patients in rural districts like Latur, Amrayati, Dhule, who have been dependent on government hospitals' free treatment and medicines, is more distressing. A 39-year-old Dhule worker, Amir Ali Siddigui, recently suffered severe burns in his hand while making roti. All he could get at the Shri BhausahebHire Government Medical College (SB-HGMC), Dhule, was paracetamol. "I had to spend Rs 650 to buy medicines (Amoxicillin, Pantoprazole and Polyvitamin tablets) from outside," he said.

Due to the limited drug stocks, the hospitals have asked their doctors to 'rationalise' the use of medicines, putting them in a moral dilemma. "For us, all patients are equal. It is ethically wrong for us to rationalise the use of medicines when a patient is in a need. But due to the situation we are being forced to provide the limited medicine only to emergency patients and ask others to buy it from outside," said a resident doctor at the Yavatmal GMC.

When The Indian Express visited JJ hospital's OPD ward, several patients and their relatives were seen pleading before the hospital staff at the drug counters for medicines. "We have been given targets for daily allotment of medicines. We can't surpass it to help the patients as we are accountable," said a hospital personnel.

Dr Pallavi Saple, Dean, JJ hospital said, "Currently, we are procuring the medicines at the local level to handle the shortage. We have given the list of required medicines to Haffkine. We are hopeful that we will get the medicines within the next 15 days." Also, she has instructed the hospital's drug store department to intimate its requirement one month in advance.

The issue of medicine shortages at JJ hospital reached the Assembly too. When contacted, Medical Education Minister Deshmukh blamed the deans and medical college superintendents for the delay in placing their requisition for medicines, which led to the crisis. "They need to place their requisition for medicine procurement to the government in advance... They need to be more efficient so that there is no time lag in procedures. It is about reforming the whole structure," he said.

Many hospital deans refuted such charges and pointed fingers at Haffkine for "their failure to meet the requirement of bulk medicine purchase, leading to the shortfall".

When contacted, Dr Madhavi Khode Chaware, Medical Director, Haffkine Bio-Pharma, said technical issues were behind the delay. "In some cases, despite floating a tender, we couldn't place the order as the consigning list was with DMER. Without that list, I didn't know the requirements of the colleges to place the orders." To address this, the state has for the first time, linked medicine procurement with the centralised portal-E-Aushadhi. "With the starting of the portal, we will get real-time updates about the requirements and supplies. We have cleared all the tendering of last year," she said.

A Haffkine officer, who did not wish to be named, said, during the pandemic they primarily focused on procuring medicines for the treatment of Covid patients.

Besides this, the pandemic also disrupted the supply of essential materials required for drug production from China, Japan, and other countries, due to which manufacturers, the officer claimed, were struggling to meet the demand for non-Covid medicines. "There has been nearly 30 per cent less response from the bidders," the officer said.

Drug vendors, however, said they "boycotted" the bidding process due to their pending dues worth nearly Rs 220 crore for supplying drugs and non-surgical equipment to the 18 government hospitals. The All Food And Drug

UN Climate Report 2022: 'It's now or never'

EXPRESS AUDIO

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

Prof Navroz K Dubash one of the coordinating lead authors of the IPCC report discusses the panel's assessment and talks about the warnings, where we stand currently, and a lot more.

> License Holder's Foundation (AFDLHF)'s president Abhay Pandey said the vendors were yet to get their 2019-20 dues of Rs 90 crore and 2020-21 dues of Rs 30 crore from Haffkine. The Directorate of Medical Education and Research also owed around Rs 100 crore to the suppliers.

This is despite the state government having made a provision of Rs 2.077 crore for procurement of medicines in 2021-22. When asked about it, Minister Deshmukh said it was for the authorities to examine discrepancies in medicine procurement.

Modi, Biden

MEA said: "The two leaders will review ongoing bilateral cooperation and exchange views on recent developments in South Asia, the Indo-Pacific region and global issues of mutual interest. The virtual meeting will enable both sides to continue their regular and highlevel engagement aimed at further strengthening the bilateral Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership."

The conversation at the highest levels is significant in the wake of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and India's carefully crafted diplomatic messaging to the US-led West and Russia.

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said Biden and Modi will discuss cooperation on a range of issues, including "ending the Covid-19 pandemic, countering the climate crisis, strengthening the global economy, and upholding a free, open, rules-based international order to bolster security, democracy, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific". The mention of "security, democracy, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific" is an oblique reference to Beijing's belligerence in the region.

Panel fixes fee

In the absence of a minimum fee, over the years, many private engineering colleges had been petitioning the AICTE to set a lower limit for tuition fee, accusing state authorities, including that of Tamil Nadu and Telangana, of fixing impractical minimum fee thresholds causing difficulties in day-to-day functioning. Accordingly, the government had requested the Srikrishna committee to take a fresh look at the fee structure, along with coming up with a ceiling on minimum charges. The fresh recommendations also prescribe maximum (Rs 1.4 lakh per annum) and minimum (Rs 67,000) fee for engineering (diploma), and for applied arts and design. In the case of post-graduate engineering programmes, the maximum and minimum fee have been proposed at Rs 3.03 lakh and Rs 1.41 lakh respectively.

The Srikrishna committee, set up to prescribe guidelines to prevent commercialisation of technical education, was formed based on the Supreme Court's direction in the TMA Pai Foundation case.

15% tax

midway through the year and so the total income figure is for a sixmonth period. Data beyond 2019-20 has not been made available.

Under the new regime introduced in September 2019, a tax rate of 15 per cent was announced under Section 115BAB for newly incorporated domestic companies, which make fresh investment by March 31, 2023, for manufacturing, production, research or distribution of such article or thing manufactured. This was extended by one year in this year's Budget to March 31, 2024.

Further, the corporate tax rate for all existing companies (manufacturing and non-manufacturing) was cut to 22 per cent (without surcharge and cess) from 30 per cent. This, however, appears to be a success. Over 1.45 lakh companies

15.85 per cent of the total number of corporate returns for 2019-20) representing total income of more than Rs 9.33 lakh crore (62.01 per cent of the total income reported by all companies for 2019-20) chose the concessional tax regime. In both cases, choosing the concessional tax rate means companies cannot avail exemptions, deductions or incentives provided under the old tax regime.

PMC/ON/LD/1161/2022 Pandharpur Municipal Council Date :- 09/04/2022

Pandharpur Municipal Council, Pandharpur, Dist-Solapur - E-Tender Notice -

Chief Officer, Pandharpur Municipal Council, Under the Pilgrimage Development Plan of the Government of Pandharpur, e-tenders for the operation of CCTV monitoring systems at various places in the city of Pandharpur are being invited from experienced contractors registered with the Government subject to the terms and conditions mentioned in the tender

Tender form available online from 11.00 am on 11/04/2022 to 5.00 pm on 03/05/2022 and information about the cost of work as well as tender price, acceptance of tender etc. is available on the website http://mahatenders.gov.in

> Signed/-Chief Officer, **Pandharpur Municipal Council**



NOTICE INVITING BID

Providing Street Lighting on Balance 36 Mtr. wide road from BPCL plant to entry of Sector 51, Dronagiri Node.

CIDCO of Maharashtra Limited through the process of e-tendering invites "ON LINE" item rate percentage tenders from license electrical contractors fulfilling the mandatory eligibility criteria, registered in Class 'A' with CIDCO Ltd. or appropriate class of Electrical Registration with Central Govt., or with State Govt. of Maharashtra and its undertakings, who have completed work of similar nature for the work mentioned below:

1. Name of Work: Providing Street Lighting on Balance 36 Mtr. wide road from BPCL plant to entry of Sector 51, Dronagiri Node. 2. C. A. No : 36/CIDCO/EE(ELECT-Nodal)/2021-22 3. Estimated **Amount**: ₹1,07,86,425.00 **4**. **E.M.D**. : ₹1,08,000.00 5. Registration Class: 'A' Class 6. Completion period: Part-I & Part-IV: 180 (One Hundred and Eighty) Days for Capital Works (including Monsoon) Part-II: 365 (Three Hundred and Sixty Five) Days for Operation & Maintenance during Defect Liability period. (including Monsoon) Part-III: 730 (Seven Hundred and Thirty) Days Operation & Comprehensive Maintenance after completion of Defect Liability period. (including Monsoon) 7. Tender Processing Fee: ₹5,900.00 (Rupees Five Thousand Nine Hundred only) (Non Refundable) (Inclusive of 18% GST) (₹5000/- Bid cost + ₹900/- for 18% GST)

Bid Document along with Bidding programme will be available on the website https://mahatenders.gov.in from 12/04/2022 at 17.01 Hrs.

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www.cidco.maharashtra.gov.in

OSBI Human Resources Department State Bank Bhavan, 16th Floor, Madame Cama Road, Mumbai - 400021

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL State Bank of India has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for empanelment of HR Consultant/s as specified in the RFP. For details please visit 'Procurement News' at Bank's Website https://bank.sbi

Place: Mumbai Deputy General Manager (CMD) Date: 11.04.2022 HR Dept., Corporate Centre Mumbai



पनवेल महानगरपालिका, पनवेल ई-निविदा सूचना नाट्यगृह विभाग

पनवेल महानगरपालिकेकडून योग्य, आर्थिकदृष्ट्या सक्षम आणि अनुभवी असलेल्या संबंधित यावसायिक/ ठेकेदार यांचेकडन ई-निविदेहारे पनवेल महानगरपालिकेच्या आद्य क्रांतिवीर वासदेव बळवंत फडके नाट्यगहाचे व्यवस्थापन करणेकामी ०३ वर्षे कालावधीकरिता मनष्यबळ पुरविणेकामी दिनांक ११.०४.२०२२ रोजीपासून दिनांक ०५.०५.२०२२ रोजीपर्यंत जाहीर ई-निविदा प्रक्रियेच्या माध्यमातून Online निविदा मागविण्यात येत आहे. निविदेचा सविस्तर तपशील http://mahatenders.gov.in या वेबसाइटवर उपलब्ध आहे.

जा.क्र./पमपा/माव्य-नाट्य/८०-२२/प्र.क्र.०५/०१

अतिरिक्त आयुक्त पनवेल महानगरपालिका



Chiplun Municipal Council, **Government of Maharashtra**

Notice for Tender Providing Solid Management Service on **Output Basis for 1 Year**

CHIPLUN Municipal Council, Government of Maharashtra, invites proposal from reputed and experienced companies to participate in the competitive bidding process to providing solid management service on output basis for 1 year. For the detailed tender documents, interested bidders should visit http:Maharashtra.gov.in/tenders. Tender submission would be online and the deadline to submit the proposal is 21.04.2022.

Date: 08.04.2022.

Sd/-**Chief Officer**

Chiplun Municipal Council Government of Maharashtra

Government of Maharashtra **Water Resources Department State Project Monitoring Unit**

World Bank Assisted National Hydrology Project

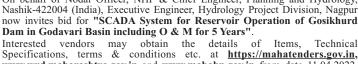
Chief Engineer, Planning and Hydrology, Jalvidnyan Bhavan, Dindori Road, Nashik-422004

E-Tender Notice for RTDAS No. 13 of 2021-22 On behalf of Nodal Officer, NHP & Chief Engineer, Planning and Hydrology Nashik-422004 (India). Executive Engineer, Hydrology Project Division, Nagpu

Interested vendors may obtain the details of Items, Specifications, terms & conditions etc. at https://mahatenders.gov.in, www.wrd.maharashtra.gov.in and www.mahahp.gov.in from date 11.04.2022 1100 hrs (IST) onwards till last date of bid date 11.05.2022 till 1500 hrs.

Executive Engineer, Hydrology Project Division,

e-mail: eehpdiv.nagpur@gmail.com



Divisional Nagpur, Vainganga nagar, Nagpur 440003 Tel.: 0712-2980146

THE CITY

Aaditya blames Railways for delay in Delisle Bridge reconstruction

Mumbai: In another round of tussle between the Centre and the state government, Cabinet minister Aaditya Thackeray blamed the Indian Railways for the delay in the reconstruction of the Delisle Bridge at Lower Parel. The bridge is a crucial connector between Lower Parel and Currey Road stations. The bridge was demolished in August 2018. The Western Railways (WR) and the BMC are jointly reconstructing the bridge that was shut owing to structural damages.

The minister had visited the construction site on Sunday.

Thackeray in a series of tweets lashed out at the delay. "This morning I visited the ongoing work at the Delisle Road bridge. While multiple reviews have been held, all hurdles smoothened, the work of the girder launching by @RailMinIndia has been delayed for over a year, with no explanation to either@mybmcorcitizens. I had earlier written to Union Minister, Railways for his intervention...," he tweeted.

Senior inspector suspended over MSRTC employees barging in at Pawar house

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, APRIL 10

MAHARASHTRA

Minister Dilip Walse Patil on Sunday suspended Gamdevi senior inspector R Rajbhar in connection with the recent incident in which MSRTC employees tried to barge into the Mumbai residence of NCP chief Sharad Pawar. An officer said that Rajbhar had knowledge that a group of MSRTC employees was headed to Pawar's residence. Despite the knowledge, Rajbhar did not do much to stop the protesters, the official added. This was part of a report that was presented to the state Home Minister following which Rajbhar was suspended.

Mumbai police said its investigation has revealed that the staffers had carried out a recce of Pawar's south Mumbai residence a day before the incident on Friday. Sources said that four people could be seen in the CCTV outside Silver Oak -- the residence of Sharad Pawar -- a day before the incident. These four people, later identified as striking MSRTC staffers, were placed under arrest by the police.

An officer said the police are probing if the incident was a planned conspiracy or a spur-ofthe-moment episode.

Over 100 striking employees along with advocate Gunaratna Sadavarte were arrested by the Mumbai police following the incident. While others are in judicial custody, Sadavarte is in police custody and will be produced before the court on

Following the incident, act-

ing DCP and senior inspector of Gamdevi was shunted out. Meanwhile, on Sunday, it also came to light that inspector Anup Dange, who was earlier suspended by former police commissioner Param Bir Singh, was posted back at the Gamdevi police station. Pawar's residence falls under the jurisdiction of this police station.

Dange had earlier taken on Singh when he was the complainant in the case against the former Mumbai top cop, alleging that the IPS officer had demanded a bribe in lieu of reinstating him in the force following his suspension.

An officer, however, clarified that Dange was posted at Gamdevi police station only as an inspector and was not given charge of the senior inspector of the police station.

Construction of tanks for storing rainwater at Hindmata, Parel to be ready by year-end

Located between two stations, this green

space is a local train traveller's delight

LAXMAN SINGH MUMBAI, APRIL 10

THE CONSTRUCTION of underground water storage tanks to tackle flooding in the infamous Hindmata and Parel area will be over by end of this year. However, with the ongoing construction work, the Hindmata area is unlikely to get respite

from flooding, this monsoon too.

FLOODING DURING MONSOON

According to an official from Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), the additional work on tanks' capacity expansion has pushed the deadline further. Mumbai suburban guardian minister Aaditya Thackeray on Sunday inspected the construction of an underground water storage tank at St Xavier's Ground to store rainwater at Hindmata.

KANAKSINGH

MUMBAI, APRIL 10

LOCATED AT Maharshi Karve Road

between Charni Road and Marine

Line is a mesmerising green

space -- SK Patil Udyan. The gar-

den, closed for an upgrade for

more than eight months in 2018-

19, had opened its gates to the pub-

lic just before the pandemic hit.

The upgraded pathway makes it

an ideal spot for an evening stroll.

train stations, the place is a heaven

for weary travellers looking for

shade in Mumbai's humid sum-

mer heat. Along with the locals,

the garden gets visitors from

across the city travelling to South

Mumbai. The place is easy to find

Located between two local

With work still being carried out, it is unlikely that tanks will be used for this monsoon. Officially, the four-month monsoon season commences in the city in June. To resolve flooding at Hindmata, the BMC's Storm Water Drain (SWD) department is constructing two underground water tanks - one below Pramod Mahajan Kala Park in Dadar west and another below

St Xavier's Ground in Parel. According to the plan, the excess rainwater accumulated at Hindmata will be diverted into these tanks. After the rain subsides, the water from the tanks will be pumped out into the nullah. "We have decided to expand the capacity of these tanks. The work will be finished by this year-end," said P Velrasu, Additional Municipal Commissioner (Projects).

Officials are checking the feasibility of partially using these tanks for the upcoming monsoon. However, since the construction work for expansion is still on it would be challenging, an official from SWD added.

While speaking to the media

in June 2021, when it took over 12 hours for floodwater to recede from the Hindamata area, Municipal Commissioner IS Chahal had said, "Just eight days back, we have received permission to lay the underground water pipelines below Tata mills (at Parel), which will carry floodwater from Hindamata to the two underground water tanks, which are 1-1.5km away. It will take another 30 days to complete the work, after which the flooding woes of the area will be resolved. In July-August rain, the project's result will be seen."

According to the old plan, the made with a storage capacity of 1.5 crore litres of water and 1 core litre in Parel. BMC is now working to increase the capacity of the tank at Dadar to 6 crore litres while St Xavier Ground can store 4 crore litres of water. The expansion proposal was passed by Standing Committee in January this year. Hindmata and Parel are the city's chronic and oldest flooding spots. Every year in monsoon the areas are waterlogged for hours.

Meanwhile, the BMC said that this year flooding spots in Mumbai remain at 386 like the last year. "We have taken up several works to mitigate the flooding spots. We have two months before rains arrive and many pending works will be cleared till then," said a BMC official.

Aaditya flags off Vintage Car Fiesta 2022

KRUTARTHPATNAIK& PRANAY MANIAR MUMBAI, APRIL 10

AADITYA THACKERAY, Minister of Tourism and Environment. Maharashtra, flagged off the 'Annual Vintage Car Fiesta 2022' at the World Trade Centre in Mumbai on Sunday.

A total of 117 vintage cars and 66 two-wheelers participated in the rally organised by the Western India Automobile Association (WIAA) and the Vintage & Classic Car Club of India (VCCCI). The event was also supported by the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation.

In line with the minister's last year's announcement on the opening of a vintage car museum in Mumbai, Nitin Dossa, chairman of WIAA/ VCCCI, said, "It is high time that Mumbai gets its vintage car museum." Dossa said that Mumbai can have a vintage car museum featuring 100 cars and 50 two-wheelers. "It will get foreign



A total of 117 vintage cars and 66 two-wheelers were part of the event held on Sunday. Pradip Das

tourists and our next generation will get a look at what cars we have today as every car is a different car," he added. Among the collection of cars were seven Rolls Royce, five Cadillacs and three Lincoln continentals, including Pope John Paul's Lincoln. Ravi Shastri's 1984 Audi-100, Jagdish Thackersey's 1935 Bentley sports drop head coupederby, 1948 Lincoln Continental V-12. 1964 Cadillac convertible of Viveck Goenka, President WIAA/VCCCI and Chairman of The Indian Express Group, also particpated in the rally. Jimmy Tata's 1967 Dodge Charge was also present at the event.

Several vintage and classic cars made appearances at the event. including the 1927 Duesenberg Model A of Gautam Singhania, MD of Raymond Group, which also was the oldest car completing the run. The show also featured a 1923 American La France

Type 12 Fire Truck and Hormusji Cama's 1936 Lanchester that was also awarded the Conour d Elegance Vintage car award.

Starting at the World Trade Centre, many vintage cars pro-Mantralayaceeded via Chowpatty-Peddar Road-Worli Sealink. A few others did a small lap and returned to WTC to showcase their most prized possessions.

Among the two-wheeler lineup, the oldest bike to complete the run was Jehangir Faroogh's 1927 AJS. Others included the 1955 BSA of Reban Solomon, 1954 BSA B33 of Jamshed Maraolia and the 1973 Norton Commando MK2 owned by Xereus Zend.

Minoo N Fittar was awarded the lifetime achievement award. S S Dhabolkar, also dubbed as the "Grandfather of the vintage car movement in India", was also present with his 1933 Austin 6.

In an interesting contrast, the students of DJ Sanghvi College of Engineering also showcased their Formula-race style electric race car at the car show.

The park also has zones for various activities such as yoga, meditation. Express

and has a walking path, running along the periphery solely dedicated to those who want to stretch their legs. The park also zones for various activities such as yoga,

meditation, and relaxation. As soon as one reaches the en-

trance, one is introduced to a land-

poha (flattened rice snack) to the locals and weary travellers for over four decades. For many, the garden of the SK Patil Udyan is located next to Sakhi Kutumb and not the other way around.

The garden offers various activities for everyone. There is an open gym, an amphitheatre, and two playgrounds for the children. Benches along the

walking pathway were recently added for senior citizens. A skating rink, a walking track, and a children's play area

were some other new additions.

Other than the greenery, the garden also provides a study

centre in its vicinity. In the morn-

from all the noise. The park has a spread of green cover and has gazebos built for people who want to sit and enjoy. Abir a thirteen old year said,

ings, many children find a place

to catch up on their lessons away

This is my favourite part of the day, I come here every day to play with my friends and because there is so much space in the park, we have the best

time playing **MUMBAI** games here." A loresident, GREENS Shailesh said, "This place is perfect for

all, the young, the elders, the students. I've been coming here every day for my evening walks and this space gives me the calm and the relaxing spirit that I come here.'

Prohibited Casuarina plantations regulate temperature in Olive Ridley turtle nests: study

SANJANA BHALERAO MUMBAI, APRIL 10

A NEW study into the Olive Ridley nesting has found that the sparsely vegetated casuarina plantations along the state's coastline, plantations of which have been prohibited by the Union Environment Ministry, will regulate the incubation temperature of the Olive Ridley turtle nests.

The Mangrove Foundation under the state government commissioned a research study to assess the incubation temperature of nests. The project, which completed its third and final phase was conducted by Sumedha Korgaonkar, a PhD scholar from the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun.

The incubation period is the number of days from egg-laying to the emergence of hatchlings inside the nest. The incubation period is inversely proportional to temperature. The greater the incubation period the hatchlings tend to be larger, more active in the movement and less malformed thus increasing their chances of emergence and survival success. Generally, after a 50-60-day incubation period, juvenile turtles break the eggshell and crawl to the sea.

Terming it as a "breakthrough", the study stated that the Casuarina plantation on the beach provides cooler ambient temperature and dispersed light that helps to maintain the nest temperature below its threshold temperature of 33 degrees Celsius. "In the current scenario of the highly skewed sex ratio of hatchlings due to an increase in temperature, it provides the most natural means to balance the sex ratio. This is the breakthrough of the data logger project," stated the report.

The National Marine Turtle

Action Plan released by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) last year has prohibited the plantation of Casuarina, calling it nonnative and an invasive species.

Casuarina is native to Australia and is extensively found along the state's coastline as it is found to be an effective bio-shield, which can minimise the impact of rough seas.

Based on the guidelines, the Maharashtra Forest Department announced to stop planting casuarina along the coast. **FULL REPORT ON**

www.indianexpress.com



Central Railside Warehouse Company Ltd (a Govt. of India Enterprise) invites applications for regular posts through Immediate Absorption basis as per the details

Pay Scale (IDA) / Grade No. of Post Dy. General Manager (Commercial) / Addl. General Manager (Commercial) Maximum Age limit is 55 years as on 01 03 2022 alongwith the instructions to apply for the aforesaid posts, etc. Sr. Manager (HR)

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Chief Executive Officer

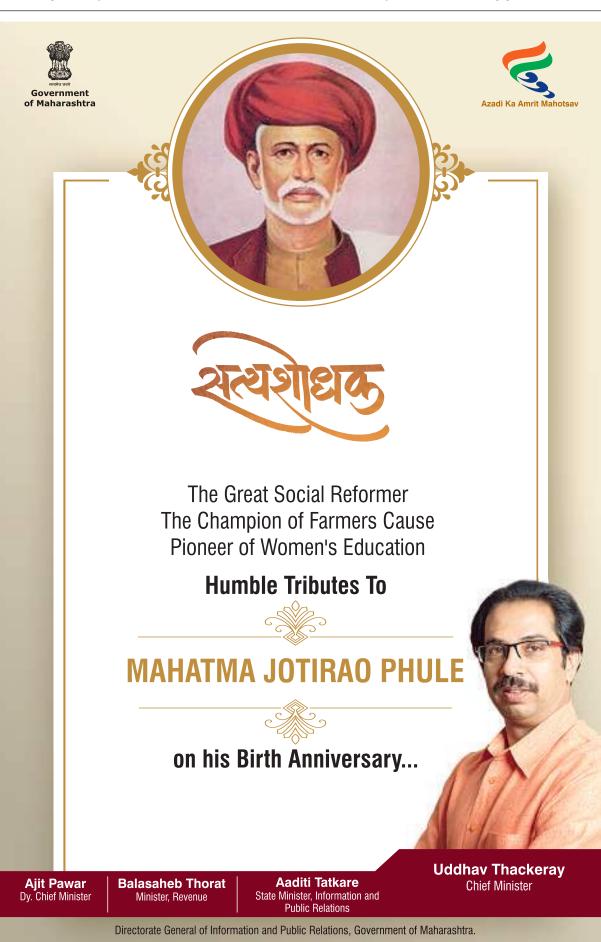


Government of India Ministry of Education Department of Higher Education Technical Section VII

ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE POST OF DIRECTORS OF INDIAN **INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION & RESEARCH (IISER),** PUNE, KOLKATA, BHOPAL, TIRUPATI AND BERHAMPUR

Applications are invited for the post of Directors of the Indian Institute of Science Education & Research, Pune (Maharashtra), Kolkata (West Bengal), Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh), Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh) and Berhampur (Odhisha). The Director shall have a contractual tenure of appointment for five years, or until attaining the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier. The detailed advertisement and proforma for application is available on the Ministry of Education's website at: https://www.education.gov.in/en/advertisements as well as on the websites of respective institutes.

The last date for receipt of applications is 23.05.2022.



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DGIPR/2022-23-55

'Stand by what I have

written; nothing



NOT TAKING CHANCES

THE POLITICAL battle between the Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government and the BJP has led to a slew of cases being filed by the Central agencies and the Maharashtra Police against leaders from the opposing sides. This battle has however, caused consternation amongst certain Maharashtra police officials who are wary of booking BJP leaders, fearing a backlash from the party. Senior officials said that with many officials of the rank of Police Inspectors fearful of rubbing the BJP the wrong way, they are having a tough time convincing them to file FIRs against party leaders.

'Pawar's Man'

NCP CHIEF Sharad Pawar met PM Narendra Modi on Wednesday to raise the issue of action taken by central agencies against Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut. The move has surprised a section of leaders in Sena who were quick to note that Pawar didn't raise the issue of action taken against leaders of his own party – the NCP. While there have been murmurs for some time in the Sena that Raut is close to Pawar, the MP on Thursday said that the fact that he is "Pawar's man" has never been hidden, adding that it was only due to his cordial relations with the NCP chief that the MVA government could be formed in Maharashtra

COMPILED BY ZEESHAN SHAIKH AND VISHWAS WAGHMODE

Have a comment or suggestion for Mumbai Confidential? Write to mumbai.newsline@expressindia.com with subject line: Mumbai Confidential

FIR against Kirit Somaiya, son transferred to EOW

>lassifieds

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, APRIL 10

AN FIR registered by Mumbai Police against BJP leader Kirit Somaiya and his son Neil at the Trombay police station has been transferred to the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Mumbai Police.

The FIR was registered on

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charges of alleged cheating and criminal breach of trust linked to the collection of funds up to Rs 57 crore for restoring the decommissioned aircraft carrier INS

An official said that in Mumbai, cases that involve an amount, which exceeds Rs 10 crore are investigated by the EOW, and hence the matter was handed over to them

ILLEGAL ABORTION CASE

'Risk to rape victim's life': Bail denied to Wardha doctor couple

SADAF MODAK MUMBAI, APRIL 10

DOCTOR COUPLE Niraj and Rekha Kadam, booked in January in Wardha for allegedly being involved in the illegal abortion of a minor rape victim, were denied bail by the sessions court recently, which said that medical papers show that there was a risk to the 13-year-old's life due to the abortion.

The court also took into consideration that there are other allegations, including disappearance of evidence and an inquiry by the Income Tax over the recovery of a huge amount of money recovered from the cou-

Wardha police filed a chargesheet against eight persons last month on several charges, including Protection of

Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), in the case.

The court, earlier this month. also rejected the bail pleas of two staffers of the hospital -- Sangita Kale and Puja Dahat.

"From police papers and

above discussion, there are not only allegations of abortion of minor victim, disappearance of evidence, but various technical irregularities, noncompliance of procedure are observed. Though a chargesheet is filed, various new facts are revealed during investigation. Applicants are in an influential position over the victim, her family members and staff of their hospital. Applicants will pressurize victim and witnesses," the court said while rejecting the bail pleas of doctors

A complaint was filed at Arvi police station in Wardha district in January on the complaint of a

teenager's mother, who had alleged that her minor daughter was made to undergo an abortion at Kadam Hospital. The victim was five months pregnant. It was revealed that she was raped by a minor boy. But instead of filing a police complaint, she was taken to the hospital for an abortion.

During the search at the hospital, the police claimed to have seized 11 skulls and 54 bones. It was submitted before the court that a report from the government medical college, part of the chargesheet, had stated that the seized samples were bones but could not conclude if they were human bones as they were smallsized and not fully developed. A DNA report was awaited.

In their bail pleas, the accused denied that the illegal abortion was carried out at their clinic. The court said that it was prima facie considering documents and state

to probe cases of threats to

politicians on social media came

up during the winter session in

the wake of threats received by

Shiv Sena leader Aaditya

Thackeray in which a person

was later arrested by the police

Sena leader Sunil Prabhu in the

After the issue was raised by

from Bengaluru.

ments including those of staffers who allegedly said illegal abortions were carried out at the hospital and fetuses were disposed of in a well behind the hospital.

"Prima facie there is nothing on record about following legal procedure and intimation to police. Applicants being gynaecologists have to follow lawful procedures and exercise due care and caution in the interest of the victim. The discharge summary of Kasturba Hospital shows that after the incident of abortion, there was a history of vaginal bleeding given by the victim. There was a risk to her life as per medical papers of Kasturba Hospital," the court said.

filed against the accused under various sections for allegedly not following other procedures, including disposing of bio-medical

'Bring law to ensure Marathi medium candidates not

PALLAVISMART

They said that the teachers who have qualified Teachers Eligibility Test (TET) as well as Aptitude Intelligence Test (TAIT) had completed the entire selection process and were recommended for teaching posts in BMC schools. However, at the time of appointment, they were told that they are ineligible for the post because their medium of instruction

Coordinator of the association of Marathi medium schools managements Sushil Shejule, said. "Those young teachers who are completely qualified for the job as they have cleared all tests are denied jobs by BMC in English schools just because their medium of instruction was Marathi when in school...'

Nashik Police commissioner DEEPAK PANDEY recently created a buzz after he wrote a letter to the Maharashtra Director General of Police (DGP) seeking curtailment in the powers of dis-

trict revenue officers and suggesting administrative changes in the state police force. SAGAR RAIPUT speaks to Pandey on the reasons that prompted him to write the letter and the officer's reaction to the censure that he has drawn from the Maharashtra Government after the letter was leaked in public. Excerpts from an interview: What was the aim behind writing such a letter?

The letter that I wrote to the

DGP was not against the revenue

department but was purely

against the land mafia. Through

the letter, I was not raising the

question of who is honest or dis-

honest; I just want to ensure that

there is a separation of powers. Currently, the revenue depart-

ment possesses all the responsi-

bility of maintaining the records

of a piece of land, taking its

measurements, registration and

also transferring the ownership.

of powers would ensure that

fairness or fair play is maintained

because every department has

some bad apples and when

these land mafias somehow

manage to influence such offi-

cials, the coast is clear for them.

If we want to ensure that every-

thing is in check, then the pow-

ers should be separated; at least

the magisterial power should be

taken away from them and given

to police commissioners of that

respective district because this

way it will be next to impossible

for the land mafia to manage of-

ficials from two different depart-

In the letter, you called revenue

officials 'RDX' and executive

magistrate 'detonators'. How

would you justify the language

ten for the first time since

Independence, which means

that what I am seeing is some-

thing which others are not. So, I

wanted to ensure that I am ex-

plaining it well with certain ex-

amples. In terms of land, the rev-

enue department is taking all the

decisions and even the powers

of an executive magistrate are

given to them. So, there is no

scope of correction. What I am

trying to imply in my letter is

that RDX is not a problem and

even detonators aren't but when

they come together, they create

a bomb that can explode. This

can be misused by land mafias

in certain situations. Even in

Such a letter has been writ-

that you have used?

So, the concept of separation

A separate case has also been

denied employment'

MUMBAI, APRIL 10

THE ASSOCIATION of Marathi medium schools' managements has demanded that the state government bring a law to ensure that nobody is denied employment on account of the medium of instruction in their school being Marathi. Irked with around 250 teachers allegedly being denied jobs by BMC, the association has written to the Chief Minister asking how the state government plans to ensure elite status to Marathi language when those choosing it are denied employment due to it.

while in school was "not English".

against revenue dept'

MONDAY Interview

DEEPAK PANDEY NASHIK POLICE COMMISSIONER

armed forces, they keep both detonators and RDX separately and they are brought together only when it is necessary. Similarly, revenue department and the position of an executive magistrate here should be sepa-

Did you ever think that your letter would cause such an outrage?

I knew that the letter would get some response from the revenue department because it is a path-breaking letter and nobody has ever written anything like this. Ajit Pawar sir has reacted in such a way because it was presented to him in that manner. If I am called and allowed to give a presentation, it may change his opinion. But I have already apologised to the revenue minister because I do not want to hurt anyone's sentiments. Having said that, I stand by what I have

Do you think that this letter can lead to your transfer from the post of Commissioner of Nashik police?

Transfer is a normal thing that keeps happening periodically... I do not differentiate between posts.

What changes should be made in the police departmentto make it more efficient?

If you want better policing then the focus should be on making the personnel fit and healthy. They are sick and surrounded by illness and we should ensure they are free from that in order to ensure best policing. For this, we are starting a naturopathy center for our policemen and the DG office has also approved it. They want me to give a detailed report on it. They are willing to assign a 100acre land for the center in which the constables can come and stay with their family and receive naturopathy treatment.

www.indianexpress.com

FULL REPORT ON

SIT set up to probe social media threats to politicians, JCP (crime) to lead team

MOHAMEDTHAVER MUMBAI, APRIL 10

IJOINT COMMISSIONER of police (crime) Milind Bharambe has been asked to head the state-level Special Investigation Team (SIT) that has been formed to probe cases of social media threats to politicians in Maharashtra, The formation of the committee was announced Maharashtra Home Minister Dilip Walse Patil during the assembly

A government official said that Bharambe has been asked to lead the SIT and the DCP (detection) too has been roped in along with some junior officers of the Mumbai crime branch as part of the committee. The official said that the job of the committee will

session in December last year.

be to ensure that cases of threats received by politicians are investigated well and chargesheets are filed in time. It will also include coming up with Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) and a list of dos and don'ts when it comes to such cases.

The official said that the SIT has already begun its work and has sought documents regarding cases registered across the state where politicians had been threatened on social media. A source said that they will be checking how many case chargesheets have been filed and will oversee the ones where the chargesheet is yet to be filed. "They will also establish a protocol to be followed by police officials investigating such matters," the official said.

The demand for a special SIT

House, Maharashtra Home Minister said, "The sentiments expressed by members in the

House and the grievances of different members have been taken into consideration. The safety of the life of a member of the legislature or an ordinary citizen is also equally important. A statelevel SIT will be set up to study the issue and a comprehensive policy will be formulated...

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

TATA CAPITAL HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED **NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY**

(Under Rule 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002)

E-Auction Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 lotice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the below Borrower and/Co- Borrower, or the

 $T\Lambda T\Lambda$

legal heirs/representatives (Borrowers) in particular that the below described immovable property mortgaged to Tata Capital Housing Finance Ltd. (TCHFL), the Physical Possession of which has been taken by the Authorisec Officer of TCHFL, will be sold on 29th April 2022 on "As is where is" & "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis for recovery of outstanding dues from below mentioned Borrower and Co-Borrowers. The Reserve Price and the Earnest Money Deposit is mentioned below. Notice is hereby given that, in the absence of any postponement/ discontinuance of the sale, the said secured asset / property shall be sold by E- Auction at 2 P.M. on the said 29th April 2022. The sealed envelope containing Demand Draft of EMD for participating in E- Auction shall be submitted to the Authorised Officer of the TCHFL on or before 28th April 2022 till 5 PM at Branch address TATA CAPITAL HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED, 1st Floor FC Annexe Building, Opp Fergusson college, Pune 411005. The sale of the Secured Asset/ Immovable Property will be on "as is where condition is" as per brief particular described herein below:

- 1		,							
Sr No		Loan A/c No.	Name of Borrower(s)/Co-borrower(s) Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative / Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Amount & Date	Reserve Price	Earnest Money			
	1	9539555 & 9770107	Mr. Kedar Paralikar (Borrower), Mrs. Devmita Kedar Paralikar (Co-Borrower)	Rs. 22,58,109/- under Loan No. 9539555 & Rs. 5,79,734/- under Loan No. 9770107 & Totalling Rs. 28,37,843/- & 18-11-2019	l Re l	Rs. 1,98,000/-			

Description of Immovable Property: All that piece and parcel of the Flat No. E-4/11, Built-Up area 51.35 Sq Mtrs. Sectore, F. Stilt 2ND Floor, Kasliwal Tarangan, Gut No. 148, 149, Mitmita, Tal. & Dist. Aurangabad, the boundaries as specified as under: Towards East: Open to Sky, Towards West: Flat No. E4/10, Towards North

At the Auction, the public generally is invited to submit their bid(s) personally. The Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s) are hereby given last chance to pay the total dues with further interest within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which the Immovable Property will be sold as per schedule. The E auction will be stopped if, amoun due as aforesaid, with interest and costs (including the cost of the sale) are tendered to the Authorised Officer of proof is given to his satisfaction that the amount of such secured debt, interest and costs has been paid before the

No officer or other person, having any duty to perform in connection with this sale shall, however, directly or indirectly bid for, acquire or attempt to acquire any interest in the Immovable Property sold. The sale shall be subject to the conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 and to the following further conditions:

The E-auction will take place through portal www.eauction.123done.in on 29th April 2022 between 2.00 PM to 3.00 PM with limited extension of 10 minutes each. Terms and Condition: 1.The particulars specified in the Schedule herein below have been stated to the best of the information of the undersigned, but the undersigned shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement of

omission in this proclamation. In the event of any dispute arising as to the amount bid, or as to the bidder, the nmovable Property shall at once again be put up to auction subject to the discretion of the Authorised Officer 2. The Immovable Property shall not be sold below the Reserve Price. 3. Bid Increment Amount will be: Rs.10,000/ (Rupees Ten Thousand Only) 4. All the Bids submitted for the purchase of the property shall be accompanied by Earnest Money as mentioned above by way of a Demand Draft favoring the "TATA CAPITAL HOUSING FINANCE LTD." Payable at Branch address. The Demand Drafts will be returned to the unsuccessful bidders after auction For payment of EMD through NEFT/RTGS/IMPS, kindly contact Authorised Officer. 5. The highest bidder shall be declared as successful bidder provided always that he/she is legally qualified to bid and provided further that the bid amount is not less than the reserve price. It shall be in the discretion of the Authorised Officer to decline acceptance of the highest bid when the price offered appears so clearly inadequate as to make it inadvisable to do so. For reasons recorded, it shall be in the discretion of the Authorised Officer to adjourn/discontinue the sale . Inspection of the Immovable Property can be done on 21st April 2022 between 11 AM to 5.00 PM with prior appointment, 8. The person declared as a successful bidder shall, immediately after such declaration, deposit twenty-five per cent of the amount of purchase money/bid which would include EMD amount to the Authorisec Officer within 24Hrs and in default of such deposit, the property shall forthwith be put to fresh auction/Sale by private treaty. 9. In case the initial deposit is made as above, the balance amount of the purchase money payable shall be paid by the purchaser to the Authorised Officer on or before the 15th day from the date of confirmation of the sale o the property, exclusive of such day, or if the 15th day be a Sunday or other holiday, then on the first office day afte the 15th day. 10. In the event of default of any payment within the period mentioned above, the property shall be put o fresh auction/Sale by private treaty. The deposit including EMD shall stand forfeited by TATA CAPITAL HOUSING FINANCE LTD and the defaulting purchaser shall lose all claims to the property. 11. Details of any encumbrances, known to the TATA CAPITAL HOUSING FINANCE LTD, to which the property is liable: Nil. Claims

if any, which have been put forward to the property and any other known particulars bearing on its nature and value NIL. The Intending Bidder is advised to make there own independent inquiries regarding encumbrances on the property including statutory liabilities arears of property tax, electricity etc. 12. For any other details or for procedure online training on e-auction the prospective bidders may contact the Service Provider Kalpana Baukhandi. Augec Asset Management (P) LTD, Address: 317 | 3rd Floor | Noida-One Building |Tower-B|, Sec-62, Noida |(U.P.) 201301 through its Mobile No. +91 7428993237, E-mail ID: kalpana.b@123done.in or Arijit Bhatt, Email ic Arijit.bhatt@tatacapital.com Authorised Officer Mobile No 9029073280. Please send your query on WhatsApp Number 9029073280 13. TDS of 1% will be applicable and payable by the highest bidder over the highest declared bid amount. The payment needs to be deposited by highest bidder in the PAN of the owner/borrower(s) and the copy of the challan shall be submitted to our company 14. Please refer to the below link provided in secured creditor's website https://bit.ly/3v3Zfuf for the above details. Please Note - TCHFL has not engaged any broker/agent apart from the mentioned auctioning partner for

sale/auction of this property. Interested parties should only contact the undersigned or the Authorised officer for all queries and enquiry in this matter Place: Aurangabad Sd/- Mr. Arijit Bhatt (Authorised Office

Tata Capital Housing Finance Ltd.

PLACE: MUMBAI

DATE : 07.04.2022

📵 **၉၈၆** Housing inance Limited

Regd. Office : 9th Floor, Antriksh Bhawan, 22, K.G. Marg, New Delhi-110001 Board No.: + 91-11-23736857, Website : www.pnbhousing.com

Branch Office: 203 & 204-A, Second Floor, Magathama, Western Edge-I, Borivali (East), Mumbai-400066, Website:- www.pnbhousing.com

POSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY) AS PER RULE 8(1) READ WITH RULE 8(2) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002 AND APPENDIX-IV R/W SECTION 13(4) OF THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSET AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002

LOAN ACCOUNT NO.: WFH/MUH/0718/554796 Whereas the undersigned being the authorized officer of PNB Housing Finance Limited under Securitisation and

Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ("SARFAESI Act, 2002"), and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 had issued a Demand Notice under Section 13(2) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 dated January 28, 2022 calling upon the Borrowers, namely Association of Persons (AOPs) of Mr. Bindesh Somaiya and Mr. Millind Somaiya; Millind Mahendra Somaiya, Yogita Millind Somaiya, Sheetal Bindesh Somaiya and Bindesh Mahendra Somaiya to repay the amount mentioned in the said Demand Notice being INR 6,94,43,132.26/- (Indian Rupees Six Crores Ninety Four Lakhs Forty Three Thousand One Hundred Thirty Two and Twenty Six Paisa Only) outstanding as on 28.01.2022 within 60 days from the date

The Borrowers mentioned herein above have failed to repay the amount as mentioned in the Demand Notice under section 13(2) of the Act dated 15.01.2022 even after expiry of 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Demand Notice. As such, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers mentioned herein above and the public in general that the undersigned has taken the constructive ossession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of SARFAESI Act, 2002 read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this 7th day of April of the year 2022. The Borrowers mentioned herein above in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of PNB Housing Finance Limited for an amount of INR 7,14,85,111.26/- (Indian Rupees Seven Crores Fourteen Lakhs Eighty Five Thousand One Hundred and Eleven and [wenty Six Paisa Only) payable and due as on 30.03.2022 and further interest at contractual rates on the aforesaid amount, including incidental expenses, costs, charges etc. incurred and accruing thereafter till the date of payment and /or

The borrowers' attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

- l) All that piece and parcel of land admeasuring 153.87 sq. meters out of 567.15 sq. meters being 27.13% undivided interest in land equaling to land admeasuring 1082.87 sq. meters and future construction thereon of Wing A and Wing B of the Building "Aristo Classic" along with unsold units situated at 76, Jakeria Road, bearing C.T.S. No. 531, 531 (1 to 15) and 562 and 562 (1 to 11) of village Malad South, Malad West admeasuring 3991.40 sq. meters within the city and the Registration Dist. of Bombay together with the present and future FSI therein. Details of unsold units are given in Table No.1 below.
- Property being Flat No. 401 on the 4th Floor, admeasuring 97.85 sq. meters in A Wing ("Flat") in the building named as Vastu Tower in society named Vastu Tower Cooperative Housing Society Limited situated on CTS 307/10, 11 and 12 of Village Valnai, Taluka-Borivali, Mumbai Sub-Urban District at Evershine Nagar, Malad (West), Mumbai - 400064.
- (3) Property being Flat No. 402 on the 4th Floor, admeasuring 97.85 sq. meters in A Wing ("Flat") in the building named as Vastu Tower in Society named Vastu Tower Cooperative Housing Society Limited situated on CTS 307/10,11 and 12 of Village Valnai, Taluka-Borivali, Mumbai, Sub-urban District at Evershine Nagar, Malad (West), Mumbai - 400064.

Details and particulars of all the above units/flats and categories have also been uploaded on the website of PNB Housing Finance Limited i.e., www.pnbhousing.com and also pasted on the secured asset)

> Mr. PRATHAMESH LOKE **AUTHORIZED OFFICER,** For PNB HOUSING FINANCE LTD.

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Date: 11.04.2022

#ExpressExplained

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

How Delhi University will admit students via CUET

ARANYA SHANKAR & DEEKSHA TERI NEW DELHI, APRIL 10

WITH THE government having made the Central University Entrance Test (CUET) compulsory across all central universities, it will change the way undergraduate students are admitted to Delhi University, which attracts candidates from across the country, and which so far had been admitting them based on their Class 12 scores. A look at how DU will use CUET now to admit students this

What is the format of the CUET paper?

CUET 2022, open to students who have passed Class 12, is a computer-based test with three sections. The first section, with multiple choice questions, tests a candidate's language skills based on her understanding of passages. This section is of two parts: 1A

Section 1A has 45-minute papers in English, Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Urdu, Assamese, Bengali, Punjabi and Odia. A DU applicant must take the test for at least one of these languages.

Section IB has to be attempted only if a candidate wishes to pursue an degree in any one (or more) of 19 other languages: French, Spanish, German, Nepali, Persian, Italian, Arabic, Sindhi, Kashmiri, Konkani, Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, Manipuri, Santhali, Tibetan, Japanese, Russian and Chinese.

Section II will test a candidate in the core subjects she wishes to study. She can appear in up to six papers (as long as she studied each in Class 12) out of 27 domain subjects – 18 in Section B1 and 9 in B2.

Subjects listed under B1 are: Accountancy/ Bookkeeping; Biology/ Biological Studies/ Biotechnology/ Biochemistry; Business Studies; Chemistry, Computer Science/ Informatics Practices, Economic/Business Economics; Geography/ Geology; History; Home Science; Legal Environmental Studies; Mathematics; Physics; Political Science; Psychology; Sociology; Anthropology;

B2 contains Engineering Graphics; Entrepreneurship; Knowledge Tradition and Practices in India; Fine Arts/Virtual Arts (Sculpture/Painting)/Commercial Arts; Teaching Aptitude; Agriculture; Mass Media/Mass Communication; Physical Education/NCC/Yoga; Performing Arts - (i) Dance (Kathak/ Bharatanatyam/ Kathakali/ Odissi/ Kuchipuri/ Manipuri (ii) Drama-Theatre (iii) Music General (Carnatic/ Rabindra Sangeet/ Hindustani/ Percussion/ Non-percussion).

Section III, which will test the candidate's general knowledge, quantitative reasoning etc, is not compulsory: a student needs to take the one-hour paper only if it's a requirement for the programme she is ap-



Counselling at Delhi University in 2017. when admission was based on Class 12

What if a subject a candidate studied in Class 12 is not among the 27 domain

Candidates should only appear for CUET domain papers in subjects that she has passed in Class 12. If a student is unable to find a particular subject in the CUET list, she will have to choose the domain paper that is most similar to the subject she studied in class 12. For example, students who studied Biochemistry in Class 12 will have to take the Biology test in CUET, since Biochemistry is not among the 27 domain

How will DU calculate CUET scores?

DU has said it will continue to honour the 'best performance" of applicants in the new system. In the cut-off system, admission was based on an applicant's performance in the four subjects with her best scores. Now her best performance in domain papers of CUET will be the determining factor.

For example, to enrol in BA (Honours), applicants need to appear for one language test from Section I and at least three subjects from Section II. However, they can choose to sit for five subjects from Section II. The final CUET score will be decided on their performance in the language test, and their top three scores in the five domain subjects.

For BSc, DU will calculate merit based on the score in one language (from Section I) and three domain subjects from Section II. A minimum score of 30% in the language test is compulsory.

Eligibility criteria for each programme is now available at www.admission.uod.ac.in.

What are these criteria?

■For B Sc (Hons) in Physics or Chemistry, candidates will have to sit for Physics. Chemistry and Maths from Section II, and also obtain 30% marks in one language. For Maths and Computer Science, B Sc candidates will have to appear for a language test from Section IA, Maths test from Section II, and another two subjects of which at least one should be from B1.

■ For BA including Political Science,

History, Sociology, the candidate must appear for one language paper from Section I, any two subjects from B1 and one more subject from either B1 or B2. So, for BA (Honours) Economics, the requirement is a language test from Section 1A, Maths test from Section II and any two domain papers out of which at least one should be from Section B1.

■ For B Com (Hons), the criteria is the same as for Economics, except that applicants also have the option for appearing for Accountancy instead of Maths.

For undergraduate language programmes, if an applicant wants to study Punjabi but hasn't studied it in Class 12, she can still attempt a language paper from Section 1A. But DU will give preference to students who have studied the concerned language in Class 12. An applicant will have to take the Punjabi test in CUET under Section 1A, two domain papers from B1 and another paper from either B1 or B2. Those who haven't studied Punjabi in school can appear for any other language test from 1A, while the rest of the criteria remain the

■ For B El Ed, candidates must have scored at least 50% in Class 12. In CUET, candidates will have to appear for one language from Section IA, any two subjects from B1 list of Section II and any one subject from either B1 or B2 list of Section II.

■ For physical education or music-related programmes, the candidate will be assessed based on CUET score and also on performance/trial/certificates. There will be equal weightage for both. For Music, applicants will need to sit for one language test from 1A, Performing Arts paper from B2 and any two subjects, of which at least one has to be from B1. If a student has not studied Music in school, she can take one language test from 1A, any two subjects from B1, plus any one subject from either B1 or B2.

Can students apply for programmes outside of their stream at school?

Like earlier, a student who studied science in high school is eligible to pursue humanities-based undergraduate programmes. However, candidates will have to ensure that they check the eligibility criteria of the desired programme, and make sure they choose domain and language courses accordingly.

Can students who have dropped a year

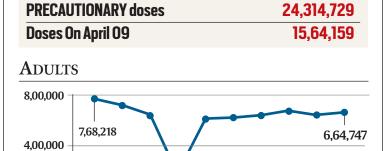
Yes, there is no bar. But this time, they too will have to appear for CUET.

Will entrance exams for professional programmes such as BBA, BBE and BMS still continue?

No, these are no longer valid. Admissions for these courses will also be done through CUET scores. For BBA, BBE and BMS, candidates will have to appear for one language test from Section 1A, Maths from Section II and the general ability test (aka Section III).

VAJIRAM & RAVI FREE INTERVIEW MODULE

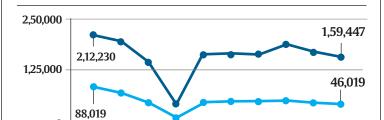
DASHBOARD, AS ON APRIL 09 **TOTAL DOSES** 185,70,71,655 First dose Second dose Adult Age group 15-18 91,34,70,465 5,76,40,927 79,98,79,673 39,568,354 AGE GROUP12-14 1st dose 22,197,507





96.372

March 31



LAST 10 DAYS (daily)

Delhi's perspective, five key takeaways: Pakistan's democracy

the National Assembly on Monday.

SHUBHAJIT ROY

Pakistan's flawed democracy is still seen as a "guided democracy". No elected Prime Minister there has ever completed his or her five-year term. The first, Liaquat Ali Khan, was assassinated on October 16, 1951. After him, seven PMs resigned, five faced dismissal, while four were ousted through military coups. Nawaz Sharif and Yousuf Raza Gilani were disqualified due to their convictions by the Supreme Court.

ON APRIL 10, 1973, Pakistan's Parliament ap-

proved its Constitution. On the same date 49

years later, a Prime Minister of that country

was ousted following a no-confidence vote for

the first time, as 174 members in the 342-

member House voted in favour of the resolu-

tion against Imran Khan. Shehbaz Sharif, brother of former PM Nawaz Sharif, is likely to

replace Imran Khan, with a vote expected in

How will this change play out? From New

Three PMs — Shaukat Aziz, Raja Pervez Ashraf and Shahid Khaqan Abbasi - relinguished office on the completion of the National Assembly's five-year term, but they had come into office to complete the remainder of the terms of their predecessors who had been disqualified or had resigned. That list includes Nawaz Sharif, who had to quit as PM four times during his three terms.

According to an analysis by Dawn, Sharif has to his credit the longest run at 3,422 days; Imran Khan is at number six at 1,335 days.

This being the first time a PM in Pakistan has been voted out, it suggests democracy in Pakistan is gradually finding its feet, albeit with some help from the military establishment.

Imran Khan's downfall

Khan, the cricketer, had arrived in politics as an unknown, since he didn't belong to the mainstream parties. That meant that he did not carry any historical baggage, but eventually he became unpopular each passing day.

The "Naya Pakistan" he promised did not turn out the way it was dreamt to be. Dawn



For New Delhi, the power shift signals the possibility of improved ties. Reuters

SIMPLY PUT

Pak power shift: takeaways

Imran Khan's defeat in the no-confidence motion paves the way for Shehbaz Sharif to take over as Pakistan PM. What does this mean for Pakistan, and for India's relations with its neighbour?

> found that out of the 51 promises in the manifesto of Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI), only two were complete and six hadn't even started.

inflation, an outcome of the government's ecoto poverty. Pakistan's GDP has fallen from \$315 billion in 2018 to \$292 billion in 2022. It has now been asking the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for bailout packages and its dependence on China has increased.

Many believe Khan's ill-timed visit to Moscow was an outcome of its overt dependence on Beijing. His remarks trying to blame Washington for the "hidden hand" against his government's downfall was possibly the last straw for the Pakistan Army, making his continuance as PM untenable.

Falling out with Army

Many in Pakistan say it was the Army that "selected" Khan for Prime Minister in 2018, after the Sharifs fell out of favour with the military establishment.

Khan always flaunted his USP: that the Pakistan Army and his government were "on the same page". But this cosy relationship broke last year, as Khan tried to block the appointment of the Army's pick Lt Gen Nadeem Anjum as the new ISI chief, instead backing Lt Gen Faiz Hameed to continue. It was reported that Khan struck a deal with Lt Gen Hameed: Khan would help him become Army chief, and the he would then help Khan win another term in 2023. But Army chief Gen Gen Qamar Bajwa got wind of this and put his foot down, sending Hameed on a posting away from Rawalpindi while bringing in Lt Gen Anjum. As Khan kept sitting on the orders from the

Pakistan's economy has been it by massive Army, that was the breaking point between the two. Khan relented after three weeks, but nomic mismanagement, with many pushed the damage was already done. The Army finally decided to dump Khan. Gen Bajwa, who retires in November, now has the chips with the new PM and the ruling coalition as he bargains for an extension beyond November 2022.

Return of the Sharifs

Four years after their defeat, the Sharifs are back in the game.

It was Shehbaz Sharif who moved the noconfidence motion, and he has worked his way into getting the support of the Pakistan Army. Shehbaz, who has been the chief minister of Pakistan's key Punjab province, has always been under the shadow of his brother. But his ties with the Pakistan Army are deep. Pakistani journalist Hamid Mir wrote in The Indian Express in July 2017 that Shehbaz was offered the Prime Minister's position by the Army at least three times (1992, 1993 and 2016) but refused to ditch his brother.

What is important for India is that the Sharif family has always been very positive about improving relations with India. Shehbaz visited India in December 2013, met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Commerce Minister Anand Sharma, and went on a visit infrastructure projects. He had also visited Punjab where he met the then CM and his deputy CM, Parkash and Sukhbir Badal, and issued a joint statement on cooperation between the Punjabs. In an interaction with journalists, includ-

ing from The Indian Express, he pitched hard for the resumption of "peaceful dialogue" on all issues including "Sir Creek, Siachen, water and Kashmir". "I told him [PM Singh] that both trade and commerce have to be combined with strategic issues...only exchange of cultural troupes is not enough. We have to resolve problems through talks," he said. Both Shehbaz and Nawaz have faced nu-

merous corruption cases in the National Accountability Bureau, including under Imran Khan's premiership, but Shehbaz has not been found guilty on any charges.

His can-do approach and trying to bring Pakistan's economy "back on track" will be key to his stint as the PM in the next year or so.

Possible diplomatic opening

Khan had made it politically difficult for New Delhi to open channels, as he had personally attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP-RSS combine. After the revocation of Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir in August 2019, his tone became more strident, calling BJP-RSS "Nazi" and using strong language against the Indian government.

But in the last year-and-a-half, the Pakistan Army opened back channels with India and they agreed to adhere to the ceasefire along the Line of Control. With the ceasefire holding for one year since February 2021, Shehbaz Sharif will find a willing partner in the Army to move forward on the ties.

It will be crucial to see how Shehbaz will act as trade ties with India could bring in funds, even as he navigates the political and diplomatic minefield for repairing ties with India.

From India's perspective, the power shift signals the possibility of an improvement of ties, amid potential challenges and difficulties.

Unlike Khan, the Sharifs will find it easier to do business with India, be in a better relationship with the US and the West, as well as engaging with China more proactively. Khan was extremely hostile towards the US under the Biden administration — he never got a call from President Joe Biden. In contrast, Shehbaz said in an interview last week that good rela-

tions with the US were critical for Pakistan for

How to withdraw cash from an ATM through UPI, without a card

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK NEW DELHI, APRIL 10

THE RESERVE Bank of India (RBI) has proposed to make a cardless cash withdrawal facility available at all ATMs, irrespective of banks, through the Unified Payment Interface (UPI). This is one of the key decisions made by the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee.

"At present the facility of cardless cash withdrawal through ATMs is limited only to a few banks. It is now proposed to make the facility available across all banks and ATM networks using UPI," RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said while making the an-

How will cash withdrawals via UPI work?

The RBI has not yet disclose details on how the process will work. According to a source

familiar with the proposed technology, ATMs soon would show an option to withdraw cash using UPL One that option is selected, the user would have to add the amount to be withdrawn, following which a QR code would be generated on the ATM machine. The user would then have to scan that code on their UPI app and enter their PIN, following which the ATM would dispense cash.

62,683

According to Das, allowing cash withdrawals through UPI would increase the security of such transactions. "In addition to enhancing ease of transactions, the absence of the need for physical cards for such transactions would help prevent frauds such as card skimming and card cloning, among others,"

What are the current ways of cardless cash withdrawals at ATMs?

At the moment, a few banks such as ICICI,

users to withdraw cash from their ATMs without a card, a feature introduced in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

However, it is a cumbersome process. Users have to install the apps of their respective banks and first select the option of cardless cash withdrawal on the app, followed by adding beneficiary details and the withdrawal amount. After confirming the mobile number of a user, the bank sends an OTP and a nine-digit order ID to the beneficiary's phone. After that, the beneficiary has to visit an ATM and key in the OTP, the order ID, the amount for transaction and their mobile number to

Cardless cash withdrawals must also be within specified limits — they start from Rs 100 per transaction and cannot cross an ceiling set by respective banks. For HDFC Bank users, such withdrawals are restricted to a maximum of Rs 10,000 each day and Rs 25,000 per month. Such withdrawals are also charged a service fee of Rs 25 per transaction. At the moment, it is not clear whether UPIbased cash withdrawals, too, would be subject to the same restrictions and service fee.

RBI Deputy Governor T Rabi Sankar said the central bank is currently working on "systemic changes" that may need to be done and the "issues will clear in the next 2-3 months". Das said the RBI would soon send separate instructions to the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), ATM networks and banks.

Could this impact debit card usage?

Debit cards are currently the most popular way of cash withdrawals at ATMs. As of now, there are more than 900 million debit cards in the country, and experts have cautioned that allowing cash withdrawals through UPI could negatively impact debit card usage

"There could be a potential first-order impact on debit cards as this step would reduce the need to carry debit cards. There could be a potential second-order impact on other payment forms such as credit cards and wallets since this step seems to promote ubiquity of the UPI," said Shivaji Thapliyal, lead an-

alyst (institutional equities) at YES Securities.

"Prima facie, this step seems negative for MDR

fee-generating payment form factors". Das clarified, however, that the issuance of debit cards would not stop due to the move, since these cards have uses beyond cash withdrawals, an argument echoed by some indus-

try stakeholders. "Due to other intertwining dependencies built in the banking system for authorisation at call centres or Internet Banking and change of PIN for UPI, the issuance of debit cards may not reduce," said Anand Bajaj, the founder, MD & CEO of PayNearby.

What's next in the UPI pipeline?

better or for worse.

It is projected that in the next 3-5 years, UPI would be processing a billion transactions a day, and to enable that, a number of initiatives have been introduced. Chief among these is UPI's AutoPay feature, which has already seen increased adoption owing to the RBI's guidelines to curb recurring transactions. According to industry experts, the AutoPay feature will be crucial to increasing daily transactions on the platform.

The RBI has also announced UPI on feature phones without an Internet connection, which is expected to open up the payments system to more than 40 crore individuals who use such devices. This will expand digital financial inclusion and add to the number of transactions made on the platform.

6 HARDLOOK

Bump in the (Coastal) Road

To speed up the commute to and from South Mumbai, the BMC is building a coastal road along the city's sprawling waterfront. However, at a time when cities globally are planning high-quality waterfront urban interventions to turn their shorelines into vibrant neighbourhoods, the civic body's initiative to build an expressway is being questioned by a group of architects who want the agency to alter its plans to make the project and the areas around it more "citizen-friendly"

ZEESHAN SHAIKH AND LAXMAN SINGH

THE MUCH-TOUTED 10.58-km-long coastal road, which is being built from Marine Drive to Worli by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) to speed up the suburban commute to and from South Mumbai, is fundamentally going to change how the city

But even as the sprawling concrete pathway is expected to help accommodate more cars and commuters, questions are now being raised on whether the present design of the mega road will cut away easy access of Mumbai's space-starved residents to the city's sprawling sea front.

 $Interestingly, while \, there \, is \, a \, global \, trend$ to "retire" or take down highways that run within cities and help create more connected, walkable neighborhoods, Mumbai will become one of the few cities to build an eight-lane expressway right in the heart of the city that will run parallel to the city's wa-

In light of this, a group of Mumbai's Architects, Urban planners, Designers, and Principals of Colleges of Architecture had written a letter to the Maharashtra Chief Minister in March seeking a realignment of the way the coastal road had been planned.

The architects suggested that slight realignment would greatly improve the revenue and tourist potential of Mumbai's wa $ter front\, be sides\, allowing\, the\, residents\, more$ open space. The BMC, for its part, says that with 50 per cent of the project already complete, there is no scope for any structural

The Coastal Road as proposed by the BMC

The Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) had planned the Mumbai Coastal Road on the western side of the state capital to provide an alternate North-South Trunk route to improve mobility along with development of recreational open public spaces and greenery.

The proposed coastal road has a length of 29.20 km along the western coastal stretch of Mumbai. The project is to be constructed in two parts; the first part is the 10.58-km-long South Section, which would connect Princess Flyover Road to the Worli Sea link for which work is presently on. The second phase involves connecting Bandra Sea Link to Kandivali Junction. Work on this stretch is

The first phase of the project to be built at a cost of Rs 12,700 crore also entailed reclamation of land from the Sea. As per the plan. around 111 hectares of land was to be reclaimed. A part of this would be used for construction of the road while the remaining reclaimed space is to be used for constructing

REPRESENTATION OF COASTAL ROAD AS PROPOSED BY BMC

Green buffer Cycle





The architects suggested that slight realignment would greatly improve the revenue and tourist potential of Mumbai's waterfront besides allowing residents more open space. The BMC, for its part, says that with 50 per cent of the project already complete, there is no scope for any structural changes. File

parks, cycle lanes, jogging tracks, promenades, and open green spaces.

As per the present proposal of the BMC based on which construction is taking place, the coastal road will contain a 20-metre wide promenade abutting the coast that will consist of a sidewalk, a cycling track and green zone. This will be followed by a 17-metre wide four-lane carriageway, an 11-metre wide median followed by another 17-metre wide four-lane road. Abutting this road stretch will be a sprawling open space of around 135 metres in width. This width of the open space will vary in size along the entire length of the coastal road.

According to the BMC, the coastal road will transform the way Mumbai commutes, adding the proposed green space will provide much-needed recreational spaces to the city. It also claimed that these seaside facilities would be within easy reach of the common public as opposed to such spaces being private backyards of a few or spots housing unsightly encroachments.

'Mumbai has been able to add only 320 Ha of public amenity spaces, including green spaces over the last two decades. It has not been possible to expand the open space area in the city due to sheer non-availability of land, since the city has limited land area, high density of population and nowhere to expand," according to a report commissioned by the BMC on the coastal road.

The report highlights the "extremely poor access to open spaces in Mumbai, stating that open space ratio per 1,000 persons in

Coastal road: 17m

Median: 11m

Mumbai is only 0.03 hectares as against the planning norm of 6.2 Ha per 1,000 persons.

The report states that the massive reclamation that is being carried out for the coastal road project will generate 70 hectares of green space along the seaside for perpetuity. This open space can be developed for the public by creating cycling tracks, promenades, landscape and theme parks.

While BMC is betting big on the coastal road as a project that will not only improve city commute but also make areas around its vicinity more livable for Mumbai's public, many architects and urban planners are questioning whether the project will actually revitalise the visual and economic aura of Mumbai's western coastline.

Changes that Architects and

On March 2, 70 architects, urban designers, planners and professors wrote a letter to BMC commissioner IS Chahal, CM Uddhav

The letter was written as many of these architects feared that the existing alignment of the coastal road would break Mumbaikars' connect with the seafront, restricting not only access but also acting as visual barrier in way of people looking out towards the sea.

The proposal that was presented involved

while keeping the road in its entirety – we think it wise to move as many of the open spaces to the seaside as possible-this would enable a world-class waterfront open to all citizens retaining the much necessary vista on to the open uncluttered horizon...." the letter states.

'The reclaimed open space is a veritable real estate gold mine. While the BMC has assured that no commercial development will be allowed on this open space, the fact that our leaders are known to tweak rules pertaining to real estate is well known. By shifting the open space towards the sea, these open public spaces will be better protected from future proposals for built-up development," another architect who is a signatory to the letter said.

The architects have also raised questions on the rationale of having an 11-metre wide median that the BMC has proposed to divide the two carriageways. An 11-metre wide median is equivalent to a three-lane road and architects have claimed that reducing this median could further allow the BMC to increase the total open space area. The median on regular city roads and expressways is between one and two metres. Pranav Naik, another architect and signa-

tory to the letter, said that open spaces closer to the sea can allow them to be designed as a "coastal resilience zone" where the force of the tides can be buffered. "Having the open spaces closer to the sea

can allow them to be designed as 'coastal resilience zones' where the force of the tides can be buffered, as well as holding ponds for the flooding that occurs regularly," said Naik.

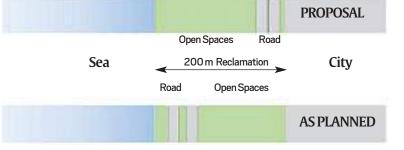
He also pointed out that bus lanes made on a "highway-type road" with no connection to residential spaces are useless. "Overall, there is no clarity about what is being built. While we are suggesting changes, we are also asking for clarifications. We can help, as citizens, and architects. We have the brightest architects in the country signing this letter," he added.

BMC's take

The BMC, meanwhile, has said that the ship has already sailed with regard to any realignment of the project. It has claimed that more than 50 per cent of the project's physical progress is already achieved as per the present alignment and hence any changes at this point of time are not possible.

"The suggestions of the Group of Architects, Urban Designers cannot be considered at this stage of the project due to following reasons. The present alignment has been planned in such a way that it fulfills the geometric requirements of alignment as per IRC Code ensuring suitability for urban highspeed Arterial road with 80-100Kmph speed and technical feasibility of interchanges to connect the coastal road with the existing road network," Ashwini Bhide, Additional Municipal Commissioner (Eastern Suburb) and in-charge of Coastal Road department, said. Architects, meanwhile, have stated that

while the suggested changes could end up costing the BMC some more money, the changes could be worth the effort.



Urban Planners are seeking

Thackeray and state environment minister Aaditya Thackeray expressing their views on the need to undertake a "slight realignment" of the Coastal Road which, they said, would greatly improve the revenue and tourist potential of Mumbai's waterfront.

shifting the proposed open spaces towards the seaside.

ture that is being created is here to stay. Making these changes will ensure that citizens get more open space to use," Abraham Some of the architects who are proposing the changes have said that making these alterations and pushing the open spaces to-

wards the sea would ensure that these

spaces are preserved for perpetuity and are

not opened up in the future for commercial

The architects also raised the point that

ideally, for a project of this scale, provisions

should also be made to ensure that continu-

ous open space should be made available for

the public so that people can walk or cycle

from one end of the coastal road to the other

Under the existing alignment, there is a

The addition of continuous bicycle paths

400-metre and a 100-metre span of the

along the length of the reclamation, would

allow one to cycle along the entire length of

the city, thereby reducing the load on the

road, as well as public transport on the north-

south corridors on the west side," the letter

Architect Alan Abraham, one of the driv-

"The proposal that we have submitted is

feasible albeit at a slight cost due to design

changes. These changes, however, are worth

it in the long run for the city as this infrastruc-

ing forces behind the letter, said that the rea-

son for sending out the letter was to ensure

that the city's residents have a universally ac-

cessible seafront with unhindered access.

through a connected waterfront.

promenade which is disconnected.

Sidewalk **Existing**

INTERVIEW

Sidewalk

'Suggestions cannot be considered at this stage of the project'

Ashwini Bhide, Additional Municipal Commissioner (Eastern Suburb) and in-charge of Coastal Road department, talks to The Indian Express about the project, its potential benefits to the city and reasons behind not being able to consider the suggestions of urban designers at this stage

How much work on the Coastal Road Project has completed? Has the reclamation in the sea been over?

More than 50% of overall work on the Coastal Road Project is completed. So far, 105 hectares of reclamation in the sea has been completed.

What are the benefits of the project for citizens? How much open space will it create for the city?

The Coastal Road project will reduce commuting time by around 70 per cent and fuel saving by about 34 per cent; it will also reduce noise and air pollution. This will also help in creation of about 70 hectare of green/open areas, which will reduce the pollution level thereby, improving the health of

citizens of Mumbai. The green space includes cycle tracks, public parks, jogging tracks, open theatre, butterfly garden, biodiversity park etc. There will be underground multilevel car parking to facilitate the public visiting the nearby green or open area. The road will have a dedicated bus lane, which will help to reduce traffic congestion on existing roads which will, in turn, aid safe, faster and low travel cost. The seawall constructed along the coastal road will help in preventing coastal erosion and storm surge.

Recently, a group of architects and urban designers wrote a letter to the Chief **Minister and Municipal Commissioner** suggesting that all the open spaces that would be created by the project be

moved towards the seaside for long-term benefit to the city. Is BMC considering those suggestions?

Coastal road: 17m

The suggestions of the Group of Architects and Urban Designers cannot be considered at this stage of the project. The present alignment has been planned in such a way that

it fulfills the geometric requirements of alignment as per IRC Code, ensuring suitability for urban high-speed Arterial road with 80-100Kmph speed and technical feasibility of interchanges to connect the coastal road with the existing road network. The project has



Sidewalk

provision of interchanges at . Amarson Garden, Haji Ali and Worli Sea face.

Open space/recreational garden

Varies as per plan

Also, the most important thing is, Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) clearance and No-Objection Certificate (NOC) has been obtained as per present alignment. Now, at this stage, any modifications in alignment will have serious im-

pacts on the project in terms of redoing design works, loss of executed works on major structures, change in work logistics, seeking fresh NOCs from various departments and cost, time and legal implications on this proj

What is the logic behind keeping the open spaces on the city side rather than the sea side? The very purpose of reclamation in this

project is to construct the road on fill instead of stilts/bridges. Open spaces formed are incidental to this as per alignment and design.

How difficult is it to make changes now?

In the current scenario, provision of interchanges to the coastal road is technically not possible...More than 50 per cent of the project's physical progress has already been achieved as per the present alignment.

It has been discussed among urban planners that the existing alignment of the Coastal Road creates a visual barrier

for Mumbaikars and hinders their view of the sea. Is it true? This is not true.

How will the BMC ensure that there are no commercial developments allowed in the open space in the future?

We have issued a circular in this regard to ensure that no commercial development takes place in the open space in future.

The architects have said the BMC is earmarking 11 meter of space as median on the Coastal Road. Can you explain this?

The 11-meter wide median in the project will be maintained as a green belt and if required in future, additional lanes can be provided.

EXPRESS NETWORK

VIOLENCE DURING RAM NAVAMI PROCESSIONS

10 houses burnt, many hurt in MP city; curfew imposed

IRAM SIDDIQUE BHOPAL, APRIL 10

AT LEAST 10 houses were set ablaze and more than two dozen people, including Superintendent of Police (SP) Siddharth Choudhary, were injured in clashes that erupted during Ram Navami procession in various areas of Khargone in Madhya Pradesh on Sunday, forcing the

administration to impose curfew

in some pockets of the city. According to Khargone District Collector Anugraha P, the first incident of stone pelting was reported around 5 pm, when the Ram Navami procession set out from Talab Chowk locality and had barely moved about 500 metres. The police resorted to lathi charge and fired teargas shells to control the situation.

According to sources, the clash broke out near Talab Chowk

Two Jharkhand districts report communal clashes

ABHISHEK ANGAD RANCHI, APRIL 10

COMMUNAL VIOLENCE was reported in at least two districts of Îharkhand on Sunday evening during Ram Navami processions.

The first incident happened in Hirdi village of Lohardaga district at around 5.30 pm. Arvind Kumar Lal. sub-divisonal officer. Lohardaga, said CrPC section 144 has been invoked and "all religious gatherings and processions have been banned". According sources, alleged stone pelting during a procession led to clashes between two groups. Eight people, which included those from both groups, were injured and three were hospitalised.

Another instance of communal violence was seen in Bermo area of Bokaro district during Ram Navami procession. Details on injuries were not available.



in Khargone when the incident took place. File

mosque when some people opposed the provocative songs being played during the procession. Videos of the incident showed a mob pelting stones at the mosque and homes close to it. The police are seen disbursing the mob.

When the incident broke out, BJP leader Kapil Mishra was also in Khargone to attend the Shriram Janmotsav Shobha Yatra procession. Sharing photos on Twitter, he wrote, "Na Musa na

SWEETY KUMARI

KOLKATA, APRIL 10

COMMUNAL TENSION prevailed

in Shibpur area of West Bengal's

Howrah city on Sunday after a

purported provocative speech

was made during a Vishwa

The police, however, were

According to sources, the

members of two communities

hurled stones at each other when

the rally reached near Panchsheel

Apartments around 5 pm. The

tension escalated when the rally

moved towards Mullick Fatak and

Fazir Bazar. Some police person-

nel and members of the public

perse the crowd engaged in pelt-

ing of stones, officials said. A few

police bikes were set on fire with

some people even receiving seri-

mandatory

subject

IN THE Northeast region.

taught till Class 8 except

in Arunachal Pradesh,

where the language is a

Class 10. In Tripura, Hindi

mandatory subject till

in school.

Hindi is compulsorily

The cops used batons to dis-

were injured, it is learnt.

Hindu Parishad (VHP) rally.

able to control the situation.

'Provocative' speech at rally

triggers tension in Howrah

Burhan, Bas Jai Shree Ram. Hamari Ram Navami yatra Khargone, Madhya Pradesh, me shuru.'

The Collector said the Talab Chowk clash led to clashes in Qazipura and other parts of the city and several vehicles were torched. Close to 60 km away from Khargone city, similar clashes and stone pelting took place in communally sensitive Sedhwa block of adjoining Barwani district.

Confirming the injury to the SP, Collector Anugraha Psaid, "He sustained injury to his leg... it is yet to be ascertained if it is a bullet iniury." Khargone Congress MLA Ravi Joshi, who visited the spot Sunday night, told The Indian Express, "The incident happened owing to gross mishandling by the police. It was such a huge event but there were hardly any police personnel at the spot. I have asked the Collector to ensure there is peace. What exactly caused the

ous injuries. Those injured were

taken to hospital for treatment.

Force (RAF) was deployed to help

the local police. Soon the inci-

dent, photos and videos of the

incident were circulated on so-

cial media. The police appealed

maintaining peace in the city. All

are requested to show utmost re-

straint and discretion while post-

ing anything on social media. They

should abstain from spreading ru-

mours about the Shibpur rally. Do

not to post anything which could

disturb social harmony as one

could be prosecuted under law,"

"We are making efforts for

to people to maintain peace.

A contingent of Rapid Action



A policeman at the site of a clash in Himmatnagar, Gujarat, Sunday. PTI

Clashes, arson erupt in Gujarat, one killed

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE AHMEDABAD, APRIL 10

ONE PERSON died and several others, including policemen, were injured as members of two communities clashed during Ram Navami processions in Khambhat town of Anand district in Central Gujarat and Himmatnagar town of Sabarkantha district of North Gujarat on Sunday

Shops and vehicles were set ablaze as the groups clashed and threw stones at each other even as police resorted to lathicharge and lobbing of tear gas shells.

According to police, the body of an unidentified man was found in Khambhat town of Anand late Sunday after the clashes. In Himmatnagar, several persons, including four policemen, were injured in stone-pelting.

Howrah city police posted on offi-Gujarat Home Minister Harsh cial social media page. Sanghavi called an emergency The VHP took out hundreds meeting with senior police offiof rallies or shobha yatras across cials late at night. Speaking to The Indian Express, Abhishek Gupta, West Bengal on Ram Navami, In the wake of the pandemic, mass deputy superintendent of police gatherings on Ram Navami rein Khambhat, said, "The body of a mained cancelled for two years. man around 60 years of age has

been found from the area where the clashes took place. The victim has not been identified yet and the nature of his death will be confirmed only after post-mortem. We have begun a crackdown and four persons have been detained... An FIR will be lodged.'

Anand SP Ajit Rajian said, "The law and order situation in Khambhat is completely under control.'

According to police, clashes started in Himmatnagar town around noon when a religious procession on motorcycles and four-wheelers reached Chhaparia locality of the town, largely dominated by minorities. Instances of stone-pelting, arson, damaging of shops and vehicles were reported till around 3 pm. Another rally was taken out from the same area by the VHP around 4 pm, which started a fresh cycle of stone-pelting, police said.

A member of the VHP faction in Himmatnagar said, "After residents of Chhaparia locality threw stones, the procession was stopped midway. However, the VHP had already scheduled another rally from 4 pm from the same area. Superintendents of police from three districts were providing security cover for the rally when again stone-pelting began. In total, 15 of our workers received head injuries in stone-pelting."

According to police, four of its personnel were being treated for injuries on Sunday night.

Speaking to The Indian Express, Hitesh Koya, Collector of Sabarkantha, said, "Law and order is completely under control in Himmatnagar... We have got additional police force from SRP and neighbouring districts."

Meanwhile, the Minority Coordination Committee (MCC), an Ahmedabad-based rights organisation, wrote to the Gujarat DGP, demanding increased security in the clash-hit areas of Himmatnagar and Khambhat along with taking action against the miscreants. "We demand action against anti-social elements who in the garb of religious events had been trying to disrupt peace in Gujarat," read the letter.

In Devbhumi Dwarka, right wing groups staged a protest claiming that a flag was burnt by unidentified miscreants.

Covid-19 not gone, could show up anywhere: PM Modi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE AHMEDABAD, APRIL 10

DESCRIBING COVIDas a "bahurupiya bimari" (multi-faced disease), Prime Minister Narendra Modi warned on Sunday that the "danger" is not gone and could show up anywhere at any time.

Delivering a virtual address to mark the 14th foundation day of the temple of Umiya Mata, the patron deity of the Kadva Patidars in Gujarat's Junagadh, Modi also issued an appeal for the adoption of natural farming, investment in water harvesting and eradication of malnutrition among children and women.

He also suggested that every district should have 75 "amrit sarovar" (ponds) by creating them or repairing existing ones before August 15, 2023, so that flag-hoisting Independence Day is done from these locations

 $Referring \,to\,Covid, the\,Prime$ Minister said: "See how big a danger this Corona was. And we still do not believe that this danger has gone...somewhere it raises its ugly head. Nobody knows when and where it will show up...this ailment is multi-

He said over 185 crore Covid vaccine doses have been administered across the country. "When people across the world hear (about the vaccine doses), they are surprised. How is it possible? It was because of the cooperation of all of you, the community," Modi said. The Prime Minister de-

scribed his call for natural farming as part of a "major campaign to save mother Earth". "As the Chief Minister (Bhupendra Patel) said, this land is our mother and I am a devotee of Umiyadham so I have no reason to cause pain to Mother Earth. Do we give medicines to our mother without any reason? Do we give them blood without any need? We know what our mother needs, so why

Violence in JNU over non-veg

food, Ram Navami puja



PM Narendra Modi addresses the 14th Foundation Day celebration at Umiya Mata Temple in Gujarat through video conferencing. ANI

get frustrated? Due to this we are facing so many problems," he

Recalling former chief minister, the late Keshubhai Patel, in this context, Modi said: "The way Keshubhai (Patel) and I had worked so hard for water, today Bhupendra Patel is working for Mother Earth. To save Mother Earth, it is my special appeal to the people of Gujarat and especially to devotees of Umiya Maa.'

Linking his call to resolving the scarcity of water faced by Gujarat, Modi said: "In the past, people were living in drought and scarcity of water but since the construction of check dams, drip irrigation and Sauni Yojana, things have changed... We are slowly coming out of this problem because of a mass movement... But still... we should be doing water harvesting."

Speaking about the issue of female foeticide, especially in the north Guiarat districts, Modi said: "In Gujarat and in Unjha, the number of girls kept declining against boys and once I gathered my supporters and asked them to promise... There is now an awareness about not killing the girl child in the

Northeast groups oppose CID to probe Bengaluru Centre's Hindi move

JIMMY LEIVON

NEW DELHI, IMPHAL, APRIL 10

SEVERAL NORTHEAST-BASED organisations — including Assam's apex literary body, the Asom Sahitya Sabha and Manipur's Meitei Erol Eyek Loinashillon Apunba Lup (MEELAL), a group established to safeguard Manipuri language — have opposed the Centre's proposal to make Hindi compulsory till Class 10 in the region and urged the government to reconsider its move. "Union Home Minister Amit

Shah should have instead taken steps to develop Assamese and other indigenous languages. Such steps spell a bleak future for Assamese and all indigenous languages in the Northeast. The Sabha demands that the decision be revoked," the Asom Sahitya Sabha said in a statement.

Earlier this week, Shah, who chairs the Parliamentary Official Language committee, had announced that Hindi would be made compulsory in all eight

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

A MURDER linked to a road rage

is not compulsory at all The Northeast Students' Union called it an "imposition". "We have always maintained the three language formula be followed — English, Hindi and the

local language," said chairman Samuel B Ivwra. "The one nation, one language, one religion ideology of the BJP cannot be implemented throughout the country, especially in Kangleipak (Manipur)...," said Huirem Loikhomba Meetei, MEE-LAL general secretary. Goli, 22, and a juvenile.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com



BENGALURU, APRIL 10

incident in a predominantly minority area of Bengaluru in the early hours of April 5 has been referred to Criminal Investigation Department of Karnataka Police after the incident was communalised by leaders of the ruling BIP.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said on Sunday that the murder of 19-year-old Chandru V had been referred to the CID for investigations. "The truth must come out. I have spoken to the Police Commissioner and Director General of Police. We have decided to give the case to the CID."

Chandru died after he was stabbed in his thigh during an altercation after a road accident in Goripalya area of JJ Nagar police limits. Based on evidence in the form of CCTV footage and statements of eyewitnesses, the police arrested Shahid Pasha, 21, Shahid

Soon after the incident, Bengaluru Police Commissioner



CM Basavaraj Bommai

Kamal Pant in a statement said the murder was linked to a road rage incident. The following day, state Home Minister Araga Jnanendra contradicted the police version, claiming Chandru was attacked for not speaking in Urdu. He withdrew the statement after a police fact check service debunked messages floated on social media - by handles linked to right-wing activists. "The murder... is purely due to 'road rage'," the police's fact-

check site said on April 6. However, BJP have legislators insisted that the murder was caused by the victim's failure to speak in Urdu after the accident. BJP MLC N Ravikumar Saturday accused the Police Commissioner

14-year-old dies after 'gangrape'; TMC leader's son detained

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA. APRIL 10

A 14-year-old girl died after she was allegedly gangraped by the son of a panchayat member owing allegiance to the TMC and others in West Bengal's Nadia district, police said on Sunday.

Brajgopal Goala (21), son of Samar Goala, a member of a local gram panchayat, has been detained. "A case was registered after we received a complaint after seven days of the incident. The girl's body has already been cremated. We are questioning the youth," said a police official

The victim's family has alleged that Brajgopal invited her besides his friends to his birthday party on April 4. He along with others gangraped her after they made her drink alcohol, they claimed. The girl died the next morning due to excessive bleeding, the family said, accusing Braigopal and his friends of pressuring them to cremate the body and threatening them

SUKRITA BARUAH. JIGNASA SINHA & ARANYA **SHANKAR**

NEW DELHI, APRIL 10

SEVERAL STUDENTS were injured in Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) after violence broke out on campus on Sunday evening. This followed a tense day between members of Left student bodies and the ABVP — with the former alleging attempts to stop non-vegetarian food from being cooked and served in the Kaveri hostel mess and the latter alleging attempts to disrupt a Ram Navami puja in the same hostel.

While police said six students were injured, Left activists alleged the number was 50-60, while ABVP claimed it was 15-20, including 8-10 members of the outfit. Visuals that emerged from the campus showed a student with a bloodied forehead, another with injuries on his back, and a third with a bleeding palm. Tensions had begun simmering in the campus since around 4 pm before erupting into violence around 7.30.

gan when ABVP students allegedly tried to stop non-vegetarian food from being cooked in the hostel mess. "Every Sunday, both nonvegetarian and vegetarian food is cooked in all hostels. This is the usual practice. ABVP students were having some event near Kaveri hostel and when the vendor came to deliver chicken, they stopped him. They harassed and heckled both him and the mess secretary, saying that a havan is being held and non-vegetarian food can't be cooked," claimed Anagha Pradeep councillor INUStudents' Union (INUSU).

ABVP activists, however, claimed non-vegetarian food was not the issue. "Students of JNU were conducting a Ram Navami havan in the Kaveri hostel but the Leftists came to prevent it from happening and stopped people from joining. It was supposed to start at 3.30 pm but could only start by 5 pm because of the ruckus. No one objected to non-vegetarian food, this controversy has been created as a cover... An iftar party and the havan were taking place simulsecretary, ABVP-JNU.

sues," claimed Umesh Ajmeera, When The Indian Express spoke to Dean of Students Sudheer Pratap Singh at 7 pm. a

little before the violence broke out, he had said: "The students' mess committees decide what is to be cooked and the administration has no role in this. There was no formal complaint but I got a call and spoke to the warden and we had said let what has come be cooked, we have no issues. The issue has been resolved." In the meantime, the Kaveri hostel mess committee, a student-run body, wrote to the Dean of Students asking for intervention

from the administration. Kaveri hostel mess warden Gopal Ram said the matter was being inquired into. "We are investigating what exactly happened and we will give information at the appropriate time... Wardens don't have any role to play in deciding the menu...," he said.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

'Institute stifles criticism of Indian govt': 14 scholars quit Aussie centre

SOURAV ROY BARMAN

NEW DELHI, APRIL 10

FOURTEEN ACADEMICS from universities across Australia have quit their affiliation to the Melbourne-based Australia India Institute (AII) over what they allege is its reluctance to discuss issues critical of the ruling establishment in India.

Among others, they cite its decision to "decline" an essay on the implications of the "rise of Hindu nationalism" and pulling the plug on a podcast on the impact of caste in academia and private enterprise in India.

The AII was set up in 2008 at the University of Melbourne with a grant of US\$ 8 million from the Australian government to "engage and gain a greater understanding of the two countries through various streams of academic research" in the wake of a series of hate crimes against Indians. On March 29 this year, 13 aca-

demics with affiliation to AII signed a resignation letter addressed to University of Melbourne Vice Chancellor Prof Duncan Maskell. The letter accused the AII of promoting Indian government "propaganda", "overlooking" a crackdown on dissent and "marginalisation of Indian minority". Later, another academic fellow resigned.

"Following some criticism on an AII fellow's talk on invisible inequalities (touching on class and caste), the AII declined to support the publication of a piece aimed at discussing the attacks on Gandhi (in view of the attempted beheading of his statue in Melbourne) prepared by two AII fellows (including one who gave the talk). It was communicated to them that the AII has decided to "stay away from the topic a little longer"," the letter stated.

"We also noted that an Ear to Asia podcast entitled Caste and the Corporation, in India and abroad by these two fellows has also not been included on the website of Aii, although those by others have been included," the letter said.

Both the essay and the podcast were projects of Prof Hari Bapuji,

Professor, Department of Management and Marketing, and Prof Dolly Kikon, both from the University of Melbourne, Bapuji is among the 14 who have resigned.

The essay, "Understanding Modern Attacks On Gandhi", seeks to examine the possible rea-

sons behind the targeted attacks on Gandhi, including vandalism of his statues.

"The life of Gandhi and his vision for the future is associated with India's principles of secularism and rights for all religious groups. The right to religious freedom is actually enshrined in the Constitution of India. But these principles are now losing favour as Hindu Nationalism gains currency and the possibilities of changing the constitution are also now being considered," states the essay, which was later published by Pursuit, a platform of the University of Melbourne.

The 47-minute podcast, "Caste and Corporation, in India and abroad", traces the genesis of the caste system, and its effect on various fields, ranging from academia to private corporations, and the bureaucracy.

When contacted, a University of Melbourne spokesperson told The Indian Express: "The University of Melbourne and the Australia India Institute respect the decision of the Academic Fellows who recently tendered their resignations. The University stands firmly in support of the strategic direction of the AII, its Board and Chief Executive Officer. The University of Melbourne is committed to academic freedom and freedom of speech. They are central to our core values and identity.'

The spokesperson said in the response: University has been working on strengthening our policies in this area for the past two years and takes any allegations of this nature very seriously." However, some of the academics who resigned dis-

agree. "It strains credulity to characterise the AII's decision as benign editorial judgment. The mission and orientation chosen for the AII sits uneasily with work that might be viewed unfavourably by the Indian government. Moreover, there has been a consistent pattern of the AII supporting events and content that have carried the flavour of propaganda, celebrating the current Indian government," one of them, speaking on condition of anonymity, told *The* Indian Express.

Another signatory told The Indian Express that 14 of the about 40 academics affiliated to AII resigned because the institute "might have lost the plot in other respects and departed from its own past history and legacy".

Apart from University of Melbourne, the 14 academics rep-

resent University of Western Australia, University of New South Wales, College of Business University of Alabama in Huntsville, Australian National University, University of Technology Sydney, La Trobe University and University of Adelaide. One of the fellows. Dr Ian Woolford, Lecturer (Hindi Language), Department of Languages and Cultures, La Trobe University, posted on Twitter that he had resigned his "affiliation with the Australia India Institute, due to concerns over government interference and restrictions of academic freedom".

According to an Indian official, who was involved in the process of setting up the institute, many of the academics, under founding director Prof Amitabh Mattoo, were initially chosen on an ad-hoc scholars dedicated to the study of the two nations. One of the academics who resigned said that "none of these academic fellows are funded in any way by AII". In their resignation letter, the

basis to "build a community" of

fellows also questioned the process through which former Australian senator Lisa Singh was picked to lead AII in 2021. Singh did not respond to requests for comment. In December 2020, 24 fellows, including 12 who recently quit, had raised other issues in a letter to University of Melbourne. In that letter, they claimed that a 'publicly-advertised event was downgraded to a private invitation-only seminar, following an intervention by the Indian High Commissioner". The Indian High Commission in Canberra did not respond to requests for comment.

WORDLY WISE

THOSE WHO TREAT POLITICS & MORALITY SEPARATELY WILL NOT UNDERSTAND EITHER.

— JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

The Indian EXPRESS

∽ FOUNDED BY ∽ Ramnath Goenka

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

Failing the test

The vision of a Naya Pakistan is in tatters as Imran Khan bows out

CHANGE NEXT DOOR

Pakistan's new PM has his task cut out — he must also face Imran Khan in trying conditions

VERY LAST BALL does not yield a turnaround in sagging fortunes, and so it was with Imran Khan. Even after he knew that his government had lost its majority in parliament, Khan fought every inch of the way to remain prime minister, pulling surprises on the Opposition, and delaying the inevitable. A no-confidence motion against him, which he and his party did their best to stall since it was submitted to the speaker on March 8, finally went through Pakistan's National Assembly with 174 votes in the House of 225, bringing his term in office to an end 16 months ahead of time. The last minute delays, and a late night cabinet meeting, suggested he was preparing to try one final move. Was Khan playing with the idea of removing the army chief and appointing a new man before he was voted out, as suggested by a late night petition asking the Islamabad High Court to restrain him from doing this? Whatever it was, it threatened to turn what was an open-and-shut case of the removal of a prime minister by means of a parliamentary process, a first for Pakistan, into a full blown constitutional crisis.

Pakistan will have a new prime minister today, barring last minute surprises. Parliamentary elections are due in next July or August. It it is upto the new government to decide if these elections should be held earlier than that. Khan's various gambits also carried more than a hint of a campaign for the next election. His ruse of alleging an American conspiracy to unseat him was possibly intended to tap into a deep-seated hostility in large sections of Pakistanis, especially the young who form the bulk of his support base, against the US. Khan has made clear he will remain in politics, and even if he does not win the next election, it will be no surprise if he and the PTI emerge as a strong opposition.

From India's point of view, Khan's exit could create opportunities for repairing ties with Pakistan. The Pakistan military establishment has so far been the main obstacle in this, but Pakistan Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa, and his frequent assertions in favour of trade and "geo-economics" as the way forward for the region, give the impression that he wants to pursue these ideas with India. It is not clear though if all his army colleagues back him, or even if the new government will endorse his plans. Khan and his government did not. Bajwa's own term in office ends in November this year. Irrespective of this, if and when a new page is turned, New Delhi should respond with an open mind. At the same time, given the fraught equations in the wake of the growing Russia-China axis, it must remain vigilant for spoilers.

BOND IDENTITY

Court must settle challenge to the electoral bonds scheme quickly. The sanctity of elections is at stake

NDIA'S APEX COURT will hear the petitions challenging the electoral bonds scheme. While this news should be welcomed, it is noteworthy that Chief Justice of India NVRamana has not specified any specific date or set any timeline for arriving at a _ judgment. Two prominent non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in India — Common Cause and Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) — have legally challenged the scheme that was started in 2018. They, along with several other critics, have been alleging that the introduction of electoral bonds is "distorting democracy" in India. Given the increasingly polarised nature of India's polity, it is of utmost importance that the Supreme Court either removes all doubts about the validity of the scheme or orders the government to make the necessary changes.

The electoral bonds scheme was first mentioned in 2017 when then Finance Minister Arun Jaitley presented it as a way to reform electoral funding in the country. Until then, most political parties used to bypass scrutiny of their finances by claiming that they received most of their donations in cash. Further, since cash amounts less than Rs 20,000 were exempted from scrutiny, parties routinely claimed that most of the donations they received were in cash and in amounts less than Rs 20,000. This opened channels for black money to flow into political parties. So Jaitley capped cash donations at Rs 2,000 and introduced electoral bonds, which could only be bought either by cheque or a digital transfer. These steps, it was assumed, would ensure that black money was not used to fund elections.

However, in actual practice, the electoral bonds scheme has left a lot to be desired. For one, it has not improved transparency in electoral funding. Worse still, it is being argued that this scheme has rigged the game in favour of the ruling party. That's because while a donor's identity is hidden from the public view, it is possible for the ruling party to know since these bonds are issued by a government-owned bank (State Bank of India). This advantage with the ruling party allows the possibility for the government of the day to either extort money or victimise those individuals/ entities that fund the Opposition. The fact that the BIP has cornered more than 75 per cent of all such bonds issued to date gives credence to this criticism. Another key area of concern is that the government, as part of the introduction of the electoral bonds, had removed the cap on how much money a company could donate. A quick closure in these matters is necessary to ensure transparency in campaign financing, critical to the integrity of the electoral process.

Freeze Frame

EPUNNY



Ajay Darshan Behera

PRIME MINISTER IMRAN Khan's loss in the no-confidence motion may have been the first in Pakistan's history. But that fact may not be as significant as what has been reiterated about the political stability of elected regimes: No elected regime in Islamabad has managed to complete its tenure since the formation of the country.

Khan, who has had a remarkable political journey in a short period, became the prime minister in 2018. He has been instrumental in single-handedly building the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI). From just one seat in parliament in 2002, his party increased its tally to 116 in the 2018 elections. By holding agitations on an anti-corruption agenda, he created a new support base. His campaigns reached out to the young educated people and he successfully projected the PTI as an alternative third force capable of bringing change from the feudalistic and dynastic rule of the past. However, the 2018 elections were questioned for their fairness. It is strongly believed that he came to power due to the political engineering by the military establishment.

His politics reflected an eclectic set of agendas — Khan mixed his anti-corruption agenda with soft Islamism and anti-Westernism. He spoke about turning Pakistan into an egalitarian, modern, Islamic, democratic, welfare state. He gave the slogan for "Naya Pakistan" and promised to bring change. That vision of a "Naya Pakistan" has been shattered for some time now. He proved to be no different from other politicians when he dissolved parliament instead of facing the no-confidence motion and plunged the country into a constitutional crisis. His claim of being different from the existing political leadership and practising clean politics is now seen as hypocritical.

Khan's tenure in office was a difficult one. He came to power at a time when Pakistan

to make populist promises like creating 10 million jobs within five years, constructing five million houses for the homeless and so on. His idea of an Islamic welfare state also required big public spending on health and education. But Khan had no pragmatic economic policy. He showed a superficial understanding of the problems faced by Pakistan. His economic mismanagement created enormous hardships for the people. The poor state of the economy diminished his popularity. There are also contradictions in his worldview. His populism has been punctured by the hard realities of governance. Eventually, it was Imran Khan's relation-

ship with the military and the Opposition that was instrumental in his fall. His standoff with the military over the appointment of a new ISI chief and differences over foreign policy issues created a rift with the military establishment. In the face of Pakistan's difficult challenges, Khan was not able to build consensual politics of any kind and carry the Opposition along with him. He resorted to demagoguery to undermine the Opposition. The military has taken a neutral stand in the Opposition's attempt to constitutionally unseat Khan. Whether Khan and the PTI will remain a formidable force in Pakistan's politics is difficult to predict. While it is still believed that he has popular support, how he will fare in electoral politics without the support of the military is not clear. Given his self-image and ego, will he be able to rebuild bridges with the military? Can he reach out to sections in the Opposition, which is necessary

faced serious economic challenges — it was

on the verge of a balance of payments crisis.

Foreign exchange reserves were very low. The

high trade deficit adversely affected the cur-

rent account deficit and foreign currency re-

serves. Pakistan's total external debt and lia-

bilities have since gone up to \$91 billion, 31

per cent of the GDP. Even then he continued

in coalition politics? We must remember that the 2018 mandate was probably not reflective of the PTI's actual popular support.

Questions have been raised about the role of the military in the current political crisis. Is this a sign of the military retreating from politics? While the military still remains dominant in the power structure in Pakistan, it is increasingly becoming clear that it is unlikely to seize power again. Pakistan has become a difficult country to govern. Even if the military does not wield power directly, it remains the final arbiter in Pakistan's politics as the 2018 general elections had shown, Years of social and political engineering have unleashed forces in Pakistan that have created structural incapacities to address social, economic and security challenges. Neither the political class nor the military has solutions to these problems.

The vision of a Naya Pakistan lies shattered. It is back to the old Pakistan with its intermittent political instability, difficult economic challenges and a military that will not allow the political class to govern. The challenges for the new prime minister will be no different. He has to deal with these structural issues. There is not much light at the end of the tunnel. The military might take a back seat for some time, but it will ensure that it is able to decide outcomes. The political class will have to get its act together to ensure that governance is the main agenda of the political regimes. Pakistan needs a major reorientation in its politics and foreign policy. It has to set its relations with external powers and its neighbours right. Cutting off support to religious militants and improving relations with India will be helpful in dealing with its economic challenges.

> The writer is a Professor and Officiating Director of the Academy of International Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi

difficult country to govern. Even if the military does not wield power directly, it remains the final arbiter in Pakistan's politics as the 2018 general elections had shown. Years of social and political engineering have unleashed forces in Pakistan that have created structural incapacities to address social, economic and security challenges. Neither the political class nor the military has solutions to these problems.

Pakistan has become a

THEIR RIGHT TO WORK

Exempting central services from reservation for disabled is legally untenable

RAHUL BAJAJ AND NISHTHA GUPTA

IN THE JUDGMENT delivered late last year in Ravinder Kumar Dhariwal and Anr. v. Union of India and Ors., the Supreme Court dealt with the initiation of disciplinary proceedings against a mentally-ill CRPF employee. While concluding that the initiation of the proceedings against the employee was indirectly discriminatory, the Court held that it will have to develop, in an appropriate case, the standard of justification for evaluating the government's decision to exclude any establishment from the nondiscrimination guarantee contained in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 [RPwD Act].

A case that the SC is currently hearing (National Platform for the Rights of the Disabled v. Department of Empowerment for Persons with Disabilities and Ors.) might just offer it the opportunity to enunciate this standard. The petitioner has challenged a notification issued by the Department of **Empowerment for Persons with Disabilities** (Department). The impugned notification exempts all categories of posts in the Indian Police Service, the Delhi, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Daman and Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli Police Service, as well as the Indian Railway Protection Force Service from the mandated 4 per cent reservation for persons with disabilities under the RPwD Act.

This notification is legally and constitutionally untenable. First, on the same day as the issuing of the impugned notification, the Department also issued another notification exempting from the purview of reservation under the RPwD Act posts only of "combatant" nature in the paramilitary police. This This case presents the SC with the opportunity to rule that the disabled are not a monolithic entity. Every disabled person is different, and it is unfair to paint all disabled people with the same broad brush, based on a stereotypical understanding of what they can do. Let us hope that the Court recognises that the disabled have the right to exist and work in the world just like their able-bodied counterparts

classification between combat and non-com- officiating in that role. Further, in the debate bat posts was premised on a clear recognition of the fact that persons with disabilities are capable of occupying non-combat posts in the central forces. The Department has offered no justification as to why this classification would not hold good as regards the services covered in the impugned notification.

Second, in an office memorandum issued in January last year, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment had identified a range of ministerial/civilian posts as being suitable for reservation for the disabled. The impugned notification is in the teeth of this identification exercise, by virtue of its blanket character. Further, on November 22, 2021, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs released Draft Accessibility Standards/Guidelines for built infrastructure under its purview (police stations, prisons and disaster mitigation centres) and services associated with them. These Draft Standards state that the police staff on civil duty could be persons with disabilities. Curiously, even as the Centre appears committed to creating a more disabled-friendly police service, it has foreclosed the possibility of the disabled being part of the police force through the impugned notification.

Third, the impugned notification appears to be a colourable exercise of power. This is because, as per the RPwD Act, the grant of any exemption has to be preceded by consultation with the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities. It is common knowledge that the office of the chief commissioner has been lying vacant for many years, with the secretary in the Department in Parliament at the time of the passage of the RPwD Act, an exchange between Sitaram Yechury and the then Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment is revealing. Yechury had feared that the central government would use the power granted to it under the RPwD Act to exempt people with disabilities from seeking reservation for posts that they are perfectly capable of occupying. The minister had assured that this concern would be addressed in the rules. By issuing the Impugned Notification, the Department has belied that assurance.

In a heartening development, on March 25, the SC passed an interim order, allowing physically disabled persons who have cleared the civil services (mains) exam to provisionally apply for posts in the IPS, IRPFS and DANIPS, considering this request to be "just and reasonable". The Court has asked the government to explain its stance on the impugned notification and listed the matter for April 18.

This case presents the SC with the opportunity to rule that the disabled are not a monolithic entity. Every disabled person is different, and it is unfair to paint all disabled people with the same broad brush, based on a stereotypical understanding of what they can do. Let us hope that the Court recognises that the disabled have the right to exist and work in the world just like their able-bodied

Bajaj is a senior resident fellow at the Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy and Gupta is a student at the NALSAR University of Law

APRIL 11, 1982, FORTY YEARS AGO

SNAG IN INSAT

ISRO SCIENTISTS FACED the first problem with Insat 1-A when their attempts to put it on a transfer orbit failed. The master control facility at Hassan announced that the apogee motor of the satellite failed to fire on command from the ground. The satellite, heralding the country's most ambitious project, to take the benefits of space technology to 60,000 villages developed the snag two hours after it was placed in the transfer orbit of the Delta rocket. Consequently, the apogee motor firing maneuvre has been put off by a day. The control team at Hassan is now engaged in working out contingency operations. Insat 1-A, the first civilian satel-

lite to combine the function of telecommunications, TV broadcasting and meteorology will have a life span of seven years.

SIGNAL TO ARGENTINA

BRITAIN WON VITAL support in its diplomatic offensive against Argentina when the rest of the European Common Market banned imports in reprisal against the seizing of Falkland Islands. The 10-member EEC announced the ban, the toughest it has imposed, after a meeting in Brussels. The EEC response came as PM Margaret Thatcher waited for news from the US Secretary of State who is in Buenos Aires to convince the Argentines that they risk an armed conflict with Britain if they do not leave the islands.

LEFT FRONT'S DEMANDS

THE LEFT FRONT wants Article 356 of the Constitution that enables the Centre to dismiss state governments to be scrapped. It has also demanded a guarantee that the requirement of President's assent will not hold up bills passed by state assemblies. These are amongst the first time demands in the Front's manifesto released by its chairman Pramode Dasgupta. It also wants the eligible age for voting to Parliament and other elected bodies be reduced to 18 years.



THE INDIAN EXPRESS, MONDAY, APRIL 11, 2022

THE IDEAS PAGE

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"Though inexperience ultimately became its undoing, the PTI did also record some commendable achievements." - DAWN

Blueprint for a prosperous Punjab

Addressing depleting groundwater, diversification of crops holds key to the state's future



BY ASHOK GULATI, BHARAT SHARMA AND Purvi Thangaraj

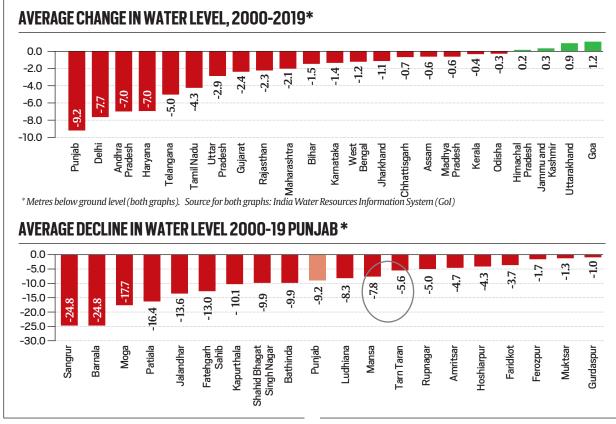
THE PEOPLE OF Punjab need to be complimented for giving a clear majority to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in the recentlyheld Assembly elections. Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann has a golden opportunity to put Punjab back on the track to higher sustainable growth, lower corruption and ensure freedom from the drug mafia. Only then can Punjab regain its happiness and prosperity.

Mann has already vowed to root out corruption from government offices, but so far, he has not revealed a blueprint for agriculture — a sector in which Punjab has been the front runner by ushering in the Green Revolution. But the state has been languishing of late. We attempt to sketch out the key issues in Punjab's agriculture, the factors that have driven it to the current situation, and what could be the potential solutions that lead to sustainable prosperity.

The biggest problem facing Punjab's agriculture is the fast-depleting and degrading quality of its groundwater resources. Over the last two decades (2000-2019), the groundwater table in Punjab has depleted by 9.2 meters, the highest amongst all major states in India (see graph). Groundwater stress is the highest in Punjab, with 78 per cent of the assessment units being categorised as "over-exploited" and the remaining falling under "critical" (4 per cent), "semi-critical" (6.7 per cent), and "safe" (11.3 per cent) categories. Moreover, within Punjab, groundwater has depleted by 24.8 metres in districts like Sangrur and Barnala (see graph). This is nothing short of plundering groundwater and robbing the rights of future generations.

In addition to this depletion, is the increasing degradation of water quality. Fluoride and nitrate contamination is directly linked to excessive use of fertilisers. Intensive use of urea and other nitrogenbearing fertilisers leaves residual nitrates, which leach into the groundwater. Punjab also faces high uranium concentration in groundwater (CGWB, 2021), which is linked to anthropogenic factors leading to cancerous effects. There is the infamous "Cancer Express" that goes from Abohar to Bikaner. Nothing can be more serious than this. This trend must be arrested and reversed if we have any love and respect for our children and grandchildren. Interestingly, Mann comes from Sangrur, and reforms in this regard should start in his home district.

But how can we do that? Let us first understand the drivers behind this downward spiral. Punjab's success in the Green Revolution led to an explosion of tubewells during the 1970s and '80s. Then, in September 2001, the government an-



nounced free power for farmers. Paddy cultivation, which was already on the rise, became more entrenched with assured and open-ended procurement by the government at minimum support price (MSP). Massive subsidies for urea (almost 75 per cent of the cost) further lured the farmers to overuse it in a race to increase productivity. It is these subsidies on power, fertilisers, and open-ended procurement, at assured MSP. that made paddy more profitable compared to competing crops like maize and kharif pulses. Today, Punjab's famous cuisine of "makki ki roti and sarson ka saag" and "dal makhni" are not supported by the state's cropping pattern, which has become largely a paddy-wheat rotation. Punjab needs to get out of this for its prosperity and the sustainability of its agriculture. It is clear that the solution lies in moving

away from paddy to other remunerative crops that are less water-intensive. Today, paddy is grown on almost 3.1 million hectares, which needs to be cut to at least half. It cannot be done overnight. But Mann has five years to convert his dreams into reality. A five-year plan as a New Deal for farmers can be chalked out. Punjab has the highest irrigation cover (almost 99 per cent) of any state. It can move toward horticulture and other high-value crops with fertigation (drip irrigation with soluble fertilisers). This will immediately cut down water depletion and environmental degradation. But a horticulture revolution requires significant participation by the private sector in building efficient value chains from farm-

Punjab can target airlifting horti-produce for countries in the Persian Gulf. Punjab has a huge agri-surplus and it must look to market its produce beyond the government agencies. The MSP business has

The solution lies in moving away from paddy to other remunerative crops that are less water-intensive. Today, paddy is grown on almost 3.1 million hectares, which needs to be cut to at least half. Mann has five years to convert his dreams into reality. A five-year plan as a New Deal for farmers can be chalked out. Punjab has the highest irrigation cover (almost 99 per cent) of any state. It can move toward horticulture and other high-

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outlived its utility and needs revamping. New start-ups in agri-marketing must be invited and given support to market "Grown in Punjab" produce in metro centres and large cities, as well as export them to Europe, Gulf, and Central Asian countries. Horticulture requires a cold storage chain, reefer vans, air-conditioned outlets, along with agro-processing. This is a great investment opportunity.

Punjab's dairy is doing very well, with the highest yields. It needs to build on that with more value-added products such as Punjabi lassi, makhan and kulfi. Punjab can also emerge as a centre for buffalo meat export to Southeast Asian countries. The replacement of some paddy farms with dairy and fodder farms is water-efficient, too.

Basmati rice and wheat can continue with more value addition and branding. Pulses and oilseeds must be rewarded by extra incentives given directly to farmers to save groundwater, using less subsidised urea (as they are nitrogen-fixing), less power, and cutting down on methane and nitrous oxide emissions. Per hectare, direct benefit transfer for switching from paddy to pulses and oilseeds would be the way to go (not-MSP bound procurement by government agencies). This is like creating carbon credits and rewarding farmers for that through innovative policies and pilots. That would be the road to farmers' prosperity with sustainability.

The challenge for Mann now is to device policies and scale-up pilots, especially in central Punjab's hotspot districts, that can save groundwater and cut down emissions while making farmers more prosperous.

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Without a coup

Imran Khan's ouster as prime minister of Pakistan has a silver lining: Judiciary performed its role, and the army's hand in the matter was subtle



Kesava Menon

IMRAN KHAN, WHO ceased to be prime minister of Pakistan after losing a trust vote in the National Assembly, has not shed his anti-American affectations because he has few other viable political assets. What is puzzling is that so many should have fallen for his line that the United States administration was involved in a conspiracy to oust him from office.

When US officials desire to steer Pakistan in a particular direction, they do not need to deal with elected civilians. They deal with the men in uniform sitting in Rawalpindi. Politicians, even those possessing rabble-rousing abilities, can at best cause delay in the arrival when it comes to decisions on national security. However, in times such as the present, obstructionist tactics can have dangerous consequences. Given the context in which Imran Khan was kindling the hostility of a superpower, it is reasonable to think that the most formidable force against him was within Pakistan, not outside.

There is one great difference this time round in that the necessary political cleansing was carried through democratic, constitutional means. Pakistan's Supreme Court upheld the spirit of democracy by annulling a presidential decree dissolving the National Assembly and another order by the Deputy Speaker of the House by which a no-confidence motion against the government was invalidated. Imran Khan was judicially mandated to take a floor test. The ruling Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf resorted to all manner of delaying tactics when the revived House reconvened but was eventually defeated.

Khan could not have taken Pakistan out of the US orbit and into the Russian one no matter the degree of excitement he felt when meeting Vladimir Putin on the morning the 21st-century Ivan Konev drove his forces into Ukraine. Given the current closeness between Russia and China -- and Islamabad's multi-dimensional dependence on Beijing – there could not have been any wholehearted endorsement of US policy by Pakistan. But the Americans surely understand that. As they also know that with only about \$200-million trade between Pakistan and Russia, there is hardly anything the South Asian country can do to stiffen the sanctions regime.

To the US, Khan does not and never has posed the sort of threat that would have necessitated a regime-toppling effort. Within the country, he had become a loose cannon that could jeopardise the operations of the ship of state during a difficult passage through stormy waters. This is a phase in history when Pakistan, like India, has to manoeuvre with precision to safeguard its interests.

Can it be said that the conspiracy, if any, originated in Rawalpindi, not Washington? No one will perhaps ever know the truth. According to the broad trend of independent opinion from across the border, the crisis erupted at a tricky moment for the military. Antipathy towards Khan was increasingly being directed at the army as well for installing and keeping in office a grossly incompetent prime minister. On the other hand, disgust at the military's proclivity to grab power and make messes even messier had built up over the decades. The dam of respect that had held it back was about to be breached. The military, apparently, was not of a mind to mount a coup and invite more opprobrium.

Whatever be the truth about the army's active participation in anti-Imran operations, that is less relevant than the manner in which it handled the reverberations. Its moves before Khan's coup of April 3 and afterwards, have been surefooted. While maintaining an overall posture of rectitude, the military top-brass flashed signals at just the right moments to keep national policy and politics on the tracks it prefers.

Even as Khan was boasting about being the only politician who had dared to confront the US, Army Chief General Qamar Bajwa was to tell a security conference that Pakistan had an excellent relationship with the superpower and had every intention of maintaining it. Immediately after Khan declared that the National Security Council had endorsed his assertion that a letter from Washington provided irrefutable evidence of his conspiracy charge, Inter-Services Public Relations issued a communique that had no mention of this letter being discussed. Khan still claimed that he had the army's endorsement only for a top officer to deny it in a private briefing to the media.

The operations of this "guiding hand" certainly had political implications. Khan's whole case, legal and political, was that the no-confidence motion was unmaintainable because it was the product of a USbacked conspiracy and thus violative of the country's constitution. The "letter from Washington" was cited as evidence of this conspiracy. By rubbishing the letter and celebrating ties with the US, the army damaged this case severely.

That done, GHQ seemed content to let the judiciary perform its duties. A fivejudge bench seemed to be taking inordinately long to settle what many senior advocates in the country believed was an open and shut case. To be fair to their lordships, they seemed to have moved with due deliberation, giving all sides a hearing so that they would not themselves be later accused of mounting a judicial coup.

From the long-term perspective, the verdict might itself be only a little more momentous than the processes through which it was wrought. For the first time in Pakistan's history, the guardians (of the national interest and not the ideology on this occasion) seem to have done their job with a sense of responsibility and due seriousness. A dangerous megalomaniac had to be ousted from power and that outcome was achieved without the stench of direct intervention.

The writer is former editor of Mathrubhumi and was a correspondent in Pakistan from 1990-93



Politics of disinformation

fertilisers).

Current system of content moderation on social media is more of a PR exercise

Ruchi Gupta

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS have effectively supplanted traditional information networks in India. The dialectical relationship between online content, traditional media and political networks means that the messages propagated online effectively touch even those who are not yet online.

This ubiquity could have been a golden moment for India – democratising access to information, fostering community, increasing citizen participation and reducing the distance between ordinary people and decisionmakers. However, social media platforms have adopted design choices that have led to a proliferation and mainstreaming of misinformation while allowing themselves to be weaponised by powerful vested interests for political and commercial benefit. The consequent free flow of disinformation, hate and targeted intimidation has led to real-world harm and degradation of democracy in India: Mainstreamed anti-minority hate, polarised communities and sowed confusion have made it difficult to establish a shared foun-

Organised misinformation (disinformation) has a political and/or commercial agenda. However, even though there is growing recognition of the political motivations and impact of disinformation, the discourse in India has remained apolitical and episodic focused on individual pieces of content and events, and generalised outrage against big tech instead of locating it in the larger political context or structural design issues. The evolution of the global discourse on misinfor-

mation too has allowed itself to get mired in the details of content standards, enforcement, fact checking, takedowns, deplatforming, etc - a framework which lends itself to bitter partisan contest over individual pieces of content while allowing platforms to disingenuously conflate the discourse on moderating misinformation with safeguards for freedom of expression. However, these issues are adjunct to the real issue of disinformation and our upcoming report establishes that the current system of content moderation is more a public relations exercise for platforms than being geared to stop the spread of disinformation.

A meaningful framework to combat disinformation at scale must be built on the understanding that it is a political problem: The issue is as much about bad actors as individual pieces of content. Content distribution and moderation are interventions in the political process. There is thus a need for a comprehensive transparency law to enforce relevant disclosures by social media platforms. Moreover, content moderation and allied functions such as standard setting, factchecking and de-platforming must be embedded in the sovereign bipartisan political process if they are to have democratic legitimacy. If this is not to degrade into legal sanction for government censorship, any regulatory body must be grounded in democratic principles — its own and of platforms.

Given the political polarisation in our country (and most others), the constitution of such a regulator and its operational legitimacy is difficult. However, the failure of a polarised political ecosystem to come to a consensus is not a free pass for the platforms. Platforms are responsible for the speed and spread of distribution of disinformation and the design choices, which have made disinformation ubiquitous and indistinguishable from vetted information. It is thus the responsibility of the platforms to tamp down on the distribution of disinformation and their weaponisation. We argue that platforms are sentient about the users and content they are hosting and bear responsibility for their distribution choices. Moreover, just as any action against content is seen as an intervention in the political process, the artificial increase in distribution of content (amplification) too has political and commercial

We recommend three approaches to distribution that can be adopted by platforms: Constrain distribution to organic reach (chronological feed); take editorial responsibility for amplified content; or amplify only credible sources (irrespective of ideological affiliation). The current approach to misinformation that relies on fact-checking a small subset of content in a vast ocean of unreviewed content is inadequate for the task and needs to be supplemented by a review of con-

Finally, as the country with the largest youth population in the world, it is important that we actively think of how we want our youth to engage in our democratic processes and the role of social media platforms in it. There are three notable effects of social

media on our politics, which require deliberation.

First, social media has led to a dislocation of politics with people weighing in on abstractions online while being disengaged from their immediate surroundings. Second social media has led to a degradation of our political discourse where serious engagement has been supplanted by "hot takes" and memes. Third, it has obscured the providence of consequential interventions in our political discourse because of opacity in

Meaningful politics, especially in democracies, is rooted in local organisation, discussion and negotiation. However, the structure of social media has facilitated a perception of engagement without organisation, action without consequence. This wasn't and isn't inevitable - there are more thoughtful ways to structure platforms, which would help connect and root people in their own communities instead of isolating them locally while "connecting" them virtually.

Instead of moving towards more grounded communities, there is an acceleration towards greater virtuality through "metaverse". Social media cannot be wished away. But its structure and manner of use are choices we must make as a polity after deliberation instead of accepting as them fait accomplior simply being overtaken by developments along the way.

> Gupta is founder, of the Future of India Foundation

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Imran's Exit THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Imran Khan

goes, kicking & screaming' (IE, April 10). As anticipated, Pakistan PM Imran Khan was removed from office through a noconfidence vote. His ouster more than a year ahead of elections expected by next summer comes at a time of mounting economic challenges for the country. The nuclear-armed nation is in the midst of a \$6 billion loan programme from the IMF that has involved unpopular measures including increases in utilities prices. His promise to create a "Naya Pakistan", was dogged economic mismanagement as his government battled depleting foreign exchange reserves and double-digit inflation. Now, the whole world is watching to see that who will be next PM of an economically and administratively torn country and whether unlike all of his predecessors since 1947, he will be able to bring the nation, out of the clutches of extremists and army generals and succeeds.

Sanjay Chopra, Mohali

WORK TOGETHER THIS REFERS TO the report, 'If SC takes up all issues, what are LS, RS there for: CJI' (IE, April 8). Chief Justice of India NV Ramana must have made two pithy statements not in passing but in all seriousness as the SC must have felt the alleged dereliction of duty on the part of our elected representatives and the alleged unsavoury attitude of the government in some cases. In order to avoid such unedifying situations in the future,

all three wings need to have broadened outlook and open mind to see and agree on what is good for the country. Tarsem Singh, Mahilpur

HIGH-HANDED

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Look out,

look in' (April 9). That the government routinely uses central investigative agencies to settle scores against dissenters is unfortunately not a new development. Its suspicion of "foreign" interference is well known. However, the CBI's defiance of the Delhi court's order clearing Aakar Patel for travel abroad smacks of highhandedness and contempt for the judicial process. The message sent couldn't be clearer: Toe the line or else.

Ila Railkar, Mumbai

EC's ABDICATION

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'ECI to SC: No power to check parties, governments from promising freebies' (IE, April 10). The Election Commission is cleverly avoiding its responsibility of ensuring free and fair elections. The irrational offer of freebies certainly vitiates the sanctity of th election process. In one sense, it is also a crime. The offence attracts Section 420 of the Indian Penal Code because the political party concerned allured voters to cast votes in its favour knowing full well that freebies as promised shall not be given. The financially weak voters become the worst sufferers. How long shall the ECremain indifferent about this matter?

Arun Gupta, Kolkata

10 IDEA EXCHANGE NEWSMAKERS IN THE NEWSROOM

You have to be different from the person whom you are going to take on. If you are little Modis, then people will already reference Modi, who is in the stratosphere...telling them about his dictatorial tendencies won't hold

Vandita Mishra: You quote VS Naipaul on the art of non-seeing, something you have raged against. Fighting for lost causes seems to agree with you as the cover has a photograph of you and vour wife, you are smiling...Looking back, what are the moments that made you smile like this?

I don't have any particular story in my mind but I do remember the special bonds that I forged over time as a journalist. Similarly, in government, there were just one or two dramatic occasions. But what matters are bonds. I'm absolutely certain that if I were in need and I rang up any one of my friends with whom I have worked, they would go out of their way to help me.

Vandita Mishra: Considering all the big cases that you fought - the undertrials, Kamala, Bhagalpur blindings and Bofors — these could be grist for the mill of whataboutery. People could say that the Indira, Rajiv or VP Singh government, too, responded with obfuscation and saw conspiracy theories behind dissent. What's different about this Government?

The answer is the scale. Murder has always been going on but slaughter is a different dimension. Yes, there were lies on Bofors but today, you have to search for a truthful statement on everything, not just GDP figures. Similarly, electoral bonds are nothing but institutionalised corruption.

The second most visible differentiator is the fact that the BJP is working according to an ideology. And it is our great failing, including mine, to have not studied it. The RSS ideology, since Dr Hedgewar's time in the 1930s, is single-minded, defining Hindus as those who follow Hinduism, who subscribe to thousands of years of culture, who are purist and reject other influences.

The third difference is technology by which BJP cadres amplify what anyone says. Then somebody else says the same thing and it becomes the new normal. Sometimes, people don't work out the implications of a stray statement. For instance, while launching the hologram of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "Our nation is thousands of years old." If that be the case, then the question would automatically arise, how is Gandhiji the father of the nation' Now, this question was actually raised soon after Gandhi's assassination in 1948 but died down following charges of conspiracy against the RSS. Now it is being revived. This is very significant because Panditii (Jawaharlal Nehru) is not, I repeat, not the problem for this government. But Gandhiji is. So, after the erasure of Panditji, it will be the erasure of Gandhiji. Somebody might just say, how is Gandhi the father of the nation, efface him. Ours is a motherland, how can it have a father?

Ritu Sarin: As an editor, you've been a conscience keeper and activist. And in the Zail Singh episode, you seem like a participant in politics. Is it possible for editors to play this role now?

When I was working in The Indian Express, nobody recognised me as a journalist. When I was in government, nobody recognised me as a politician. But I did stand up for what I felt was wrong. I remember the time when Tarlochan Singh (then President Zail Singh's aide) had asked me whether the dismissal (of then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi by Zail Singh following their tension) would happen. And I had given all my reasons as to how it would be unconstitutional. Whether I was with the paper (The Indian Express) or not, I would still have rushed to Rashtrapati Bhavan the way I did. Gianiji, too, did not think that an editor had come though he must have felt that he (Shourie) had brought sneh (affection) and a message, that the earlier message had been rescinded. But other than that, he would just say, a Punjabi has come.

Ritu Sarin: How would you like people to remember you as, considering you joined the Government...and there is a bit of a defensiveness there?

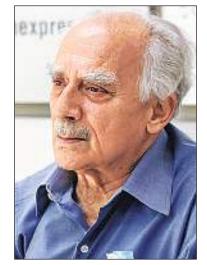
No defensiveness but I would be known only as Adit's father. I don't think I'm priding myself for it or anything but when Atal Bihari Vajpayee was PM, the personnel supervisor at the Parliament security gate exempted me, saying, "Shourie saab, your identity is not of a minister, we read your articles in college." It was an important lesson that we should not become our jobs and worry about the perks that go as the froth subsides. I was inspired by my father, who, at 75, taught himself painting. He was a one-man Common Cause and until 94, was as active as anybody else.

Vandita Mishra: These days the government can go straight to people using technologies and social media.

WHY ARUN SHOURIE

As editor of *The Indian* Express, Arun Shourie had taken on the Indira Gandhi government during the Emergency. In his latest book, The Commissioner for Lost Causes (Penguin), Shourie, who went on to serve as a Union minister in the Vajpayee Cabinet, documents his work as an editor that unsettled

governments, institutions and systems. Be it freeing 40,000 undertrials, uncovering the Bhagalpur blindings, nailing corruption lies and unmasking the establishment, he faced punishing consequences but never traded his integrity, one that has made him one of the few World Press Freedom Heroes of our time



No one knew Kejriwal in 2013 but Modi was studying him. He asked IT wizard Rajesh Jain to come to Delhi and study AAP's campaign methods. Modi recognised that AAP's door-to-door approach was worth studying

'Everybody can be instigated...people haven't shifted, the lid has been lifted'

Arun Shourie on his days at *The Indian Express*, what's changed since then, what's new about the current establishment, the media's challenges and the weakening of institutions. The session was moderated by Vandita Mishra, National Opinion Editor



Vandita Mishra, National Opinion Editor, in conversation with Arun Shourie at The Indian Express office Abhinav Saha

What are the media's challenges now?

We are not important to the government. So, the government should not be important to us in our writing also. The best stories in this newspaper have been done by field reporters or by getting documents out through RTI or otherwise. Those things are in spite of the government, not because

However, a few years from now, even the few freedoms we have for occasionally doing a story that's inconvenient to the government will not be there.

Therefore, we must find ways to disseminate news. We must now set up networked groups in which people collect information and disseminate it one at a time.

Coomi Kapoor: What would you say was more rewarding and impactful: journalism or politics?

Idon't know about the impact but both periods were interesting and exciting because of two individuals. It would be Ramnathii (Ramnath Goenka) for journalism and Vajpayeeji for politics. I liked whatever I was doing at that point of time. It's not one or the other. Both roles came to me by happenstance. I'll quote Ghalib here: Lai hayat aae qaza le chali chale/ apni khushi na aaye, na apni khushi chale (Came with life, will go with death).

Vandita Mishra: When you fought pitched battles with the government, the court would act as a friend of the Press. Now with institutional authority waning, how do you see the challenge?

The investigative institutions, the police, in fact all institutions are in a very bad way and the challenge is infinitely greater. Ramnathji would always say, "Nahin, abhi hathivar chhodne ki koi zaroorat nahin hai. court hai (there's no need to drop your weapon, the court is still around)!" Now, whether the court is there or not, one judge can speak in favour, the other may not.

As journalists, we can keep a hawk's eve on institutions, particularly the financial, regulatory institutions and even the RBI, regardless of the growth figures they give out. It's an absolute scandal. If you read the speech the late Arun Jaitley gave while introducing the Bankruptcy Bill, the resolution limit was 90 days. Yet cases are pending at the NCLT for years. Every reform has been proclaimed as great and nobody sees what's happening on the ground.

Vandita Mishra: You argue that in reportage or commentary, you should not be giving all sides of the story, you form a conclusion and give it to the reader. What about the middle ground in the time of polarisation?

This is one of the pills for laziness. Our job is to look at the facts and report them as we see them at that time. Maybe we will be wrong, we'll correct them later or somebody else will point out the facts. Let's take

the hijab controversy in Karnataka. You have a wonderful article of Faizan Mustafa and then you give a contrarian column on the other side. You are giving analytical pieces on different viewpoints. But as far as facts are concerned, there can be no mid-

Ritu Sarin: Did you struggle with confidentiality issues while writing this book? Did you debate whether discussions should be outed given the fact that Ramnathji is no more?

No, I did not struggle at all. I remember being criticised over my account of a lunch with the then Karnataka Chief Minister Gundu Rao. I had asked him, "What do you feel about Mrs Gandhi?" He said, "She can give me the keys and go to sleep." I wrote about what transpired but the then editor Nihal Singh decided not to publish it on grounds of privacy. So, I sent it to (MJ) Akbar and he published it in Sunday magazine. I sent our resident editor E Raghavan back to Gundu Rao, telling him to ask Rao not to contradict for I could have recorded that conversation. Gundu Rao did not contradict but said the revelation was wrong as the information was a matter of privacy. I am nobody's confidante. It may not be the right attitude and you should not have it, provided you don't mind losing friends. If the matter is of public concern, then your account is your little contribution, maybe just a comma in the writing of history.

Vandita Mishra: In the book, you quote Gandhiji as saying that the adage, yatha raja tatha praja (as is the king, so are the subjects), is just half the truth. It is also yatha praja tatha raja (as are the subjects, so is the king). Do you think that people have changed and are endorsing polarising politics?

People have not shifted but they have been instigated. For example, there was anti-Semitism all over Europe, below the surface, for 2,000 years. But when you $scratched\,it, almost\,every body\,participated$

saw how old animosities were fanned during the break-up of Czechoslovakia or among Trumpists. Then you have a mob and with state protection, there's no limit. Everybody can be instigated to beat up small, poor people in the name of any big cause. People haven't shifted but the lid has been lifted. Be it the *namaaz* row in Haryana or the hijab controversy in Karnataka, their echo reached UP where elections were due. This is part of the BJP's technique.

Shyamlal Yadav: The BJP is an electionwinning machine. Can a challenge come to it from outside or inside?

Not from the inside. It's no longer a party but an electoral machine. It has a sadhan resource) which the others don't have and that is the cadre of the RSS. The RSS is rationalising that its agenda is being carried out. Besides, the top leadership of the RSS is now just the mukhota (facade). The second-rung leadership and the cadres have all been coopted by Mr Modi and are now his army. The only possibility of a challenge is external, if other parties join forces.

Anant Goenka: Do you believe that the mainstream media is to blame for not addressing majoritarian insecurity? Would that be one of the reasons why the BJP strategy is working so well?

Yes. Nobody in the mainstream media or in the academic community has looked at the primary literature of the RSS. So that neglect of ours has certainly contributed to the current state of affairs. We are surprised by what is happening while they are correct in saying, "Hum jo kehte hain wohi karte hain (We do what we say)." But we were not listening.

Second, we did not pay attention to the people they have mobilised. For instance, we talk to ourselves in very small circles. But the RSS has been working since the 1940s to bring into its fold groups like the sadhus. They are influential in society but it never occurred to us to reach out to them and make sure that they do not become the instruments for things that are, let's say

Gandhiji is. So, after the

non-Hindutva. In our neglect, they have become easy prey for others.

Anant Goenka: For instance, the emotions of the Kashmiri Pandits and the way they have been brought out by one film. Do you think the mainstream media has ignored the issue?

newspapers, so I don't want to comment. But in this art of not-seeing, we don't want to look at what's happening. Kashmiri Pandits would have suffered from the same aversion to seeing the facts. Not that they were singled out.

Rakesh Sinha: What is the difference between the Opposition of a majority government like Rajiv Gandhi and the Opposition now?

I was interacting more with the government than with the Opposition. The selective bias was maybe because of the people I was meeting. Also, governments are so much larger in our mental space than the Opposition.

Still, I will say, it's not as if the country is in peril. Each of you (Opposition/regional leaders) as individuals are in peril. So at least for that reason, get together. Gulliver was brought down by Lilliputians. But that's not just going to be by stitching together. Each Opposition leader is a formidable figure in his/her state. Most leaders have a good organisation, reach; some of them have a reputation of doing good. But in the end, you have to be different from the person whom you are going to take on. If you are little Modis, then people will already reference Modi, who is a very big figure in the stratosphere. If the local ruler is as authoritarian or as oriented and if the government is as personality-oriented in that state, then to tell the voter about Modi's dictatorial tendencies won't hold. One has to be different.

Shubhra Gupta: How do you see polarisation playing out till the end? Is there a way where people with different ideologies can start having conversations?

The pattern is being set by people at the top that unless you are the sole of my foot, you are my enemy. This whole fanning of social media to abuse somebody is being done from the top. That is what is leading to polarisation. We should maintain our friendships, this politics is not that important. Why lose your friendship on that count? Nothing is going to change because of our opinions expressed to each other. So why make them so important in our lives? It's up to us to defeat the designs of the government which wants to polarise us.

The second factor is that we must not give currency to labels. This is a bad habit acquired from the Communists. You are rightist, I will not examine your facts. Now it has become generic to the entire society. Whether I am for or against the PM, please examine the facts.

Shyamal Majumdar: You talked about regulators and how they have been almost hollowed out. Many people say that the RBI has become the cheerleader of the government. Others say it is being pragmatic. Your views?

that people like Raghuram Rajan and Urjit Patel were removed or it was made difficult for them to continue shows the attempt to reduce the RBI to yet another instrument of power.

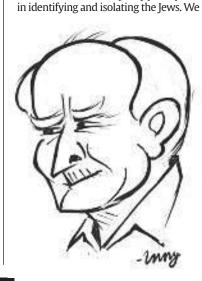
Narender Singh: Do you ever regret joining the BJP? Wasn't it in the making, whatever is happening today?

Not as long as Mr Vajpayee was there. Maybe it was my blindness but I was very focussed on him and the work that I was assigned. He had a way of dealing with contentious issues. I remember the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit in Kuala Lumpur, where I was the Minister accompanying Atalji. At a press conference, after which he was to meet Sri Lankan leaders, somebody asked him to comment on the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's (VHP's) call for a shila puja in Ayodhya. Atalji simply said, "Ayodhya walo se hum Dilli jakar milenge, abhi toh hum Lanka walo se milne ja rahe hain (I will address Ayodhya concerns in Delhi, now I have to meet the Lankans)."

Rakesh Sinha: How do you see Rahul Gandhi and the Congress? Is there an issue or has the BJP been successful in shrinking him?

Idon't know Rahul Gandhi but the thing is he has stood up for the right issues against the government. This is not what I expected when he came into public life. He may be restricting himself to social media and may not have a mass base but he has taken up issues of considerable importance, much more than regional leaders. Maybe he should be the spokesman of the party and not someone who is running it.

Modi is a 24x7 politician, always devoting time to organisational matters in the party and listening to partymen. Congressmen have complained they don't get appointments with the leadership. The problem with the Congress is not ideology or G 23, it is the fact that its cadre has disappeared. That is why Modi is concerned about AAP and not anybody else, because that party just has volunteers signing up. I remember I was in Ahmedabad in 2013 and no one knew Kejriwal. But Modi was studying him and he asked IT wizard Rajesh Jain to come to Delhi and study AAP's campaign methods. Modi recognised that AAP's door-to-door approach was worth studying, After Punjab, AAP may very well form the government in Himachal, it might be formidable in Haryana. And even if it gets 15 seats in Gujarat, it's a victory.



Panditji (Nehru) is not the problem for this government. But erasure of Panditji, it will be the erasure of Gandhiji. Somebody might just say, efface him

THE WORLD

PROBE INTO BIG PVT TAXIDERMY MUSEUM

Spain's Civil Guard says it is investigating a businessman in the Valencia region who owned a private taxidermy collection with more than 1,000 stuffed animals, including over 400 from protected species and at least one specimen of a North African oryx, already extinct. The collection would fetch \$31.5 million on the black market, the Civil Guard said on Sunday.



Scott Morrison

AUSTRALIA PM Morrison calls May 21 election

AUSTRALIA'S PRIME minister has called for a May 21 election that will be fought on issues including Chinese economic coercion, climate change and the Covid-19 pandemic. Prime Minister Scott Morrison on Sunday advised Governor-General David Hurley as representative of Australia's head of state, Queen Elizabeth II, to set the election date. Morrison's conservative coalition is seeking a fourth three-year term. The date is the latest available to him. He urged voters to stick with a government that delivered one of the lowest Covid death tolls of any major economy rather than risk the Opposition Labour Party.

Shanghai boosts supplies, 11,000 **Covid patients** discharged

SHANGHAI ON Sunday discharged over 11,000 recovered Covid-19 patients and health authorities emphasised that they must be allowed to return home despite the lockdown that has severely restricted movement in China's largest city. City authorities also said they have secured daily supplies for residents from online platforms, according to newspaper Global Times, following complaints about deliveries of food and other basic necessities as the lockdown enters its third

USA

Two killed in shooting at nightclub

GUNFIRE AT a Cedar Rapids, Iowa, nightclub left two people dead and 10 wounded early on Sunday, authorities said. Police said in a news release that the happened shooting shortly before 1.30 am at the Taboo Nightclub and Lounge, and that officers who were patrolling downtown were able to respond quickly. The police didn't say whether there was one or more suspected shooters, what might have led to the shooting or whether they had arrested anyone, but they said there was no lingering threat to public. AP

CRISIS IN SRI LANKA

Tamil alliance says ready to back Opp in no-confidence vote against Gotabaya

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

COLOMBO, APRIL 10

SRI LANKA'S main Tamil party, the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), said on Sunday that it is ready to support the Opposition in moving a no-confidence motion against the government of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and is prepared to impeach the embattled leader.

Sri Lanka's main Opposition party, the Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) on Friday announced that it will move a noconfidence motion against the



Pressure has been mounting on Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa amid the economic crisis

government of Gotabaya as it has failed to take steps to address the concerns of the public amid the economic crisis

Opposition leader Sajith Premadasa also called for the executive presidency to be abolished, saying power should be divided between the executive, legislature and judiciary.

"We will be compelled to support the main Opposition party's moves to bring in a vote of no confidence and an impeachment against the President. The government must understand the public demand for the Rajapaksa family to quit," TNA spokesperson M A Sumanthiran said.

The TNA delegation had met Gotabaya last month and asked him to keep the basics of the come up with a political solution that gives them more power through a new constitution.

The TNA wants full devolution under the Amendment as central governments have over the years shown reluctance to meet the demand for police and land powers to the provinces.

The 13th Amendment provides for devolution of power to the Tamil community. India has been pressing Sri Lanka to implement the Amendment, which was brought in after the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement of 1987.

eration against the nationalist Le

Pen, who has seen a popularity

boost after tapping into voter

Pen by a landslide to become

France's youngest modern pres-

ident. That win for the former

banker – now 44 – was seen as

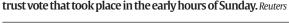
a victory against populist, na-

tionalist politics, coming in the

In 2017, Macron trounced Le

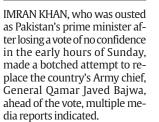
anger over rising inflation.

Security was tightened outside Pakistan's Parliament amid the



SAJJAD HUSSAIN

ISLAMABAD, APRIL 10



BBC Urdu reported that a helicopter carrying "two uninvited guests" landed at Khan's residence on Saturday night, and the two were escorted by Army soldiers to the interior of the palatial building. The two met alone for 45 minutes with Khan. The meeting was not held in a cordial atmosphere, the report said.

The Prime Minister had issued orders an hour ago to remove one of the high officials who came to meet him. So the uninvited arrival of these guests was unexpected for the Prime Minister," according to the report.

It further said that Khan was expecting that the helicopter would bring his "newly appointed official", instead of the two that it actually brought.

The report also said that the attempted effort for a "change" fication for the appointment.

Imran Khan

did not issue the necessary noti-

The BBC did not identify the uninvited guests", but it is believed that they were likely to have been General Bajwa and ISI chief Lt Gen Nadeem Ahmed Anjum. The Army rejected the report

and termed it a "typical propaganda" story. It said in a statement that the article was "totally baseless and a pack of lies". Khan has also said there was

no truth to reports that he was trying to remove the Army chief. The Express Tribune newspa-

per reported that an emergency petition was filed in the Islamabad High Court on Saturday night seeking to restrain Khan from denotifying Gen Bajwa as Army chief. According to the petition, it was filed to "uphold the... mandatory constitutional provision with regard to identification of the term" of the Army chief.

Khan apparently lost support of the powerful Army after he refused to endorse the appointment of the ISI chief last year. He even-

Shehbaz better for ties with Beijing: China state media

Beijing: Chinese state media on Sunday sounded upbeat about the prospect of Shehbaz Sharif becoming the new prime minister of Pakistan after the ouster of Imran Khan, saying ties between China and Pakistan "could be better than under Khan".

A new Pakistan government will be formed most likely under Shehbaz, the younger brother of three-time former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, after Parliament reconvenes on Monday to vote for a new PM.

"The potential successor of Khan is from the Sharif family, which has been promoting China-Pakistan ties for a long time, and cooperation between the two countries could be even better than under Khan," an article in the state-run Global Times said. PTI

Welcome back to purana Pakistan: Bilawal Bhutto

Islamabad: "We welcome (you) back to the purana Pakistan," top Opposition leader Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said on Sunday, after the ouster of Imran Khan as Pakistan prime minister.

Khan had came to power in 2018 with promises to create a 'Naya Pakistan'.

"I would like to congratulate the whole nation and this House, as for the first time in the history of the country, a no-confidence motion has succeeded and we have made history," Bilawal, chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Party, said. Today, on April 10, 2022, we welcome [you] back to the purana

Before ouster, Imran tried to sack Pak **Army chief: reports**



trust vote that took place in the early hours of Sunday. Reuters

FRENCH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Macron, far-right rival Le Pen set for runoff

In an area damaged by Russian shelling in Kharkiv, Ukraine,

US commits to arms

in eastern Ukraine

supply as battle looms

China delivers

missiles to Serbia

Belgrade: Russian ally

Serbia took the delivery of

a sophisticated Chinese

anti-aircraft system in a

veiled operation this week-

end, amid Western con-

cerns that an arms buildup

in the Balkans at the time of

the war in Ukraine could

threaten the fragile peace in

the region. Media and mili-

tary experts said Sunday that

six Chinese Air Force Y-20

transport planes landed at

Belgrade's civilian airport

early Saturday, reportedly

carrying HQ-22 surface-to-

air missile systems for the

defence help, and to punish

Moscow with tough sanctions.

Jake Sullivan told ABC News:

"We're going to get Ukraine the

weapons it needs to beat back

the Russians to stop them from

REUTERS

taking more cities and towns."

US national security advises

Serbian military.

JOHN LEICESTER & THOMAS ADAMSON PARIS, APRIL 10

FRENCH POLLING agency projections show President Emmanuel Macron and farright rival Marine Le Pen leading in the first round of France's presidential election.

If borne out by official results, the two will advance to a presidential runoff on April 24 with strong echoes of their last face-

West Bank on

bloodshed;

JEFFREY HELLER

officials said.

JERUSALEM, APRIL 10

edge after more

Israeli forces kill

two Palestinians

ISRAELI FORCES killed two

Palestinian women on Sunday

after one ran towards troops and

the other stabbed a soldier in

separate incidents in the occu-

pied West Bank, Israeli security

string of deadly attacks in Israel.

There have also been Israeli raids

in and around the West Bank city

of Jenin, a militant stronghold,

against what Prime Minister

Naftali Bennett has called "a new

No weapon was found on the

body of the woman shot in

Bethlehem after she ignored sol-

diers' calls and warning fire to

stop approaching, the Israeli mil-

itary said, adding that it had

woman armed with a knife was

shot dead after she slightly

wounded a paramilitary border

policeman in Hebron, outside

the Tomb of the Patriarchs,

which Muslims call al-Ibrahimi

mosque, Israeli security offi-

Ministry confirmed both deaths.

high alert following attacks by

three members of Israel's Arab

minority and two Palestinians

from the West Bank that have

killed 14 people in Israel since

many of them armed, have

been killed by Israeli forces

January,

Palestinians have reported a

rise in violence by Israeli set-

tlers in the West Bank.

More than 20 Palestinians,

while

The Palestinian Health

Israeli forces have been on

cials said.

late March.

In the second incident, a

launched an investigation.

wave of terrorism".

The bloodshed follows a



Macron greets supporters after voting, in Le Touquet, France, on Sunday. AP

off in the 2017 election. The proiections show Macron with a

on Sunday. Reuters

ELIZABETH PIPER &

KYIV, BUZOVA, APRIL 10

itself against Russia.

RUSSIAN FORCES continued

shelling targets in eastern Ukraine

on Sunday, as Washington said it

would meet Kyiv's request for

more military aid by providing

"the weapons it needs" to defend

major cities since it launched its

invasion on Feb 24, but Ukraine

says it has been gathering its

forces in the east for a major as-

Russian forces fired rockets

into Ukraine's Luhansk and

Dnipropetrovsk regions on

Sunday, officials said, Missiles

completely destroyed the airport

in the city of Dnipro, said Valentyn

Reznichenko, governor of the

central Dnipropetrovsk region.

said that high-precision missiles

had destroyed the headquarters

of Ukraine's Dnipro battalion in

Zelenskyy has appealed to

Western powers to provide more

Since Russia invaded,

the town of Zvonetsky.

Russia's defence ministry

sault and urged people to flee.

Russia has failed to take any

comfortable first-round lead Sunday of 27-29% support, ahead of Le Pen, who is expected to capture 23-24% of the vote. But the second round is likely

The election's result will im-

pact Europe's direction as it tried to contain Russia and the havoc wreaked by Russian President Vladimir Putin's war on Ukraine. The April 24 runoff appears set to pit the centrist president seeking to modernise the economy and strengthen European coop-

wake of Donald Trump's election to the White House and Britain's vote to leave the European Union, both in 2016. Nepal bans

SHIRISH B PRADHAN

exchange

NEPAL'S CENTRAL bank has an-

Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB), the country's central bank, issued this directive last week after a high-level meeting here consisting of officials from Nepal's commercial banks.

toms that there may be some kind of crisis in the economy, mainly because of growing imports. essary," NRB spokesperson Since July 2021, Nepal has

seen a decline in forex reserves due to the surging imports, declining inflows of remittance and meagre earnings from tourism and exports.

reserves had decreased 17 per cent to \$9.75 billion from \$11.75 billion in mid-July 2021, according to central bank figures. The forex reserves are now

only enough to sustain the import of goods and services for 6.7 months, below the central bank's target for at least seven months.

balance of payment deficit, Nepal's Finance Minister Janardhan Sharma assured that the Himalayan nation is not headed in the direction of Sri Lanka.

import of luxury

nounced a ban on the import of vehicles and other luxury items, citing liquidity crunch and declining foreign exchange reserves, despite government assurances that the economy will not go into a

By February 2022, the

items as foreign reserves decline

KATHMANDU. APRIL 10

tailspin like Sri Lanka.

"We have been seeing symp-

Therefore, we have discussed halting the imports of those items which are not immediately nec-Gunakhar Bhatta said.

Himalayan country's gross forex

However, despite the high

tually relented, but it purportedly failed as the Defence Ministry soured his ties with the army. PTI Frontrunner for next Pak PM

SYED RAZA HASSAN & GIBRAN NAIYYAR **PESHIMAM**

ISLAMABAD, APRIL 10

SHEHBAZ SHARIF, the person most likely to be Pakistan's next prime minister, is little known outside his home country but has a reputation domestically as an effective administrator more than as a politician.

The younger brother of three-time PM Nawaz Sharif, Shehbaz, 70, led a successful bid by the Opposition in Parliament to topple Imran Khan in a noconfidence vote early on Sunday that Khan's supporters tried for hours to block.

Analysts say Shehbaz, unlike Nawaz, enjoys amicable relations with Pakistan's military.

Pakistan's generals have directly intervened to topple civilian governments three times, and no PM has finished a full five-year term since the country's independence.



Shehbaz Sharif

Khan's ouster was a chance to make a fresh start, Shehbaz, the joint Opposition candidate to replace Khan, told Parliament soon after the vote. "A new dawn has started... this alliance will rebuild Pakistan," he said.

Shehbaz is best known for his

direct, "can-do" administrative style, which was on display when, as chief minister of Puniab province, he worked closely with China on Beijing-funded projects.

He also said in an interview last week that good relations with the United States were critical for Pakistan, in stark contrast to Khan's recently antagonistic

relationship with Washington. There are still several proce-

Report: UK inquiry launched into

come Pakistan's 23rd PM, but the Opposition has consistently identified him as its sole candidate.

If he does take on the role, analysts say, Sharif will not act with full independence as he will have to work on a collective agenda with the others Opposition parties and his brother, Nawaz, who has been in London for the past two years.

As chief minister of Punjab, Pakistan's most populous province. Shehbaz Sharif planned and executed a number of ambitious infrastructure projects, including Pakistan's first modern mass transport system in Lahore.

According to local media, the outgoing Chinese consul general wrote to Sharif last year praising his "Punjab Speed" execution of projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor initiative. The diplomat also said Sharif and his party would be friends of China in government or in opposition.

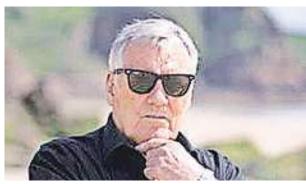
The Eagle Has Landed author Jack Higgins dies at 92

ASSOCIATED PRESS LONDON, APRIL 10

BRITISH AUTHOR Jack Higgins, who wrote The Eagle Has Landed and other bestselling thrillers and espionage novels, has died. He was 92.

 $Publisher\, Harper Collins\, said$ that Higgins died at his home on the English Channel island of Jersey surrounded by his family.

Born Henry Patterson in in Newcastle, England, in July 1929, Higgins served in the military before studying sociology at the London School of Economics. He became a teacher in the northern city of Leeds and a writer in his spare time, with novels that sold modestly starting in the late 1950s.



Henry Patterson wrote under the pseudonym Jack Higgins

That changed with the 1975 publication of The Eagle Has Landed, about a fictional World War II plot to kidnap British Minister Winston

Churchill. In a 2010 interview with The Guardian, Higgins recounted a pivotal call from his

accountant. "He asked me what I wanted

to get out of my writing," Higgins said. "I replied that I wasn't really sure, before adding as a joke it would be nice to make a million by the time I retired. He then said: 'Well you're a bloody fool. Because you've just earned that much this week. So, what are you going to do about it?"

He was advised to leave England because of 1970s taxation rates and settled with his family on Jersey. The Eagle Has Landed became

more popular after the 1976 film adaptation was released. Caine, Donald Sutherland and Robert Duvall were among the stars of the eponymously named movie that was a box office success.

In a statement, HarperCollins executive Charlie Redmayne said Higgins' death marked "the end of an era." "I've been a fan of Jack

Higgins for longer than I can re-

member. He was a classic thriller writer: instinctive, tough, relentless," he said. "The Eagle Has Landed and his other Liam Devlin books, his later Sean Dillon series, and so

many others were and remain

absolutely unputdownable." Patterson wrote nearly 80 books, most under the pseudonym of Jack Higgins. Other Higgins titles included The Eagle Has Flown, Angel of Death, Day of Reckoning, and A Darker Place.

According to his publisher's website, the novels have sold more than 250 million copies and been translated into dozens of languages.

Akshata Murty's tax affairs leak PTI&REUTERS

LONDON, APRIL 10

AN INTERNAL inquiry has been launched into how the tax affairs of Akshata Murty, daughter of Infosys co-founder Narayana Murthy, were leaked to a newspaper, according to UK media reports on Sunday.

The investigation will look into how the information about the non-domicile status of the wife of Rishi Sunak, the UK's Chancellor of the Exchequer, was passed on to The Independent newspaper, which first published the story earlier this week.

According to *The Sunday* Times, Sunak's team believes an Opposition Labour Party sup-



husband Rishi Sunak

porting government official dubbed "red throat" is responsible for the leak.

"There's going to be a full Cabinet Office and HM Treasury investigation into who had that information and if anyone has requested that information," the paper quoted an unnamed senior government official as saying. national, was "non-domiciled" in the UK for tax purposes meant she was not legally bound to pay taxes on her overseas earnings. This led to allegations of hypocrisy from the Opposition, pointing to recent tax rises im-

The revelation that the

Sunak's wife, who is an Indian

nance minister. On Friday, Akshata announced that she would pay tax in the UK on all her income in order to avoid the issue being a continued "distraction" for her husband.

posed by the Indian-origin fi-

The Sunday Times also re-

ported that Sunak considered whether he should resign after the revelation about his wife's taxes caused a controversy. PTI

New Delhi: The combined market valuation of four of the 10 most valued firms tumbled Rs 1,05,848.14 crore last week, with TCS and Infosys emerging the biggest laggards. The market valuation of RIL eroded Rs 25,503.68 crore and that of Bajaj Finance dipped Rs 2,999.9 crore. PTI

INVEST RS 7,707 CRORE IN DOMESTIC EQUITIES

A first in 6 months: Mkt fall a chance to buy dips, FPIs turn buyers in Apr so far

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU MUMBAI, APRIL 10

AFTER MASSIVE net outflows to the tune of Rs 1.48 lakh crore from equities in the last six months from October 2021 to March 2022, foreign portfolio investors have turned net buyers in April so far by infusing Rs 7,707 crore in domestic equities (including secondary and IPO markets).

FPIs also put in Rs 1,403 crore in the debt markets during the period under review, after pulling out a net Rs 8,705 crore in the last two months (February and March), according to NSDL data. With this, total FPI investment is Rs 8,276 crore in April so far.

Foreign investors withdrew a net Rs 1.4 lakh crore from equities in the entire FY22. Despite the FPI pullout, the NSE Nifty rose 19 per cent in the same period, on the back of support from domestic in-



The BSE, Mumbai. Foreign investors withdrew net ₹1.4 lakh crore from equities in the entire FY22. File

stitutions and retail investors. Analysts said FPIs have now factored in the US Federal Reserve move to tighten the monetary policy. The US central bank has hiked interest rates and indicated withdrawal of liquidity from the system to fight inflation. FPI outflows were largely on the back of anticipation of rate hike by the US Federal Reserve, and later, due to the deteriorating geopolitical environment following Russia's invasion of **Ukraine**

However, analysts said it would still be slightly premature to call it a change in the FPI trend and it will be prudent to watch how the scenario unfolds over

Recalibration exercise

> THE INFLOW indicates that foreign investors are almost done with the recalibration exercise of their portfolios owing to the current scenario. Also, the recent correction in the equity markets have opened investment opportunities.

the next few weeks or months to get more clarity.

The inflow indicates that foreign investors are almost done with the recalibration exercise of their portfolios owing to the current scenario. Also, the recent correction in the equity markets have opened investment opportunities, which FPIs

try point, he added.

FPIs had pulled out over Rs 50,000 crore in the month of March. As a result, forex reserves recorded the highest ever fall for the week ended April 1, sliding by \$11.173 billion to \$606.475 billion as the currency came under pressure due to geopolitical developments

The steep fall in the foreign exchange reserves was because of a decline in the core currency assets, which declined by \$10.727 billion to \$539.727 billion. Typically, the RBI intervenes in the market to reduce volatility in the currency market by selling from its reserves kitty.

Shrikant Chouhan, head-equity research (retail), Kotak Securities, said FPIs flows are expected to remain volatile in the near term given the headwinds in terms of elevated crude prices and inflation, among others

EV SALES had stood at fiscal, it noted. (FADA), electric passenger vehicle retail sales stood at 17,802 during the last fiscal, up over three-fold from 4,984 units in FY21

TATA MOTORS led the segment with retails of 15,198 units and a market share of 85.37 per cent in the vertical

Electric two-wheeler retail sales last fiscal stood at 2,31,338 units, a jump of over five-fold from 41,046 units in

Source: FADA/PTI

1,68,300 units in the 2019-20

2020-21

EV retail sales zoom over three-folds in FY22: FADA

Electric vehicle (EV) retail sales in the country witnessed an over three-fold jump last fiscal with two-wheeler offtake leading the segment, according to FADA data



4,29,217 units in 2021-22, a rise of threefold from 1,34,821 units in the financial year 2020-21, according to the Federation of Automobile Dealers

Total EV retails reached

Musk's agenda:

shareholder, Saturday suggested a raft of changes to the social media giant's Twitter Blue premium subscription service, including slashing its price, banning advertising and giving an option to pay in the cryptocurrency dogecoin.

Musk, who disclosed a 9.2 per

was offered a seat on its board.

INTERVIEW WITH RACHEL KYTE

'India should be a hugely investable proposition for the rest of the world'

Rachel Kyte

Your views on India's

early commitment on

renewables and the

phasing down coal?

approach at Glasgow, the

subsequent intervention on

perhaps in green hydrogen or

a managed transition with huge

social implications, and that India

should get help with that. So the

South Africa deal is important...

Then as a community, the focus

can be on how to replicate South

Africa in other coal dependent

economies (the US, the UK, France,

Germany and the European Union

have pledged upwards of 8.5 bil-

lion dollars to help South Africa fi-

nance a quicker transition from

coal). So there's a coalition being

built to support Indonesia and

then Vietnam. India is a little dif-

ferent. India doesn't need an inter-

national coalition... but India wants

the support to come alongside.

And that's what John Kerry and

There are multiple paradoxes

everybody has got to do.

And India should be a hugely

vhatever.

'Cost of not doing anything is way higher'

ACCORDING TO RACHEL KYTE, Dean of The Fletcher School at Tufts University and a member of the UN Secretary-General's highlevel advisory group on climate action, the answer to the question of what the world achieved at the 2021 Glasgow climate talks, and what happens from here on, depends in large part on where you live. While going into the Glasgow summit. countries' commitments had put the world on a trajectory of warming about 2.9°C this century, well beyond the 1.5 °C goal, India's announcement in Glasgow on reaching net zero emissions by 2070 and generating 50 per cent of its energy from renewables by 2030, has helped lower that trajectory. She tells ANIL SASI while that may not be enough, as evidenced by the bleak outlook in the latest IPCC report, countries are likely to return for the next round of climate talks in November 2022 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, with stronger commitments to put the world on track for 1.5°C, she adds. Edited excerpts:

The latest IPCC report projects that without immediate and deep emissions reductions across all sectors, limiting global warming to 1.5°C is beyond reach. How do you read the predictions?

Well, we've been warned ... and still we put our hand in the fire. The cost of not doing anything is way higher ... But the problem is, we've been told that a lot of the solutions can be deployed, that they can be deployed more cheaply than we think they can. That to not deploy them would be more expensive. And we still don't do anything. And, and yes, it's difficult. I mean, these are massive transitions. But that's what we have to focus on ... But I think the other thing that's evident is that we left it for so late...

This is the first time that carbon removal has been so centrally discussed. So that means changing our relationship with nature, because it means paying farmers to keep the carbon in the soil, it means stopping deforestation, reforesting landscapes, and all of the technologies on (carbon) capture... So, at the moment, those are very expensive. They'll get cheaper, but we've left it to the point now, where we have to use all technical expertise and a lot of cash to pull this stuff out of the atmosphere because we're having a political debate. About whether or not, we go to renewables quickly enough. And it's a political debate, because the opposition to that is note from ordinary people. The opposition to that is the oil and gas lobby. So these people are in the system, and are allowed this kind of stranglehold on political decision making, and it's going to cost us therefore more than it

instance, the wind, solar and wind have gotten cheaper. electric vehicles are being pushed, but all of the minerals that are needed for these transitions are expensive and I think what was really very their exploitation degrades the strong about Prime Minister environment. Be it copper, (Narendra) Modi's announcement lithium, nickel, cobalt or

in Glasgow was the 50% of energy silicon. And the war in Ukraine coming through renewables by has complicated supply chains 2030. Because that is really ambifurther. Also, India's EV push is tious... On the debate over the not the same as in Norway phased out or phase down (of where 99per cent of the coal), that I understood very much electricity is hydro? to be the China and India perspec-So first of all, the solar supply tive: look, we've made our comchains are highly dependent on mitments. How we get there is our one region in China. The war in the business. So you're not going to mi-Russian invasion of Ukraine has cromanage us. I mean, that's what also brought all the way to the top I saw... Now, of course, India of the agenda, people's nervouswants a lot of investment coming ness around sovereignty of supply chains, right and having supply sein as well. And it needs that investcurity. That supply chain is also disment in order to make sure that the grid is smart enough to absorb rupted. Because of Covid, and beall the renewables to speed up the cause of events in China, and now transition and to help with the sothe war. So just at the time when cial disruption of the transition and we want to ramp up, we've realto help establish scale and speed ized that we've got this highly de-

investable proposition for the rest effects of inflation on the renewof the world. Because I think we've able energy market as well. got to make sure that India meets We're just starting to see its green targets. And then we've prices of solar PV and wind go up got to make sure that India beagain, for the first time in 10 years comes a green powerhouse... like this. Then you've got the com-But I think there's this general modity supply chains into the understanding of the country like electric mobility revolution, And then I think, again, there's a secu-India, you can't get out of coal tomorrow, right? And that has to be rity of supply issue, the domi-

pendent supply chain with prob-

lems added, which is entirely

disruptive. You're beginning to see

nance of China. Also, the very vulnerable and weak governance regimes in some of the places that we depend upon (for supplies). Yeah, so of course, the answer to all of this is innovation. So in innovating, you need less lithium or whatever. And you're obviously recycling the circular economy, the extent to which you can recycle. As we discover a strategic dependency, then, you know, how do you get around that? So. I don't think it's easy at all. And the frustrating thing from the point of view of the scientists is that they've been warning us for 30 years. We didn't do anything. So now we've got to get our act together really quickly to get out of

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FULL INTERVIEW ON

SECTOR WATCH **ENERGY**

Many states face power outage

DEEPAJAINANI, VIKASSRIVASTAVA& SAJANCKUMAR LUCKNOW/MUMBAI/ CHENNAI, APRIL 10

A PEAKING summer, coupled with an industrial revival, has led to a huge power shortage in the country. Even as the government claims it is pulling out all the stops to avoid a nationwide power crisis, worsening of fuel stocks at thermal stations is likely to cripple electricity supplies in the weeks ahead.

Electricity shortage rose to 80 million units (MUs) on April 7, close to an all-time high of 82 MU seen on October 12, 2021, and up from a daily average of just 19.7 MU in March. Supply shortage during peak hours was 6,124 mega watt (MW) on April 7, even higher than the recent high of 5,591 MW (October 12)

The states that have already started witnessing temporary power outages in the last few days are Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh. Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, the most industrialised states, are trying to hard to avoid load shedding by letting the state-run utilities buy expensive power from gencos under shortterm arrangements and even from the spot market.

Stating that the current sit-

BRIEFLY —

FM, PSB meet

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to meet heads of public sector banks (PSBs) on

April 23 to review perform-

ance of lenders and progress

made by them on various

schemes launched by the

government for revival of the

economy battered by Covid.

New Delhi: India's gold im-

ports, which have a bearing

on the country's current ac-

count deficit (CAD), rose by

33.34 per cent to \$46.14 bil-

lion during the 2021-22 fis-

cal on account of higher de-

mand, as per official data.

Discoms' dues

New Delhi: COAI has said

spectrum pricing should be

kept conducive to market

Gold imports

Electricity shortage rose to 80 million units (MUs) on Apr 7, close to an all-time high of 82 MU seen on October 12, 2021

uation is a "fallout of a high prices of imported coal and gas, which increased the pressure on domestic coal suppliers" rather than any laxity on the domestic coal front or on the part of railways in transporting the fuel, Union Power Secretary Alok Kumar told FE that the current level of coal stocks at power plants (24.5 million tonne) would suffice for 12 days, at the current level of consumption. He added that it was 'almost impossible' to change the logistics design in short term, but listed out the steps taken by the government to avert a major power crisis.

"Domestic coal production and transportation by the railways are being increased to the maximum level possible in the short term. We have also advised states and power companies owned by the Centre like NTPC and DVC to import coal for blending, and this has started happening. Our utilities will also import around 9 million tonne of coal by June, without putting any additional pressure on transportation of domestic coal by the railways." FE

LENDER REFUTES ALL ALLEGATIONS

Kotak Mahindra Bank staffer arrested over 'cheating' allegations

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE ΜΙΙΜΒΔΙ ΔΡΡΙΙ 10

THE LONAVALA City Police on Saturday arrested a bank employee for allegedly being involved in a case of cheating and forgery while giving a loan to a Lonavalabased hotelier.

The accused has been identified as Alankar Khare, a loan officer of Kotak Mahindra Bank.

The arrest came a day after an FIR was registered against seven officials of of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd including Uday Kotak, Valy Fernandes, Samprat Kamat, Amber Darbari, Pramod Krupal, Alankar Khare and Abhijeet Magar.

Kotak Mahindra Bank has, however, refuted all the allegations, terming them to be false. "A borrower at our Lonavala Branch has filed an FIR naming Kotak Mahindra Bank officials at the

Lonavala Police Station wherein he has made false allegations in the context of his borrowing transactions. The bank acted in accordance with the prevailing law and processes at all times. We are cooperating with the local authorities," said Rohit Rao, spokesperson, Kotak Mahindra Group.

According to the the FIR was registered based on a complaint filed by hotelier Ashok Purohit. who alleged that the accused cheated him by using documents with forged signature. "We have arrested one of the staffers and are probing if there was any forgery, as alleged...," said Pune Rural Superintendent of Police Abhinav Deshmukh. Meanwhile another official said Uday Kotak's name has been added in the FIR even as so far no direct involvement of Kotak

has come into the probe. The transactions allegedly took place between 2014 and 2020.

Shaking up Twitter 'Blue' subscription

REUTERS BENGALURU, APRIL 10

ELON MUSK, Twitter Inc's biggest

cent stake in Twitter just days ago,

Twitter Blue, launched last June, is its first subscription service and offers "exclusive access to premium features" on a monthly subscription basis, Twitter says. In a Twitter post, he suggested that users who sign up for Twitter Blue should pay significantly less than the current \$2.99 a month, and should get an authentication checkmark as well as an option to pay in local currency.

Unified Payment Interface Recently Crossed \$1-trillion mark in Transaction Values for FY22

UPI spreads, but with banking access limited, friendships foster

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK NEW DELHI, APRIL 10

SUBHASH SINGH, a vegetable seller in New Delhi's Lajpat Nagar, is not a user of the Unified Payment Interface (UPI), yet a chunk of his daily earnings happen on the platform. He has been parking his cart in front of a grocery store for about two years now, and in the process, has befriended the store owner who accepts UPI payments on his behalf.

As the coronavirus pandemic hit India, Singh says, more people have started paying digitally through UPI. That was when he realised that he had to find a way to accept these payments. But, there was a problem: Singh does not have the digital literacy to operate a smartphone because of which he has never purchased a smartphone and more importantly, he does not have a bank account two key requisites to join the UPI ecosystem right now. While the Reserve Bank of India has said that it will launch a version of UPI called UPI123Pay for feature phones without internet access, having a bank account is still necessary to use the service. "My family depends on my daily earnings. Whatever I earn today, we end up finishing a large part of it today and we don't have any savings. So there has never been a need to open a bank account," Singh said when asked why he did not have a bank account. Singh is not alone. According to a 2018 World Bank report, around 190 million Indians did not have a bank account. Realising Singh's problems,

Raiendra Chaudharv, who owns the grocery store right behind where Singh parks his vegetable cart in Lajpat Nagar's H block, offered to take UPI payments on his behalf. He claims that there is nothing in it for him, and he is helping Singh because the two of them have become friends. "I saw he did not have any equipment to use UPI and because his cart was



Subhash Singh (left), a vegetable seller, with Rajendra Chaudhary, a grocery store owner who helps him with UPI payments. Soumyarendra Barik

parked in front of my store all the time, I offered to help him after he asked me about UPI when several

of his customers insisted on paying online," Chaudhary said. UPI recently crossed the \$1-

trillion mark in transaction values for the financial year 2021-22 after the payments system crossed 5 billion transactions in a month for the first time in March, marking a major landmark for the flagship payments architecture which has gained significant momentum in adaptation in the last few years.

The payments system, developed and managed by the National Payments Corporation of India. commands a lion's share in the volume of total retail payments made in the country. According to a Macquarie Securities report, in FY22, around 60 per cent of the volume of India's retail payments were done through UPI. The platform is also expected to have played a key role in increasing the adoption of digital payments in the country. The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) digital payments index (DPI) for September 2021 stood at 304.06 compared to 270.59 in March 2021.

UPI is used by more than 500

centage of the population remains to be onboarded to the platform, it is fueling unlikely friendships on the streets - between merchants who currently use UPI and those who don't. Singh says that on average, he earns around Rs 600 every day, and more than half of that - close to Rs 400 - comes to him via UPI. At the end of each day, he sits down with Chaudhary, the store owner, who maintains a log book of the payments he receives on UPI on behalf of Singh and gives him the amount for each day in

million users, but even as a per-

Chaudhary close friends, he says. "I was even invited to his daughter's wedding last year. That is what happens when you can trust someone with your money, and in my case, a majority of my earnings sit with Rajendra (Chaudhary) throughout the day,' Singh told The Indian Express.

cash. This has made Singh and

Rinku Yadav, a hawker in Lajpat Nagar's Central Market who sells

socks and handkerchiefs, has befriended Saurav Aggarwal, a competitor who sells the same items, for accepting UPI payments on behalf of him. He says that despite the two of them being rivals on the street, Aggarwal has agreed to help him with digital payments given the sheer number of people who prefer paying through UPI. Like Singh, the vegetable vendor, Yadav too doesn't own a smartphone or have a bank account. "A majority of my customers prefer paying through UPI, it has been like that for over two years now. I don't think people are carrying a lot of cash these days even when they visit markets," Yadav told The Indian Express. "Even though Saurav

(Aggarwal) sells the same things as me, he recognises that if I don't accept digital payments, I will not make much money in a day which is why he takes payments on my behalf. We may be rivals on the ground, but UPI has made us good friends," he added.

the wall. PTI







PCB's four-nation plan doesn't find favour with ICC

DEVENDRA PANDEY MUMBAI, APRIL 10

THE PAKISTAN Cricket Board's (PCB) proposal to have an annual four-nation tournament which features Pakistan, India. Australia and England did not find favour with a majority of the International Cricket Council (ICC) members, it is learnt.

PCB's chief Ramiz Raja had proposed the idea during the ICC board meeting in Dubai on Sunday and gave a detailed plan.

The Indian Express understands that a few boards did support the idea but majority were not in favour of it.

"He (Raja) spoke about at length but the majority felt it is important for boards to focus more on bilateral commitment. The Asian Cricket Council (ACC) members felt that going ahead they will only have the Asia Cup as a multi-team event in Asia and did not back the four-nation tournament," a member, who attended the ICC meet said.

At the same time, other boards who didn't feature in the proposal didn't like PCB's idea of going ahead with the tournament without them. Also, it was difficult to find space in the packed calendar.

"At the same time the Future Tours Programme is too tight, it's hard to get in a new tournament at this stage for sure," the

In an interaction with this paper before the ICC tournament, Raja had stated that he was taking this proposal forward as an ICC Board member and not as a Pakistan Cricket

"It's not Us versus Them, it's Us versus Us. The last great concept was the T20 World Cup, which was held in 2007. So nothing new has come since that 2007 event, and here's an opportunity. This thing happens in rugby, so we have a precedent. I'm just hoping that we look at this concept as a cricketing concept and not as a political concept," Raja had said.

India versus Pakistan bilateral cricket has come to a stop after India's stand to not play until terror attacks are stopped on Indian territory. However, India does play Pakistan in ICC events and multilateral championships around the world.PCB chairman, Raja later in the day tweeted, "Great discussion regarding 4 Nations series today at the International Cricket Council meet. As a concept it was welcomed and debated upon and seen as promoting the interest of the game. Fingers crossed. More when I am back at the office tomorrow."

International Cricket Council have left to its members to take the decision whether to have women Test matches or not.

A team like India doesn't have a women's Test match calendar as yet sadly. However, they have played Pink-ball Tests. In its press release, ICC informed that it has granted ODI status to a number of Associate members.



Ramiz Raja had proposed the idea during the ICC board meeting in Dubai on Sunday FILE

Great discussion regarding 4 Nations series today at the ICC meet. As a concept it was welcomed and debated upon and seen as promoting the interest of the game. (Fingers crossed emoji) More when I am back at the office tomorrow.

RAMIZ RAJA

PCB CHIEF, ON TWITTER

"Following the recent decision to expand the ICC Women's Championship to 10 teams, the ICC Board approved a recommendation that One Day Internationals status be extended to a number of Associate Member women's teams to enable them to progress to global qualifying events based on ODI rankings," the International Cricket Council said in its press release.The International Cricket Council Board meeting agreed with the recommendation from the International Cricket Council Men's Cricket Committee that more neutral match officials should be utilised as travel restrictions are lifted while building on the success of the use of home umpires.

In another decision, South Africa was confirmed as the host of the inaugural ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup 2023, to be staged in January next year as a 16-team, 41match event.

Shah in committee

PTI adds: Board of Control for Cricket in India secretary Jay Shah is one of the new inductees in the International Cricket Council cricket committee with former Sri Lankan captain Mahela Jayawardene being reappointed as former player. New Zealand chief coach Gary Stead, International Cricket Council Elite Panel umpire Joel Wilson and Marylebone Cricket Committee representative Jamie Cox are also part of the panel.

Heartbreak, but future bright

India lose 0-3 to Netherlands in the semifinals of Junior Women's World Cup

MIHIR VASAVDA

APRIL 10

IF THE purpose of the Junior World Cup is to provide a peek into the future, then there are plenty of reasons for the Indians to get ex-

The under-21 side lost to The Netherlands 3-0 in the semifinals on Sunday, but the scoreline does not tell the entire story. For three-quarters of the match, India looked their technically-superior opponents in the eye, didn't give them respect any more than what was needed and in the opening 15 minutes, even outplayed them. The tears streaming down the faces of the Indian players, and the relieved look on the Dutch faces after the full time provided a more accurate account of

Heading into the tournament, The Netherlands, who've won the most number of titles (three) were the odds-on favourites to lift the trophy once again. They displayed that authority on field, swatting aside every opponent they had faced so much so that their goalkeepers barely had anything to do throughout the group stage - heading into this match, the Netherlands had gone four hours without conceding.

It would have been understandable if India would've felt slightly intimidated by Netherlands' overwhelming supremacy but the batch of '22 knows only one way to play - without any fear. That's how they earlier defeated Germany, who hammered England 8-0 in the second semifinal

And so, right from push back, they took the game to their opponents. Inside the opening 30 seconds itself, captain Salima Tete managed to create the first goal-scoring opportunity, firing a ball towards Mumtaz Khan who sliced it over the crossbar.

The Dutch had barely settled into the match and India created another glorious chance. Salima and Mumtaz combined again, minutes after the first attempt, but this time, Mumtaz's shot hit the goal post. India went on to win three penalty corners in the opening exchanges.

India were causing the Netherlands more problems in the opening 15 minutes than they had faced in the entire tournament. Eric Wonink's side did most things right - had more possession, better chances, and won But they just couldn't find the back of the

net. Almost always, big teams will make you pay if the chances aren't converted. It's a lesson the under-21s learned the hard way. For, it did not take a lot for the Dutch to show their

18-pass goal by the Dutch

In the 12th minute, a Dutch defender picked up the ball near her 'D' and played it square to a teammate a couple of yards away.

India barely saw the ball in the second half and as a consequence, could neither create an opportunity for a field goal nor win any penalty corner.

It looked like a harmless pass but within seconds, it turned into something really danger-

They went back and forth at first, moved from one flank to another as the ball exchanged sticks with precision and speed.

The Indian players were chasing shadows and before they knew it, a one-two near the 'D' from Luna Fokke to Noor Omrani sliced open the defence. Omrani played a through ball towards

Tessa Beetsma, who expertly slotted it bevond Bichu Kharibam. For all their dominance. India were the first to concede following this brilliant 18-pass move. The Indian players, however, did not let

their shoulders drop. Upfront, Sharmila Devi weaved her way past the Dutch defenders, spraying passes to the forwards. Lalremsiami and Tete provided the thrust in the attacking third, where Beauty

Dungdung and Sangeeta were a constant threat, Ishika Chaudhary and Priyanka made sure the backline did not lose its shape. India showed enough resilience to keep

the scoreline within their reach going into the final quarter but as the minutes were ticking by, especially in the third quarter, there was an increasing drop in their intensity. That's where - during the third and fourth periods - India, as Wonink described,

India barely saw the ball in the second

half and as a consequence, could neither create an opportunity for a field goal nor win any penalty corner.

In the final 15 minutes, as they tried to press forward in desperation, they left their defence vulnerable and the Netherlands were too clinical to let the opportunity slip by and settled the match with two quick

Coaches often argue that results in tournaments like these, which are designed to develop players, are secondary. The performances, although, do give an indication of what the future could hold. In that sense, the Netherlands – who have now scored 46 goals in the Junior World Cup and conceded 0 look on course to extending their dominance at the senior level. India, a well-oiled unit, will hope the re-

silience shown by the players in this tournament will continue to reflect in the senior side, given more than half-a-dozen players have already made their international de-All's not lost yet, however. On Tuesday,

India will take on England in the bronze medal playoff. It's a repeat of the 2013 Junior World Cup third-place match. Back then, India secured a first-ever podium finish, a performance that ushered in a new era for women's hockey in India.

Wonink will hope his team will carry for-

ward that legacy.

Ferrari's Leclerc claims thumping pole-to-flag win

REUTERS

MELBOURNE, APRIL 10

FERRARI'S Charles Leclerc claimed his second win of the Formula One season with a thumping, pole-to-flag victory at the Australian Grand Prix on Sunday as Red Bull's world champion Max Verstappen suffered "deja vu" with another retirement.

Leclerc's car was dominant on the upgraded Albert Park circuit as the Monagesque sealed his fourth career win more than 20 seconds ahead of Red Bull's runnerup Sergio Perez. Third-placed George Russell grabbed his second podium and first for Mercedes in an encouraging day for the struggling constructors' champions. "What a race and what pace," said a thrilled Leclerc on the team radio, having finished more than 20 seconds ahead of Perez in the 58-lap race. "The car was incredible today, well done guys.'

Winner of the season-opener in Bahrain, 24-year-old Leclerc has now built a 34-point lead over Russell to emerge as early favourite for the drivers' championship. Ferrari's celebrations were tempered by Carlos Sainz crashing out shortly after the start, while four-times world champion Sebastian Vettel of Aston Martin crashed his car on his return after missing the opening races due to

Verstappen was second behind Leclerc when his RB18 car suffered a reliability problem and rolled to a halt during his 39th lap with smoke billowing.

"I smell some weird fluid," said the Dutchman before coming to a stop at turn two. Yet he would have had little hope of reeling in Leclerc. "I knew I could not fight Charles so there was no point to try and put pressure on him," Verstappen told Sky.

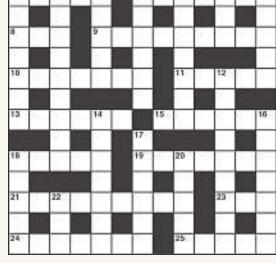
DRIVER STANDINGS



Leclerc won his second race after the season-opener in Bahrain.

Rar	nk Driver (Team)	Points
1.	C. Leclerc (Ferrari)	71
2.	G. Russell (Mercedes)	37
3.	C. Sainz Jr. (Ferrari)	33
4.	S. Pérez (Red Bull)	30
5.	L. Hamilton (Mercedes)	28

CROSSWORD 4711



ACROSS

out(9)

- 1 It enables one to turn one's hand to many things (5)
- 4 North America's largest meat producer(7)
- 8 Either way she's very timid (3) 9 Drawn wine ready to be put
- 10 Sort of thinking of belonging to the side (7)
- 11 Not all the number may be
- beret?(6) 18 A girl to go out with(5)

- 23 Danny takes her to heart
- 24 Shrink from any last solution (7) 25 They may run out in time (5)

- 13 File an account in it it's easy
- 15 Discount for the purchaser of a
- 19 Given up to the faithful
- 21 Somehow pulverise something

JUMBLED WORDS

BCHEE

CHMAS

DOWN 1 and 5 Down: In its turn it

- brings success or riches (5.2.7)2 I'd upset a client just the same
- 3 Arranged a trip to see an
- animal(5)
- 4 Steal away by night (6) See 1 Down
- Unlimited choice? (3) Precedence of command
- 12 A main line express? (4,5) 14 Constant quality (7)
- 16 Fairytale ones should be happy 17 A tenor is currently helpless
- 18 Ray is out in the country
- 20 New verse goes in a new direction (5)
- 22 In shape and size one is very like another (3)

Solutions Crossword 4710: Across: 1 Allegation, 8 Pecan, 9 Quartet, 10 Termini, 11 India, 12 Agency, 14 Relief, 17 Reign, 19 Patella, 21 Sitters, 22 Giant, 23 Wide screen. Down: 2 Lucerne, 3 Ennui, 4 Acquit, 5 Imagine, 6 Noted, 7 At half-mast, 8 Puts across, 13 Contend, 15 Ill fame, 16 Spasms, 18 In tow, 20 Tiger

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

ACOUNT

NEURBM

Some men can live up to their loftiest ideals without ever going higher than a

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis









CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson







MARVIN by Tom Armstrong

MARVIN, YOU OF ALL PEOPLE

SHOULD KNOW HOW IT FEELS TO HAVE PEOPLE MAKE ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT YOU!



WHEN A PLATE OF



Difficulty Level 4s 1 7 6 3 2 5 9 4 8 To solve a Sudoku puzzle,

Difficulty Level 1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy;

Instructions

nine boxes.

SUDOKU

every digit from 1 to 9

must appear in each of the

each of the nine horizontal

nine vertical columns, in

rows and in each of the

3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s =

					9	3		
İ	2	8						7
Ī			2	1	3		4	
		3		6		8		
	4		9	5	8			
3						2	5	
		6	8					
,		4						

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4800 3 2 4 7 8 9 6 5 1 8 9 5 6 4 1 8 1 6 3 5 7 2 6 5 8 9 1 4 7 2 3 7 1 2 8 3 6 5 6 1 4 9 3 4 3 7 2 5 8 1 6 9 2 8 9 1 6 7 4 3 5

DAY TODAY

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20) The scope for agreement today is extensive. Yet vou may look upon

differences of opinion as helpful developments which are bound to lead to the clarification of difficult and unresolved issues. Feelings can get in the way of harmonious solutions, so stick to the facts.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

Γhere's an optimistic mood abroad, but you're still facing a series of misjudgements and miscalculations. You may look

back on this week's minor blunders and laugh but, at the time, they may not be so funny. At least, other people probably won't think so.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21) Mercury, a planet with a special place in your horoscope, is the star of the week, forming and reforming a series of intricate patterns with a whole sequence of planets. Therefore, you must expect

sharp changes of mood and

alterations in your plans.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23) You may have to backtrack on a number of domestic arrangements over the coming week. At times you will imagine that control over your personal affairs is slipping from your hands, a delusion resulting from Mercury's mischievous motion. You're being warned to start exerting

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23) Most of you will experience some misunderstanding or other this week.

more control.

which is all the more reason to be straight about your intentions and clear about vour arrangements. Relations at work will be passionate, so avoid falling out with those who feel equally strongly.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
Financial questions will loom even larger this week than last. Today's

indications look decidedly optimistic and you may be tempted to rush into rash commitments. However, by tomorrow the picture will start to look very different indeed, perhaps because reality

BY PETER VIDAL

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23) A serious set of

relationships from Mercury to various major planets is going to force you to change your mind. Some consolation will be offered by the fact that many of your friends and colleagues will themselves be undecided, perhaps because

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)



or encounter. One word of

a close eye on your cash. SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22) You could be

warning for the week is to keep



arrangements or your genuine feelings. When they eventually find out the real situation, they may have cause to complain, and you might be forced to

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
Professional plans may come unstuck, although this could work to vour advantage. If you are given extra space to think again, you will be able to make sure that next time around your

interests are given a higher priority. One thing to be said in your favour is that you learn from your mistakes. AQUARIUS (Jan 21- Feb 19)

Your high principles

are your greatest strength. Do question your own beliefs, but please don't let other people undermine you or persuade you to lower your standards. The underlying pressures at the moment are

very uncertain, but they do

indicate that your interests

could be best served by being

utterly selfless. PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20) Your romantic



major trip to a distant location. Or perhaps you're awaiting news of a loved one far away. At least, this is an ideal moment to build bridges and mend

basement, - Theodore Roosevelt men can live up to their loftiest ideals without ever going higher than a SOLUTION: BEECH, CHASM, TOUCAN, NUMBER

– Briefly ——

Man City, Liverpool share spoils

Manchester: Manchester City remained one point clear of Liverpool at the top of the Premier League standings after the pair cancelled each other out in a pulsating 2-2 draw at the Etihad Stadium on Sunday. The clash lived up to its blockbuster billing right from the off as City took lead twice, through Kevin De Bruyne (5') and Gabriel Jesus (36') but Liverpool came back both times with goals from Diogo Jota (13') and Sadio Mane (46'). City moved on to 74 points, one ahead of their title rivals, after having both played 31 games.

Madrid win, Atletico lose in La Liga

Barcelona: Real Madrid consolidated its already commanding lead at the top of the Spanish league with a 2-0 win over Getafe, ahead of a week in which it hopes to finish off Chelsea in the Champions League quarterfinals. Casemiro put Madrid ahead in the 38th minute with his first goal of the season. Lucas Vázquez added a second goal against toothless Getafe in the 68th on Saturday. Madrid restored its lead to 12 points over second-place Sevilla, with Barcelona 15 points back having played two games fewer than Madrid. Atlético Madrid lost 1-0 at Mallorca as Diego Simeone's side stumbled again after its defeat at Manchester City. Atlético will now have to regroup before it hosts City on Wednesday needing to overturn a 1-0 first-leg loss to Pep Guardiola's side to reach the Champions League's final four.

Tamil Nadu crowned national champions

Chennai: Tamil Nadu defeated defending champion Punjab 87-69 in the final to win the men's title in the 71st Senior National Basketball Championship here on Sunday. The formidable Indian Railways team won the women's title, beating Telangana 131-82 in convincing fashion, riding on Poonam Chaturvedi's 26 points. In the men's summit clash, Tamil Nadu pulled ahead after a slow start when Punjab kept pace and never looked back. At half-time, the host had widened the lead to 17 with a 50-33 score line. A Aravind with 26 points and M Arvind Kumar (21) were in fine nick for the home team as they stamped their authority against their arch-rival.

India-England hockey matches cancelled

Bhubaneswar: The Indian women hockey team's two FIH Pro League matches against England, which were earlier postponed due to COVID-related issues in the English side, have been cancelled, handing the Savita-led side the top position in the standings. The two matches were initially scheduled for April 2 and 3 at the Kalinga Staium here but postponed due to a high number of COVID-19 cases and injuries in the England team. The Indian team has now been awarded six points -- three each for a match -- for the two can-

PTI, REUTERS, AP

Thinking out of the box

Ashwin retires out, a masterstroke move in RR's three-run win over LSG that takes them to helm

SYNOPSIS: Marcus Stoinis threatened to do a Shimron Hetmyer on RR but debutant Kuldeep Sen held firm in the final over to deliver a narrow win. The talking point, though, would remain Ashwin's retired out

ABHISHEK PUROHIT

SHIMRON HETMYER revived a sluggish Raiasthan Royals innings with late hitting; Trent Boult, and later Yuzvendra Chahal, all but sealed the victory for RR before Marcus Stoinis took Lucknow Super Giants to the brink with a last-gasp counterattack.

Ashwin, a trendsetter?

With ten deliveries to go in the RR innings, RAshwin, on 28 from 23 deliveries, walked off the field and continued onto the Wankhede dressing room steps. No. 7 Riyan Parag took his place; he faced four deliveries and scored eight, including one six.

Ashwin was sent in at No 6 after RR had been reduced to 67 for 4 in the tenth over. RR allrounder Jimmy Neesham, who wasn't playing this game, told the on-air commentators during the RR innings that the plan was for Ashwin and Shimron Hetmyer to knock the ball around for a few overs, since there were several left, and for Parag to then come in and hit a few big ones. There was no mention of retiring anyone out.

It was Ashwin, in fact, who had kickstarted the RR counterattack, when he lofted and pulled off-spinner K Gowtham for consecutive sixes in the 16th over. But those remained the only boundaries he was able to hit. In the 19th over bowled by Avesh Khan, Ashwin took a single out to the sweeper and began to walk back to the pavilion.

It is incredible that it took almost two decades of T20 for a batsman to retire himself out amid high stakes in the world's richest cricket league. With every delivery carrying that much more weightage considering there are only 120 of them in an innings, you'd have thought the number crunchers would have made a convincing case long ago for stuck batsmen to strike themselves out. Of course, it is easier said than done, for it can easily open you to ridicule should the move not come off, at the cost of a wicket. Besides, there is that bit about a professional batsman being asked to sacrifice himself in what is already essentially a one-ball game for him.

Law 25.4 on 'Batters retiring' allows a batsman to retire at any time when the ball is dead, upon informing the reason to the umpires. If he is not retiring due to "illness, injury or any other unavoidable cause", he can resume his innings only with the consent of the fielding captain. If he does not resume his innings, he will be recorded as hav-

This was only the fourth such case of a atsman getting dismissed thus in T20s. The first, fittingly as well as surprisingly, was Shahid Afridi for the Pakistanis against Northamptonshire in 2010, but that came in a tour match after Lala had had his fill, having bashed 42 off 14. The other two instances occurred in 2019, in a game between Bhutan and Maldives, and in a Bangladesh Premier League match. It is also fitting that it is Ashwin, never shy of suggestions and innovations to drive the game forward, who has become the first to retire out in the IPL. He has already helped in getting the act of the bowler running out the non-striker to no longer be deemed unfair play. That may not have started a trend of bowlers rushing to run non-strikers out, but this latest act of retiring himself may well be one whose time



Rajasthan Royals' R Ashwin walked off after two balls of the 19th over, having scored 28 runs off 23 balls. Sportzpics for IPL

EMOTIONAL ROLLERCOASTER

Hot heads, calm minds and everything in between at the game

A-wish for Avesh gets granted, Jos like that

Avesh Khan has a default first ball full-length, at the stumps, swinging



in-whatever the format or standard of the game. He once explained the logic to this paper: "The first ball is often my fastest ball, and if I keep that at stumps, there is a great chance that the batsman could

miss the ball and I could hit the stumps. I always stick to that.' So he screamed in and bowled a fullpelt full-length ball around Jos Buttler's off-stump. The Englishman, stuck in a dot-ball pit, attempted an ungainly half-slap, half-slog at the

ball. He was beaten for pace and mar-

ginal inward movement that hammered his middle-stump. Khan was ecstatic-his trusted method has earned him another wicket. And he blew kisses into the Mumbai night.

Sheepish Sanju gone to a full toss

A sin more cardinal in cricket than bowling a thigh-high full toss is per-



haps getting out to a full-toss. As did **Sanju** Samson, when he tried to flick a full-toss on the knee roll and completely missed it. The ball that slipped out of Holder's palm,

dipped a trifle as it reached him (beaten on the dip off a mediumpacer, how embarrassing that could e), and Sanju just wafted the air. The ball struck him so adjacent that he did not even linger on for a review. Perhaps wondering how he contrived to perish to a full-toss, he even dropped his bat on the ground without realising when walking back. Maybe he premeditated; maybe his eyes lit up; maybe he tried to hit harder than usual. Whatever be the reason, Sanju walked back, defeated by a harmless little full toss.

Boult, not quite from the blue

It's a nightmare first ball for a righthanded batsman when encountering a left-arm seamer the full ball that nips back late. Wasim



ter at that. Trent Boult is not too far behind either—as he had illustrated throughout his career and again showed on Sunday night. The ball began its deathly inward swerve from outside the off-stump and then bent a bit more back into KL Rahul to shatter his stumps. All this while Rahul knew the path the ball would take, yet he was helpless. He stood momentarily perplexed-turned back to see his stumps akimbo and walked back like a man who felt he had been wronged. But it has been a ball that has nailed him several times in the past. In all fairness, there is little a fresh-at-the-crease batsman could prepare to avert the danger when the in-swinger is as inch-perfect as the Boult one was. That's why it's the worst nightmare for a righthanded batsman.

Akram was an unsurpassable mas-

playing for Australia in Lahore, Marcus Stoinis caused some late momentum-shifting too. Coming in as low as No 8, at 101 for 6 in the 16th over, Stoinis belted an unbeaten 38 off 17, with four sixes. He mowed Prasidh Krishna for 19 in the penultimate over, creaming straight sixes to reduce the equation to 15 off the last over. That came to debutant seamer Kuldeep Sen, who did really well to keep Stoinis quiet with three successive dots, before two closing boundaries reduced the margin of defeat to just

BRIEF SCORES: Rajasthan Royals 165/6 in 20 overs (Hetmyer 59 not out; Gowtham 2/30) bt Lucknow Super Giants 162/8 in 20 overs (de Kock 39, Stoinis 38 not out; Chahal

Delhi's human capital clicks, overpower KKR

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY

IRRESPECTIVE OF the ground size, 215/5 posted by Delhi Capitals was an imposing total. And Kolkata Knight Riders eventually fell to scoreboard pressure. Shreyas Iyer was threatening to take the game away from DC. Even after his dismissal, KKR had Andre Russell and Pat Cummins. But it was Kuldeep Yadav's bright evening at Brabourne, who returned with 4/35. Both Khaleel Ahmed (3/25) and Shardul Thakur (2/30) supported him well. KKR were all out for 171 in 19.4 overs.

Kuldeep is back

Not many moons ago, while playing for KKR, Kuldeep Yadav cried on the field after a Moeen Ali batting assault. Things went down-hill for the chinaman bowler after that. A knee injury that needed surgery to fix didn't help matters. This season, he lost out on a BCCI central contract even. This IPL has been witnessing a stirring fightback from the 27-year-old. Today's game against KKR was his best. The impact spell he bowled secured victory for DC. Iyer's wicket was the finest of them all. The KKR captain was going great guns. Iyer had just hit a six off Kuldeep to raise his fifty. The bowler responded with a googly, varied his flight and pulled the length back a little. The batsmen came down the track, missed the ball and was stumped. Iyer's wicket changed the game. But Kuldeep wasn't finished yet. He dismissed Cummins, Sunil Narine and Umesh Yadav in one over, slamming the door shut on KKR.

A study in contrast

Prithvi Shaw opens for DC in the IPL, Ajinkya Rahane does it for KKR. The two batsmen provided a study in 'opening' contrasts.

Shaw so far has failed to replicate his talent in international cricket, his fitness being one of the reasons. In the IPL, however, where he is mentally unfettered, Shaw can be majestic on his day. His batting at CCI oozed class.

The first ball of the match, from Yadav to Shaw, went for a four. Four balls later, Yadav strayed down the leg and the batsmen tickled it to the fine leg boundary. The start set the tone for DC's innings. Shaw punished Yadav in his next over also, later pulled Cummins for a six and welcomed Venkatesh Iyer with a six and four, as he reached a 20-ball half-century. And $although \, Varun \, Chakravarthy \, castled \, him \, soon,$ his innings set the platform for a 200-plus total.

Rahane, meanwhile, was bought by KKR at his base price of Rs 1 crore and so far, he hasn't lived up to the challenge. As KKR began their chase, Mustafizur Rahman hit him on the front pad, with the on-field umpire adjudging him leg-before. DRS saved him, but Rahane was given out leg-before next ball as well. There was an inside edge though and Ultra-edge spotted it. Rishabh Pant decided not to review when Rahane had nicked one behind the stumps.

Shardul, too, had a confident LWB shout against Rahane before he put the latter out of his misery, through a wonderful high catch.

Mystery unravelled

Narine and Varun, the two KKR spinners, thrive on their mystery. Shaw, Warner and Pant unravelled it, using the sweep shot to brilliant effect. When Varun tossed one up outside off, Warner slog-swept it over the deep midwicket boundary. Narine bowled faster and flatter, and Warner reverse-lapped it over short third man for a four. Shaw, too, swept Narine to the backward square leg boundary. Pant was even more innovative. A conventional sweep sent a Varun delivery over the deep mid-wicket fence before he reverse-swept the bowler past short third man for another four.

BRIEF SCORES: DC 215/5 in 20 overs (Shaw 51, Warner 61; Narine 2/21) lost to KKR 171 all out in 19.4 overs (Iyer 54; Kuldeep 4/35, Khaleel 3/25) by 44 runs

After Ashwin exited, Hetmyer went on to demonstrate how quickly momentum can switch sides in this format. Heading into the last three overs of the RR innings, Hetymer was on 21 off 25, and RR on 115 for 4. Hetmyer took 38 off his final 11 balls. He went up against West Indies team-mate Jason Holder, and won that battle. During the break, he'd say he knew what Holder was up to. The tall allrounder served up on-pace full deliveries, and Hetmyer walloped them into the stands. Bowling in friendly mid-120s, Holder's offerings were easy to take apart. He tried going wider but Hetmyer, dropped on 14 by Krunal Pandya at long-on off Gowtham, reached out and hit Holder over the straighter boundary.

Having conceded 50 in the final three, LSG were to be now stunned by Trent Boult's lethal swing. He went round the wicket first ball to KL Rahul, and that was all he needed. It curled in like Shaheen Afridi's massive in-duckers had in the 2021 T20 World Cup, and uprooted the stumps past Rahul's attempted clip. Indicating it was a clear plan to Rahul, Boult went back to over the wicket to the incoming batsman, Gowtham, as LSG tried some pinch-hitting innovation of their own. Big swing, same result, this time leg-before. Prasidh Krishna took out Holder in the fourth with a surprise short ball after beating him with fuller, swinging ones.

Stoinis stunner

In his first match this IPL five days after

three runs.

In Pant's footsteps, aggressive and nonchalant Rawat blossoms in the IPL dred, 134 off 183 against Madhya Pradesh.

PRATYUSH RAJ NEW DELHI, APRIL 10

THE PATH Rishabh Pant has traced, Anuj Rawat has retraced. Like Pant, he left the quaint hills of Ramnagar, a Mofussil town in Nainital in Uttarakhand, and reached Delhi with his mother to fulfil his cricketing dream. Like the Delhi Capitals captain, the lefthanded wicket-keeper batsman relishes hitting big and expending his vocal energy be-

hind the stumps. But Rawat's tale has just begun—and it would not be a surprise if his story adds more colourful chapters to it. He has already registered a couple of first-class hundreds, but the announcement of talent came at the IPL stage, when he rattled out a power-laden 66 off 47 balls for RCB against Mumbai Indians, flaying some of the fiercest bowlers around including the nastiest of them all, Jasprit Bumrah.

As with Pant, and so many others, the journey began in the backyard of the Rawat household. He began playing with his father, Virender and elder Prashant. "My father used to play cricket when he was young. But he never got any support from his family. He was the first one who spotted the talent in Anuj, and took him to Satish Pokhriyal, a cricket coach in Ramanagar. Anuj must have

been six or seven back then," Anuj's elder brother Prashant Rawat tells The Indian Express about the early steps.

Virender was a cricket tragic. "My father would never miss a match; he was so passionate about cricket. It was the same with Anuj and me. At our home, there used to be a festive atmosphere if India were playing any match," says Prashant.

After a few years, Satish Pokhriyal advised Anuj's father that if he wanted his son to play professional cricket, he should take him to New Delhi. Exactly eleven years ago, Asha Rawat, along with her sons Prashant and Anuj, boarded the train to New Delhi. The Rawats then rented a two-room flat in Uttam Nagar, closer to Raj Kumar Sharma's West Delhi Cricket Academy.

"I had completed my Class XIIth boards. I was anyway moving to Delhi, and Anuj also accompanied me. My mother stayed with us for six months, and then she moved back. We decided to stay at Uttam Nagar because it was closer to Anuj's cricket academy, while my college was in Noida," said Prashant, who now runs a digital marketing company with his wife Ranjana.

Financial hurdles

With Prashant's education and Anuj's cricket, Virendra started facing financial problems. He took loans from his friends and



Anuj Rawat (R) and Mohammed Siraj take a selfie after RCB defeated MI. Sportzpics for IPL

family, but sometimes it did not suffice. "From my second year in college, I started working as well. I told my father that your dream is mine too. You don't have to worry about Anuj's cricketing career. I will pay his school fees, his coaching fees, I will take care of everything," recalled Prashant.

"For a few years, we hardly interacted with each other. When I am back from college, he will be heading out for training. And when he is back home in the evening, I will be at work," he said.

Finances became rosier, but Anuj's career was not going anywhere. He was facing rejections after rejections. "He was not selected for Delhi Under-14 and then Delhi Under-16. For any cricketer, it is disheartening. But my father never lost hope; he As with Pant, and so many others, the journey began in the backyard of the Rawat household. He began playing with his father, Virender and elder Prashant

will just keep motivating him. My father always knew that Anuj had everything in him and he would succeed at the professional level," said Prashant.

It was not only Anuj who was hurt. The coach was equally anguished. Sharma took the rejection into his heart, and thus began the 'making of Anui Rawat.'

"Anuj always has this great self-belief. He was the most sincere among the lot, the most hard-working. If I ask him to take four laps, he will finish those four laps," said Sharma.

He soon caught the eves of Delhi selectors and made his Ranji Trophy debut in the 2017-18 season, when Pant was called up for India A. Anuj impressed with a fluent 71 and followed it up with another half-century against the Railways.

When Pant became a national team regular, Anuj began to get more chances. Next season, he registered his maiden hunDelhi were reeling at 36 for 5, before he walked in, and he engineered them to a nine-wicket win.

Soon Rajasthan Royals' scouts picked him. He spent two years with the Royals, where he played only two games. Then RCB came calling, and realising his potential, coughed up Rs 3.4 crore, seventeen times more than his base price, to purchase him. It seems like money well spent. "Virat (Kohli), Faf (Du Plessis) and Mike (Hesson) were impressed with him at the nets. And it was team management's decision to play him at the top, and he is doing relatively well," said Sharma.

His greatest strength, Sharma says, is that he is unfazed by reputations. "One of the greatest strengths of Anuj is that he never goes by the bowler's reputation. He will always play the ball, not the bowler, and I have seen this in him since the first day he came to my academy," said Sharma.

In age-group cricket, Anuj always played as an opener, but when he played in the Ranji Trophy, he had to move down to the middle order. "He is a floater. He has opened for India Under-19, even for Delhi in the Ranji Trophy. He is a complete team-man," said Sharma, who is now the Delhi coach. So far, he has travelled behind and along with Pant, but their paths could cross one day.

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