

The Indian Express wishes its readers Happy Diwali

We are closed today. There will be no edition of the newspaper on Monday, November 13

HAPPY DIWALI

A RED initiative appears in today's edition of *The Indian Express*. These pages are an initiative of the marketing solutions team of The Indian Express Group and contains content paid for by advertisers. These pages should be read as an advertisement.

MULTIPLE INTERACTIONS ALONG LAC, PART OF CBMs AGREED UPON

India, China ground commanders hold talks as troops brace for Ladakh winter

Army has started moving troops for winter posture, readjusting deployment

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

BRACING FOR what will be their fourth winter since the start of the military standoff along the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh, Indian and Chinese ground commanders have been holding interactions to rule out any incident as troop deployments are readjusted for the harsh months ahead.

Sources have told The

Sunday Express that several agenda-based interactions have been taking place at multiple points along the LAC for nearly 10 days now between local commanders at the levels of brigade and below to sort out minor issues that may have cropped up and to prevent any incident during the winter months.

More such meetings are likely to take place over the next few weeks.

This is among the various confidence-building measures

(CBMs) which were discussed during the Corps Commander-level talks between the two sides.

Other CBMs discussed in the last few rounds of military talks were adherence to existing border protocols and advance sharing of patrol information to avoid clashes on ground.

Sources said the Indian Army, in the last fortnight, has already started moving into its winter posture. They say another round of high-level military talks is expected to take place before the

start of summer.

"Even as these CBMs are being implemented along the LAC, the Army has continued to maintain adequate reserves in the depth areas as part of preparations to deal with any contingency that may crop up," a source said.

Additionally, enhancement of infrastructure, wherever feasible, is being carried out despite the extreme cold weather conditions in eastern Ladakh, the source said.

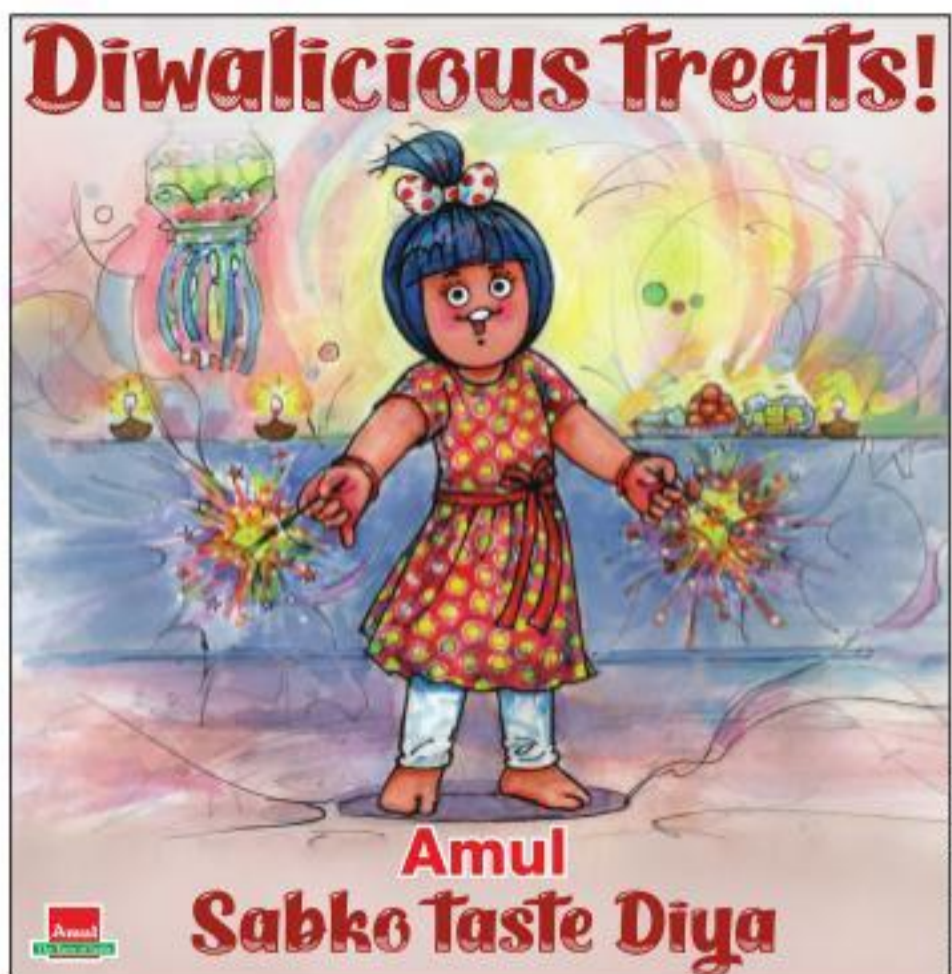
The Indian Express reported

EXPLAINED

Stalemate, the issues

THE LAST disengagement was more than a year ago in the Gogra-Hot Springs area and there has been a bit of a stalemate in talks between India and China. Indian troops continue to be denied access to traditional patrolling points.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Amul Sabko Taste Diya

Swiss woman murder: Probe finds father of accused went to her home, threatened kin

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

THE DELHI Police has issued a lookout circular against the father of West Delhi resident Gurpreet Singh, the accused in the murder of Swiss national Nina Berger whose decomposing body was found dumped near a school last month, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

According to police sources, before Gurpreet allegedly murdered 36-year-old Berger, his father Arjun Singh travelled to Switzerland to threaten her fam-

ily over a monetary dispute involving Rs 8 lakh. They said the father's role came to the fore after investigators scanned around 2,500 messages Gurpreet and Berger had sent to each other on WhatsApp.

Investigators have also found that it was over this dispute that Gurpreet later killed Berger, and not over a spurned marriage proposal as he had earlier claimed to mislead the probe.

Meanwhile, the final findings of Berger's post-mortem, conducted by a panel of three doctors from Deen Dayal Upadhyay hospital, have attributed her

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Uttarakhand to hold special Assembly session on UCC Bill after Diwali

Live-ins must be registered, no specific measures for population control

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

THE UTTARAKHAND government will convene a special session of its Legislative Assembly in the week immediately after Diwali to discuss and pass the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill, sources in the know of discussions told *The Indian Express*.

The report, it is learnt, has placed emphasis on gender equality and equal rights for daughters in ancestral properties. It does not, however, suggest raising the marriageable age of women to 21. The committee's recommendation says the marriageable age for women should be retained as 18.



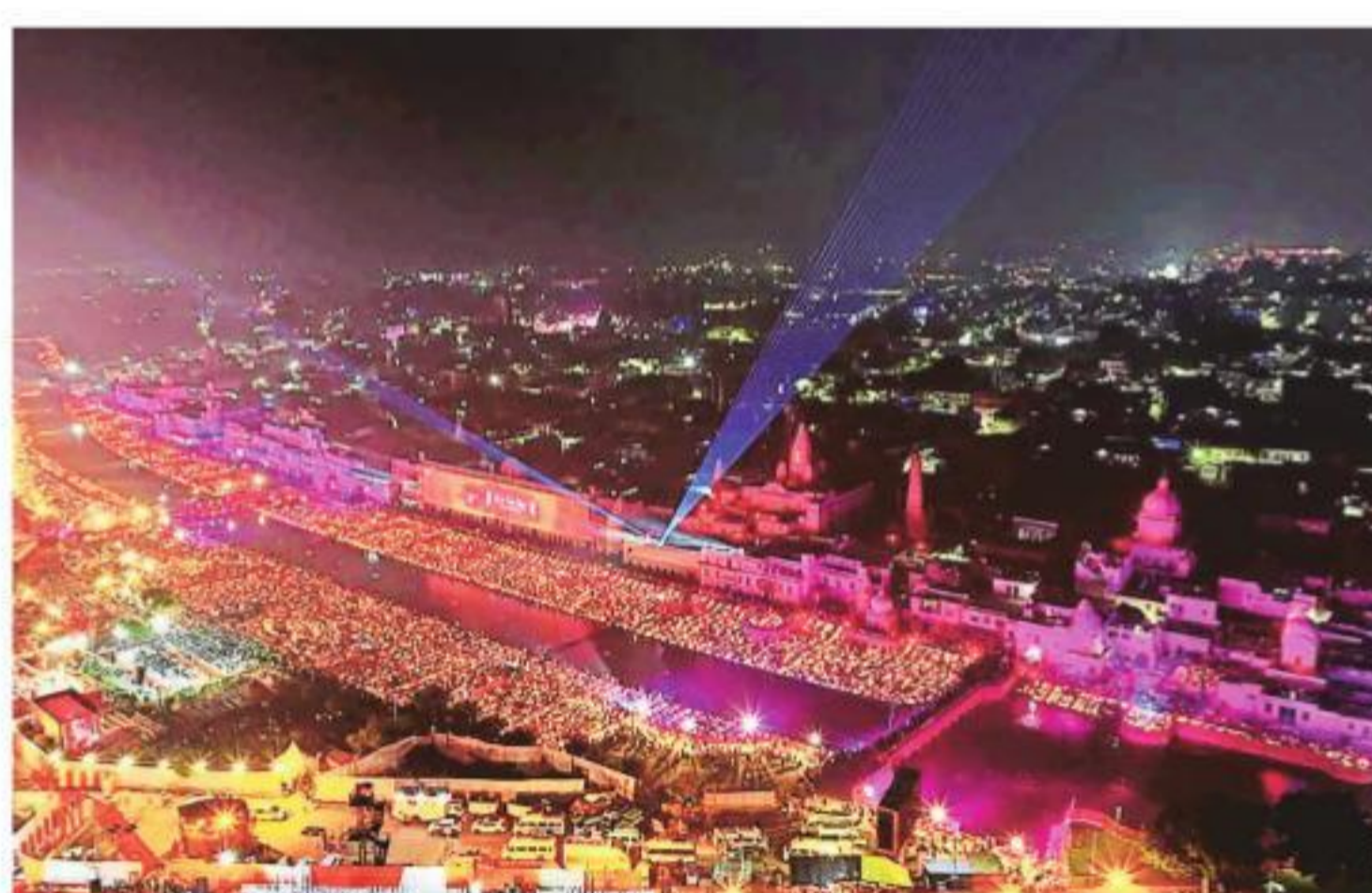
Panel was formed after CM Dhama's first Cabinet meet. File

"It is to formulate one law that is applicable to all religions in matters related to marriage, divorce, inheritance and adoption," said the source.

Accordingly, the Bill's broader focus is on uniformity in personnel laws such as marriage registration, divorce, property rights, inter-state property rights, maintenance, custody of children, etc, the sources said.

The proposed legislation

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



DIWALI IN AYODHYA

A ghat illuminated with diyas on Diwali eve in Ayodhya. More than 22 lakh diyas were lit on the banks of the Sarayu on Saturday, setting a world record. PTI

RELATED REPORT, PAGE 9

Glitch in BRS govt's farm scheme is sowing seeds of hope for challengers

SREENIVAS JANYALA
MEDAK (TELANGANA), NOVEMBER 11

THE TALK in the fields in Station Ghanpur in Medak Assembly constituency, where freshly harvested paddy is being bagged, is about the Congress's promises.

The ruling Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), they acknowledge, has a lot of schemes. But the Congress is offering more

of everything the BRS is providing. Plus, there is a complaint about Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao's much-coveted Rythu Bandhu farmers' assistance programme, as voiced passionately by R Veeraiiah, a farmer in Ramayampet.

"Why am I angry? My neighbour has 6 acres of land and receives Rs 60,000 as Rythu Bandhu per year. I own 1 acre and receive Rs 10,000. My neighbour does

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EXPRESS NETWORK

THREE BANGLA TOURISTS DIE IN SRINAGAR HOUSEBOAT FIRE
PAGE 9

LPG cylinder to cash transfers to courting majority: Cong in a me-too race with BJP

In MP, Cong counts on BJP for change of guard, lacks energy to communicate big ideas or strategy to frame alternative

VANDITA MISHRA
BHOPAL, INDORE, KHANDWA, CHHINDWARA, NOV 11

IT'S A minute or two past 7 o'clock in the evening when Kamal Nath makes his way in an open jeep, to the sound of deafening drumbeats, down a nar-



DECISION 2023
MADHYA PRADESH

row lane of Gulabara locality in his home turf of Chhindwara. A small stage, covered in frilled white has been rigged up at the lane's end for a nukkad meeting.

That scene may seem unremarkable in the run-up to polls — it is not. In this election, there is talk in Chhindwara about



MP Congress chief Kamal Nath with Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in Indore. File

how the mighty Congress leader, around whom so many elections have revolved, and who is ru-

moured to have pulled strings even inside the rival BJP camp here, has been driven this time to make an appearance at the smallest of gatherings.

In his short five-minute speech, Kamal Nath speaks of how, in his career spanning more than four decades, he has put Chhindwara on the country's map. "Earlier, they would ask, *kaun sa Chhindwara* (which Chhindwara)?"

Kamal Nath's Congress smells a chance in this election in Madhya Pradesh — it had

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

In Punjab, a death and a ban stop tractor stuntmen right in middle of their tracks

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

KAMALDEEP SINGH BRAR & RAAKHI JAGGA
AMRITSAR, LUDHIANA, NOVEMBER 11

"IT'S NO big deal... even a child can do it," says Gaggi Bansra.

Gaggi is talking of revving his tractor engine, shifting gears — reverse, followed by the first gear — until the front tyres rise and the 3,200-kg beast is now balanced



Happy Malha from Moga has featured in movies and music albums.

on its rear tyres, much like a playful puppy. This is usually followed by a dervish-like spin, all through which the exhaust pipe spouts black fumes. Child's play?

Gaggi, 34, a small-time farmer turned tractor stuntman, is angry and upset that the Punjab government has banned tractor stunts as being "dangerous". The ban follows the death of 29-year-old Sukhmandeep Singh on October 28. Singh was performing a high-risk stunt during a rural sports fair in Sarchur village in Gurdaspur when he was crushed to death.

According to eyewitnesses, Sukhmandeep's tractor was up on its rear wheels when he tried to climb onto the vehicle. As his left foot slipped, he fell and came under the tyres of the tractor.

While the accident left many in Punjab shocked, in a state where tractors serve much more than their primary function as tillers of the earth, the ban hasn't gone down too well, especially among the practitioners of these stunts, a popular form of entertainment in rural Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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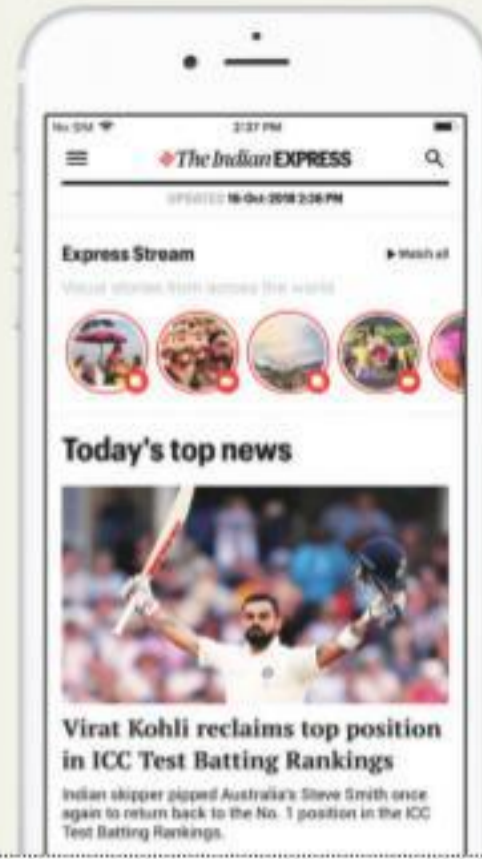
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THREE INDIAN RESTAURANTS IN THE US HONOURED WITH MICHELIN STARS This Diwali is special for three Indian restaurants in the US as they have been honoured with the Michelin star for their outstanding culinary offerings.



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EXPRESS AUDIO Protecting babies from air pollution with Bhavreen Kandhari

On The Early Childhood Project, we delve into the critical topic of clean air for babies and toddlers. From hazards of bad air quality to solutions for parents, this conversation is a breath of fresh air.

FROM PAGE ONE

FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

India, China ground commanders hold talks as troops brace for Ladakh winter

last month that the Army's winter posture will see overall redeployment of troops along the LAC - possibly also a reduction in troop strength from eastern Ladakh while maintaining adequate reserves in depth areas.

In the 20th round of military talks held last month, there was no tangible forward movement on the ground, but both sides had agreed to maintain the momentum of dialogue and negotiations through various military and diplomatic mechanisms.

points along the LAC and early disengagement at the remaining friction points including legacy ones such as Depsang Plains and Demchok. An overall de-escalation of troops in the Ladakh region has also been on the agenda of the talks.

Friction points such as Galwan Valley, north and south banks of Pangong Tso and the Gogra-Hot Springs area have seen some resolution in the last three years with the creation of buffer zones.

Swiss woman murder: Police say father of accused threatened her kin

death to "asphyxia caused by constriction of the neck... by an iron chain" and "assisted by masking of the face... by a polythene bag". Berger's body had around nine wounds, an officer said citing the report.

Delhi on the pretext of a "ritual" after promising to help her attain "mental peace" through occult rituals and gemology.

source said, Berger requested Gurpreet to call his father Arjun and ask him to leave her house in Switzerland after she had come to know that Arjun had threatened her parents to pay up.

Nagar. She had initially booked her returning ticket for October 18, but later changed it to October 22," the source said. "In Delhi, she visited a bank where she made a reference to the hotel manager and requested to withdraw money.

Uttarakhand to hold special Assembly session on UCC Bill after Diwali

would, however, neither touch upon any religious customs for marriages nor dwell upon other rituals. Registration of live-in relationships will also be mandatory.

state Assembly elections last year. The committee was announced after the first Cabinet meeting of the newly-formed Uttarakhand government.

mits it to us, we will take it forward as per the constitutional process and try to implement it as soon as possible," Dhama had said.

states - Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat - have appointed committees to initiate the process of implementing UCC. At the national level, the Law Commission of India too has begun consultation on UCC.

In Punjab, a death and a ban stop tractor stuntmen right in their tracks

Pradesh. From kabaddi tournaments to rural fairs, tractor tochan mukabla (rug-of-war competitions featuring two tractors, each trying to pull the other across a dividing line) and stunts are big draws.

stunts are more in demand than cheerleaders. Gaggi says he has participated in 200 "tournaments" so far and earns around Rs 50,000 to Rs 60,000 a month from performing these stunts, charging around Rs 30,000 per show.

customising their old Ford, Swaraj and 5911 tractor models before shipping them abroad. Amarinder Singh, a farmer from Lakhowal village in Ludhiana, says, "Usually, those who perform stunts using tractors make a lot of modifications to their vehicles and don't use them for farming.

came into effect. "Thousands of lives are lost to drugs every year. The government can't do anything about that and with one death, they ban stunts," says Jagdeep.

LPG cylinder to cash transfers: Congress in a me-too race with BJP

closed the gap with the BJP in 2018, finishing a little behind in vote share and slightly ahead in seats. It ran a 15-month government that was brought down by the Jyotiraditya Scindia-led defections in 2020.

recruitment scams that blight the future of its young, or on farmers' issues in an agriculture-dominated economy. Kamal Nath himself, not seen as a mass leader, has spent most of his career in the political corridors of Delhi.

think inko suvidhaon ke laabh se vanchit kiya jaaye (the stone-pelters' punishment should also be that they are deprived of government schemes)."

the time of marriage)... and so on. In this rush to offer the voter more cash, here and now, big ideas, the possibilities of structural changes, on both sides, are a casualty.

If the BJP's campaign this time is uber centralised in a bid to paper over the wear and tear of a four-term incumbency, the Congress campaign is hyper local and dispersed.

In Indore, Deepak Joshi 'Pintu', first time candidate, who belongs to a powerful Congress family, says that, apart from the regular Congress manifesto, he has customised manifestoes for every ward in his constituency.

The residents of Khaskhas Badi feel violated by the BJP government, and abandoned by the Congress. Says Saud Khan, a mechanic: "Congress MLA ashwawan dete rahe, madda nahin ki (gave assurances, but didn't help)."

And yet, that is not the only or main reason why Rahul Gandhi's big idea ahead of 2024 is being given the go-by by his party in this Assembly election in MP.

But it seems that the Congress is going local as an escape, not as a strategy. This is because in terms of the big issues and ideas, Kamal Nath's party has not been seen to take on the Shivraj government.

Admittedly, in a polarised climate, with a hardening majoritarianism the dominant political strain, there will be a blowback from any outreach to the minority community.

in Khargone, where in April 2022, after incidents of arson and stone-pelting on a Ram Navami procession, the Chouhan government, borrowing from the playbook of Yogi Adityanath in UP, short-circuited due process and demolished several homes, using the fig leaf of illegal constructions, in Muslim localities, the Congress has dithered in raising its voice against the clear injustice of the government action.

It offers Rs 1,250 per month to women has kicked off a frantic competition. The Congress has pledged Rs 1,500 to women and a gas cylinder for Rs 500 and a reversal to the Old Pension Scheme.

Glitch in BRS govt's farm scheme, hope for rivals

not even cultivate his land, gives it on lease, but he still gets richer every year. Why is the government neglecting the poor while rewarding the rich?"

91.33%, or 59.36 lakh, of Telangana's farmers. Those with land holdings more than 9.89 acres make up just 1.39%, or 90,449, of the total farmers.

It offers Rs 1,250 per month to women has kicked off a frantic competition. The Congress has pledged Rs 1,500 to women and a gas cylinder for Rs 500 and a reversal to the Old Pension Scheme.

Rythu Bandhu funds and old-age pension since the schemes were launched, is also looking at the Congress. Similar voices, from small farmers, pensioners, rural women are heard across Medak.

It's not KCR though (as the CM is popularly known) whom Veeraiiah directs his anger at, but his local MLA, Padma Devender Reddy. "The local BRS MLAs have done nothing and just watched the rich landlords get richer. Padma could have told KCR there are more small farmers in the district and got them more investment support, but she did not do it," he says.

As per disbursements in December 2022-January 2023, 22.55 lakh farmers owning less than an acre of land received a total of Rs 642.52 crore. The 16.98 lakh farmers with 1 to 2 acres received Rs 1,278 crore, 10.89 lakh farmers with 2 to 3 acres received Rs 1,131 crore, 4.89 lakh farmers with 3 to 4 acres received Rs 1,047 crore, 1.52 lakh farmer with 4 to 5 acres received Rs 265.18 crore, and about 50,000 farmers with 5 to 6 acres got Rs 136.54 crore.

near Raghunathpally in Station Ghanpur, P Naresh, who makes iron grilles, is also looking at the Congress, saying it is more likely to fulfill its promises.

This discontent is worrying for the BRS, as it had swept the undivided Medak district in both 2018 (9 of 10 Assembly seats) and 2014 (8).

According to the 2022 State Statistical Report, marginal (less than 2.47 acres) and small farmers (2.48 to 4.94 acres) account for

at its launch, the government allocated Rs 12,000 crore for the scheme. The budget for this Rabi season is Rs 7,676 crore.

In Venkatraopet village, M Satyanarayana, a small-holding farmer who is thankful for the

However, for now, the expectations are outstripping what the BRS has to offer. In Station Ghanpur constituency's Nellutla village, a group of women watch BRS candidate Kadiyari Srihari's convoy pass by. Pointing to the small houses in the village, Renuka, a farm worker, says: "We keep hearing of BRS schemes, but except a small amount of Rs 5,000 from Rythu Bandhu once every six months, we have not seen anything."



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4 THE CITY

S K Y W A T C H

FORECAST: November 12
Mainly clear sky. Shallow fog in the morning.
AQI forecast: Likely to be very poor

MAX: 27 MIN: 14
1.5°C below normal | 0.3°C below normal

JIND, KAITHAL LEAD THE WAY

On Haryana's road to 'near elimination of stubble burning', some wins, some hiccups

ABHINAYA HARIGOVIND
KAITHAL/JIND, NOVEMBER 11

THIS YEAR, two districts in Haryana, Kaithal and Jind, have seen a reduction in fires. But farmers and officials say it could take another couple of years to ensure easy availability of machines and incentives, focusing subsidies on implements in areas where burning is high, and awareness sessions, before the practice can be halted entirely.

Unsold bales of straw prepped using what is becoming a popular, but expensive machine, a still hazy supply chain that leads to alternative uses of paddy straw, and some machines remaining out of reach for small farmers are among issues that are yet to be ironed out.

On the bright side, the fire count so far in Haryana is lower than it was last year. From September 15 to November 11, Haryana has recorded 1,703 instances of crop residue burning, according to data from IARI. The highest single-day fire count that Haryana has seen so far is 127 on October 15, followed by 109 on November 5. (see box)

Till November 11, Kaithal has seen 229 instances of burning, IARI data shows, while Jind has seen 256 instances so far — lower than previous years. (see box).

Straw to bales

In Jind's Raichandwala village, thousands of quintals of bales of straw, remnants of the recently harvested paddy crop, are stacked on an acre of land — a fact Bijender Singh (50) is not happy about.

He is yet to find a buyer for what he estimates is nearly 15,500 quintals of straw, collected using two balers — one his and another belonging to a resident of a neighbouring village — that have been running for a little over a month. The baler converts straw into portable bales that can be moved to units for use as fuel. "Nobody's buying it, even at low prices. Maybe it will sell sometime in March or April when supply of straw is not this high," Singh said. In the meantime, if it rains, bales out in the open will be destroyed.

Singh's baler, the only one owned by any farmer in the village, is running as a form of "social service," he said, albeit an expensive one — the baler and rake can cost Rs 18-20 lakh, on which a subsidy is provided, and the machine can consume up to 10 litres of diesel per acre of land it is operated on.

"Maintenance is expensive and it runs only for a season... We pay for lifting and transport of the bales, and land must be rented to stock them," said Singh, who owns 2 acres of land himself.



He had better luck last year when a company in Jind, that is expected to generate electricity from straw, bought 29,000 quintals of straw from Singh at a rate of Rs 172 per quintal. This year, with the firm running its own balers, farmers with the machine in Jind have been finding it difficult to sell the straw they collect.

The baler is an 'ex-situ' stubble management method, now increasingly sought-after since paddy straw is taken away at no cost to the landowner. In Haryana, the landowner receives an incentive of Rs 1,000 per acre of land for choosing an alternative to burning stubble. Compared to an ex-situ utilisation of 1.80 million tonnes of paddy straw in 2022, Haryana is aiming to use 1.95 million tonnes this year.

Not far from where Singh's baler was running, Ajmer (48) set fire to the stubble on a little over 2 acres of his land. "The crop was harvested 15 days ago. We asked about the baler, it didn't arrive. To use a super-seeder (another crop residue management machine that can plough stubble back into the land, prepare soil for the next crop, and sow seeds), it can cost Rs 2,500 for an acre which is too expensive," he said.

Singh said with his being the only machine in the village, the waiting time to use the baler can be at least 5-7 days.

In neighbouring Dhatrath village, Jind Bio Energy, which has bought paddy straw from farmers over the past two years, has a total of 26 balers now running in Jind and Fatehabad. The straw is meant to feed a 15 MW power plant that is not running yet.

"We're using large, imported balers this time, instead of smaller ones that farmers have. The plant is not functional yet as we need a meter and the connection to the power grid is incomplete. This is

FIRE TRACKER



(Above) A baler at work in Jind; a farmer sets fire to his field in Kaithal.
Photos: Praveen Khanna

TOTAL FARM FIRES IN HARYANA	2023	2022	2021	2020
	1,703	2,880	5,063	3,447

IN KAITHAL

2023	229
2022	605
2021	1,090
2020	787

IN JIND

2023	256
2022	384
2021	545
2020	284

(Between September 15 and November 11)
Source: Data from IARI

the third year we are procuring the straw, but a lot of what we collected over the past two years was destroyed as we were not able to use it...," said Ranjit Patel, plant head at the company.

In Kaithal, Karn Singh, sarpanch of Kotra village, has been more fortunate in dealing with the bales, having bought the machine only this year. "The baler is on a year-long bond with a company in Samana, Punjab. We have around 15,000-16,000 quintals so far from three villages, with an acre of paddy yielding 25 quintals of straw. Landowners are in a hurry for the bales to be taken away... they say they will set it on fire otherwise. This year, balers are being used a lot more. Crop residue burning has reduced, the government is stricter, and mindset is also changing," he said.

Satbir (48), who rents a 4-acre field to another farmer in Harsola village, said he considered purchasing a baler this year but decided against it. "Bales are not selling, and the baler is an ex-

pensive machine... I had applied for it (for a subsidy under the crop residue management scheme) but then decided not to buy it... Stubble here is either managed using a super-seeder or is set on fire," he said.

Demand vs supply

J C Malik, Assistant Agriculture Engineer, Kaithal, said the district sees more ex-situ use of straw than any other in the state considering the presence of industrial units. "We had 350 balers running here this season, including 50 from Punjab, and baler use has been increasing over the past three years. There are three plants buying the straw. A paper mill, a solvent unit, and a biomass power plant bought straw, but now their stock is complete. So, over the past week, baler owners have not been able to sell. Altogether we are aiming to use around 7 lakh metric tonnes this way, out of a straw generation of around 10.5 lakh metric tonnes," Malik said.

Malik chalked up the reduc-

tion in instances of burning in Kaithal to better awareness. "But the problem now is consumption of the bales. Price is falling now because of supply. An ethanol plant is coming up at Panipat, and since it is a large one, there is hope consumption will eventually increase in other parts of the state. Another issue is that subsidies this year were focused on 'red' and 'yellow' zone villages, and farmers in the 'green' zone have not been able to get subsidies as easily," he said.

Based on active fires last year, villages have been identified as 'red', 'yellow' and 'green' zone villages, with 'green' zone ones having had the least burning last year.

On other measures, Malik said: "There are 2,200 super-seeders in Kaithal, though balers are more convenient for land owners. But the advantage of using super-seeders is that the stubble has potassium and sulphur and when it is mixed in the soil, it doesn't need fertiliser."

In Jind, an official in the agriculture department pointed to

the limited time between harvest and sowing the winter crop, and sale of bales as two factors that are yet to be addressed: "Machines are available, but there aren't too many industrial units in Jind, so selling the bales is turning into a problem."

Vijay Kumar, Assistant Agriculture Engineer, Jind, said, "We have enough of the other machines, but need more balers. Some farmers are stocking a supply of bales for the plant coming up at Panipat, in the hope it will buy from here as well. The biomass power plant in Kaithal had set a target of purchasing 30,000 metric tonnes from Jind. Last year, the biomass plant in Jind that is not functioning yet bought around 17,000 metric tonnes."

Way ahead

The incentive to the individual farmer sets Haryana apart from Punjab. In Kaithal, a total of 14,758 farmers applied for the incentive last year, and 12,537 applied so far this season, Malik said.

Fines have also been imposed to deal with burning. Fines worth Rs 3.8 lakh have been imposed till the end of October on over 200 farmers, and 31 FIRs have been registered for burning in Kaithal, Malik said. Fines of around Rs 2 lakh had been imposed till the October end in Jind, Kumar said.

The district has 4.5 lakh acres under paddy cultivation, with paddy straw generation of 8.5 lakh tonnes. "Give it another one-two years, it will get better. The problem is the small window between the harvest and sowing, and for a baler, there can be a waiting time of 4 to 5 days. We hope to manage 1.18 lakh metric tonnes through ex-situ measures. There are 70 balers so far, another 140 have been sanctioned," Kumar added.

Workers on strike, garbage piles up on revamped Chandni Chowk stretch

SAMAN HUSAIN
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

HEAPS OF waste piled on streets, garbage spilling out of dustbins — the much-touted pedestrianised stretch at the popular Chandni Chowk market is facing a sanitation crisis. The reason? Contractors, hired by the Public Works Department (PWD) to maintain cleanliness in the area, have suspended their services over non-payment of outstanding dues amounting to Rs 5.5 crore and non-renewal of their lease.

Traders complained that for the past week, the 1.3 km-long portion between Red Fort and Fatehpuri Mosque has been in a state of neglect, causing inconvenience to customers and impacting businesses.

"The area requires constant cleaning; prior to the contractors' walkout, roads were routinely mechanically swept every night," said shop owner Raavi Kumar Dubey.

On Wednesday night, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi cleared the area. However, because of the heavy footfall owing to the festive season, garbage began to pile up once more by



Garbage spills out of dustbins at the market. Express

Thursday evening, said Dubey. Sanjay Bhargava, head of the Chandni Chowk Traders Association, said, "The redevelopment project is in limbo because no civic body is ready to take the matter seriously... all departments are at loggerheads with each other. Both PWD and MCD are currently under the same government, so why is there so much confusion?"

"... It's a black Diwali for Chandni Chowk as many customers have stopped visiting the market due to the sanitation issues," he added.

Sanitation workers under the PWD also said the four public toilets on the revamped stretch are currently non-functional. "Water supply to the four restrooms has been cut, they have also not been cleaned in

the last week, making them unusable for the public," said workers responsible for operating the washrooms in the area.

To maintain cleanliness, Bhargava said PWD contractors had deployed over 150 personnel in three shifts. As soon as the PWD extends the lease and states when they will pay the outstanding balance, contractors will end their strike, he added.

On its part, the Delhi government said "contract has been renewed", however, there was no response on when PWD would resume work on the stretch.

The MCD said, "The area was not cleaned for 6-7 days. As a responsible civic agency, we've taken up the task of cleanliness in Chandni Chowk's redesigned stretch which the PWD is responsible for. We are hoping the PWD gets its house in order soon."

Earlier this week, the High Court had asked the Delhi government to ensure redevelopment work carried out in Chandni Chowk is continued and maintained. A division bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela said the traders association also owed "some social responsibility" as the area is being developed for their welfare as well.

More than one cloud over govt's artificial rain plan

ABHINAYA HARIGOVIND
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

WHILE EQUIPMENT, an aircraft, and the 'seed' are already available, when the conditions — at least the presence of clouds — become favourable to induce rain through cloud seeding, in a bid to confront Delhi's current pollution conundrum, is uncertain.

The Delhi government had Wednesday said IIT-Kanpur could carry out the first pilot project for cloud seeding around November 20-21 in an effort to induce rain and wash away pollutants. But its success depends on a host of factors — presence of clouds, their moisture content, when they are seeded, and how it's done.

Cloud seeding involves inducing rain artificially by spraying a mixture, which includes salts, into a cloud — in this case from an aircraft — to allow "cloud drops" to form around the nuclei that the salts provide, and eventually drop down as rain.

Manindra Agrawal at IIT-Kanpur, project in-charge, explained that favourable conditions would be clouds with "reasonable moisture content". "As of now, radar data shows that around that period (November 20), there will be clouds. But these things change. It will be incorrect to say we will do it on November 20 or 21, as in a week's time, it's possible that updated information shows clouds may not be there," he said.

"In winter, you do get clouds once in a while. Sometimes, although rarely, it does rain too. What we will be doing is increasing the chance of rain whenever there are clouds. These are scientific experiments..." he added. Sachchida Nand Tripathi, professor at IIT Kanpur, who is also part of the project, said the institute has the aircraft — a Cessna — with seeding equipment installed. "We have the 'seed' developed by IIT-Kanpur — the solution on which cloud droplets form needs to have cloud condensation nuclei and ice nuclei, which come from two different salts. Where and at what height you seed depends on meteorological conditions and cloud-related properties," he said.

According to Agrawal, clarity on conditions becoming favourable for seeding was possible closer to when the process was scheduled to be carried out; three days ahead of the chosen time, it could shed light on whether or not the required conditions were available for it. "If we know three days ahead that there is a chance, we can make all arrangements, park the aircraft in Delhi, and then wait. On the day we want to fly, we would have to get detailed data and see," he said.

The process, said Agrawal, would ideally require flying into the cloud to measure its moisture content and adapt the seeding technique with regard to it. "Once we know (the moisture content) we tailor our spraying accordingly. If there is less moisture content, we spray more. If there is more moisture, we spray less. But that kind of instrumentation (to measure moisture) we don't have now, and we will have to fly a little blind there, which is what makes it more uncertain," he added.

What about the extent of the area over which the process could be carried out, the duration of seeding, and the expenditure?

"If we get the kind of cloud cover we need, we would like to do 300 sq km. Delhi is around 1,500 sq km, so if a reasonable part of that we can seed... The estimated cost is around Rs 3 crore, but we will know better once we do the experiment," Agrawal said.

The procedure would, however, require permissions. "Many permissions are required to fly the aircraft in Delhi airspace. For 300 sq km, it can take 9-10 hours to spray the finely ground solid mixture," he said.

"... there is a company in Sivakasi which makes these flares that contain this mixture for other parts of the world as well, and they are doing this for us," he also said.

To spray the salt mixture, according to Agrawal, aircraft would be required to fly below the clouds. "If you just spray it from below, some will go up, and some will naturally fall by gravity. One can go up above the cloud and spray it, but clouds are often thick, and that would mean going very high. You don't want to go inside the cloud because there will be turbulence," he said.

"So, what is done is that you fire the flares — that generates heat and then you eject the mixture. Hot air rises, and it takes the entire mixture up into the clouds," he added.

Earlier attempts at cloud seeding have already been made at IIT-Kanpur, he said, with much success — but when weather conditions were more amenable. "This exercise was done in July, August, and September this year, but it did not intend to cause rain. The intention was to get DGCA's approval for air-worthiness of our aircraft, which was modified due to flare attachments that were put on the wing," he said, adding that it was carried out during the rainy season.

"... We have never actually done this in the winter... there is always a question mark," Agrawal added.

ED arrests 3 'associates' of AAP's Amanatullah in money laundering case

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate (ED) arrested three alleged associates of AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan Saturday in connection with a money laundering case linked to alleged irregularities in the recruitment of staff for the Delhi Waqf Board.

Last month, the agency had raided the premises of the 49-year-old AAP legislator who represents the Okhla constituency.

A source in the ED said, "Zeeshan Haider, Daud Nasir, and Jawed Imam Siddiqui have been taken into custody under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). All three were associates of Khan and had dubious cash transactions between them."

The ED, after the raids, had alleged Khan acquired huge proceeds of crime in cash through illegal recruitment of staff in the Delhi Waqf Board and invested the amount to purchase immovable assets in the name of his associates. "Searches were conducted in the case related to illegal recruitment of staff in Delhi Waqf Board and illegal per-



Last month, the agency had raided Khan's premises

sonal gains by way of unfairly leasing out of Waqf Board properties during the chairmanship of the board by Amanatullah Khan during 2018-2022," the ED had said in a statement.

It had said that an FIR by the CBI and three Delhi Police complaints formed the basis of the ED action against the AAP MLA.

Meanwhile, a Delhi court Saturday refused the ED's request seeking 14-day custodial interrogation of the three men after the defence counsel accused the agency of "illegal detention". Special Judge Nyay Bindu sent the accused to judicial custody till Sunday, saying the arguments were likely to take a long time to conclude. (with PTI inputs)



HOMEWARD BOUND

Passengers throng Anand Vihar ISBT on Diwali eve, Saturday.
Gajendra Yadav

Capital's roads choked by Diwali eve traffic

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

THE NATIONAL capital saw a traffic logjam at several places, with parts of Outer Delhi seeing heavy vehicular congestion on Saturday, officers said.

Traffic officers said that vehicular congestion was heavy near Ghazipur border and towards Outer Delhi's Nangloi. Several parts of Lutyens'

How is it done?

The process, said Agrawal, would ideally require flying into the cloud to measure its moisture content and adapt the seeding technique with regard to it. "Once we know (the moisture content) we tailor our spraying accordingly. If there is less moisture content, we spray more. If there is more moisture, we spray less. But that kind of instrumentation (to measure moisture) we don't have now, and we will have to fly a little blind there, which is what makes it more uncertain," he added.

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"... We have never actually done this in the winter... there is always a question mark," Agrawal added.

LAND ACQUISITION FOR DWARKA EXPRESSWAY

Govt initiates inquiry against CS; officials say CM signed off on 'corrupt' DM transfer

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

A DAY after Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal referred a matter regarding a complaint alleging links between Delhi Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar and owners of a piece of land acquired for the Dwarka Expressway to the Vigilance Department, Minister Atishi initiated an inquiry.

As reported by *The Indian Express* Friday, the piece of land in Southwest Delhi, compensation for which was increased from Rs 41.52 crore to Rs 353.79 crore in May, leading to action against an IAS officer, is now at the centre of a fresh row — a complaint has been filed by a lawyer with the Centre as well as the Delhi government alleging that the son-in-law of one of the landowners is the director in a

firm that employs the son of the Chief Secretary.

The CS has denied the allegations terming them an attempt "by the present set up of the elected government" to malign him.

Atishi wrote to the Director of the Vigilance department and the Divisional Commissioner on the matter, issuing directions for requisition of all files related to the acquisition of land in Bannoli Village. She also directed both departments to ensure no files regarding the issue were passed through the Chief Secretary since "he is the subject of enquiry".

On Saturday, however, sources in the bureaucracy cited minutes of a September 20 meeting of the National Capital Civil Services Authority (NCCSA) — which is chaired by Kejriwal and has Principal Secretary (Home) Ashwani Kumar and the



Vigilance Minister Atishi; Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar. *Archive*

CS as its members — to question why the CM signed off on the transfer of IAS officer Hemant Kumar who was serving as the DM of the district where the alleged corruption unfolded.

The NCCSA is at the helm of taking decisions regarding transfer, posting and vigilance-related matters of bureaucrats working with the Delhi government.

According to minutes of the body's meeting, which *The Indian*

Express has seen, the DM in question was among 21 IAS officers to be recommended for posting — in this case, to the Administrative Reforms department from his current role as DM of Southwest district which he took on last June. The minutes bear signatures of all three members.

Sources in the bureaucracy, quoting from a note from a senior vigilance department official sent to Atishi, said the Member-Secretary to the Authority should be requested to "inform about the reasons for recommending transfer of Sh. Hemant Kumar by the NCCSA in its meeting held on 20.09.2023 which was chaired by Hon'ble Chief Minister".

This, according to the note, said sources quoting from it, was also the date on which the Vigilance Department had written to the MHA to take disciplinary action against Hemant Kumar and refer the matter to

the CBI for investigation.

The 19-acre land in question was acquired by the NHAI for Dwarka Expressway in 2018. The initial award of Rs 41.52 crore as compensation was decided by the Additional District Magistrate, Southwest, that year. The landowners then challenged this amount, and the matter went into arbitration, with the DM as arbitrator. Between February 2019 and June 2022, three other officers who were posted as Southwest Delhi DM successively agreed with the initial assessment of Rs 41.52 crore.

IAS officer Hemant Kumar was appointed as DM in June 2022. He granted landowners an enhanced compensation of Rs 353.79 crore, reasoning that the land was low-density residential area and not agricultural. The money, however, has not been paid so far since the matter has been in court.

Truck rams into car, van on Delhi-Jaipur highway, 4 dead



The truck coming from Jaipur crossed the divider and hit the two vehicles. The collision resulted in a fire due to a CNG leak in the car and its 3 occupants were charred to death. *PTI*

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GURGAON, NOVEMBER 11

FOUR PEOPLE died after a truck rammed into a car and a pickup van on the Delhi-Jaipur highway in Gurgaon on Friday night, police said.

According to Bilaspur police, an oil tanker coming from Jaipur skidded over the divider and collided with the vehicles, sparking a blaze in the car. The three occupants in the car were burnt to death while the pickup van driver was trapped inside the vehicle. By the time he was retrieved by police, he died.

Said police, "A 16-wheeler truck coming from Jaipur crossed the divider and hit a Datsun Go car and a pickup van. The collision resulted in a fire due to CNG leakage in the car. Three occupants in the car — Jitendra, a resident of Samalkha

in Panipat; Lokesh Saini, a Jind resident; and Pavan Dubey, from Bihar — succumbed to the flames. The van driver, Trilok Sharma alias Deepak, residing in Chilhad village, Pataudi, also lost his life in the accident."

The truck driver fled the scene soon after the accident. Police said they were informed at 11 pm. The remains of the bodies inside the car have been sent to forensics, police said.

Sandeep, the complainant in the case, said at 9 pm on Friday, his friends Jitendra, Lokesh and Pavan, who all work at the same company in Kundli, were going to Bhiwadi to give Diwali gifts to their company's clients.

"I met them around 9 pm at Rajiv Chowk. Around 11 pm, I received a call that Jitendra and his companions had an accident on NH-48 near Triveni Dham Hotel, and their car caught fire. I rushed to the spot. A tanker had

driven negligently, resulting in the collision. The three, along with the car, were engulfed in flames and lost their lives..." the complainant stated.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Sandeep said he and Jitendra had been friends for over 15 years and worked together. "Our houses were also close by. He hailed from Samalkha and lived with his wife, two kids, and father. On Friday, he had met me at my home before heading off to Bhiwadi..." Sandeep said.

Police said they received information about a car catching fire near Triveni Hotel Sidhrawali, Bilaspur, and a police team and fire brigade reached the scene and extinguished the fire.

An FIR has been registered under IPC sections 279 and 304A against unknown persons, police said.

Home for 6 hrs from jail, Sisodia meets wife, son

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

A MUTED Chhoti Diwali celebration followed by a tearful goodbye underlined former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia's visit to his residence, Saturday.

Lodged at Tihar Jail in connection with the excise policy case, the senior Aam Aadmi Party leader was given permission by a Delhi court to meet his ailing wife, Seema, who has multiple sclerosis, for six hours between 10 am and 4 pm.

His second such visit since he was arrested, Sisodia could not meet his wife when the Delhi High Court granted him permission to do so in June since she had to be hospitalised due to a sudden dip in her health.

On Saturday, however, the former education minister was able to meet both her and his son, who studies abroad, at their Mathura Road residence. The three lit diyas on the eve of Diwali before Sisodia bid them goodbye at the end of the period of the court-permitted visit.

Sharing a photo of him hugging his wife before he stepped out of the house, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, in a post on X, said, "This picture is very painful. Is it right to do such injustice to a person who gave hope to the poor children of the country?"

While permitting Sisodia, who was arrested in connection with the case by the CBI in February and had his bail plea rejected by the Supreme Court recently, to meet his wife, the court ordered him not to talk to the media or indulge in any political activity.



Former Delhi Deputy CM Manish Sisodia hugs his ailing wife, Seema, as he leaves for jail, Saturday. On Friday, a Delhi court granted permission to Sisodia, an accused in a money-laundering case related to alleged irregularities in the excise policy, to meet his wife. *PTI*

Rashmika deepfake video: Police seek details from Meta

New Delhi: The Delhi Police Intelligence Fusion and Strategic Operations (IFSO) unit has lodged a case of forgery in connection with the alleged AI-based deepfake video being circulated online which purportedly shows actress Rashmika Mandanna. Officers said details are being secured from Meta and other social me-

dia platforms to identify the accused. The unit said an FIR under IPC sections 465 (punishment for forgery) and 469 (forgery for purpose of harming reputation) sections 66 and 66E of IT Act has been lodged.

Senior officers said the original source of the video is being ascertained. *ENS*

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Heartiest Greetings to all on the auspicious occasion of Diwali

November 12, 2023

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6 GOVT & POLITICS

Opp MPs dissent on criminal law Bills: Copy-paste job, colonial spirit retained

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

IN THEIR dissent notes, Opposition members in the Parliamentary panel on the three criminal law Bills have called the proposed legislation only a "re-arrangement of sections" in the existing laws and a "stunt" that will have "many undesirable consequences".

While protesting the rechristening of the laws in Sanskritised Hindi as "an affront" to non-Hindi speaking people, the Opposition members have also noted the Bills retained the "colonial spirit" and had no new clauses imbuing the "Indian thought process".

They have also flagged the exclusion of marital rape and the inclusion of clauses such as marriage through "suppression of identity" and "deceitful means" in the new code, apart from re-shaping the law on sedition.

The 30-member Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs to review the three Bills — Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (to replace the IPC); Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (for CrP) and Bharatiya Sakshya Bill (for Indian Evidence Act) — adopted its reports on November 7. The reports, including the dissent notes, were made public on Saturday.

As reported earlier by *The Indian Express*, the Centre is likely to introduce the three Bills in the Winter Session of Parliament from December 4 to 22. According to sources, the Law Ministry is already working internally on new drafts that would include key changes suggested by the panel, headed by BJP MP Brij Lal.

The Opposition members who submitted their dissent notes include Congress MPs P Chidambaram, Adhir Ranjan



Cong's Chidambaram, Adhir Ranjan among Opp members

under the clauses defining rape under the BNS. He has also objected to Clause 69 of the BNS which deals with "sexual intercourse by applying deceitful means etc."

According to Chaudhary, the criterion of "deceitful means" was too broad and the phrase "suppression of identity" "can be misused by ill-interested parties to harass interfaith and inter-caste couples." He also criticised the Bills for retaining the "colonial spirit" of the existing laws and enhancing "the coercive powers of the State".

The dissent notes by Ranveet Singh and Digvijaya Singh are identical to Chaudhary's. TMC's Derek O'Brien flagged the lack of representation of marginalised communities in the committee that drafted the Bills.

In his dissent note, O'Brien pointed out that the sedition law has been paraphrased and retained, not abolished. He objected to non-inclusion of trans women under rape and the provision of seven years' imprisonment if a murder is committed by a group of more than five people on certain grounds.

TMC MP Dastidar's dissent note contained similar objections to the Bill. While flagging a lack of consultation and expressing dismay over non-inclusion of suggestions by stakeholders, DMK MP Dayanidhi Maran's dissent note significantly focused on "imposition of Hindi" through the Bills. It would "further change the federal relationship and structure between the Union and the State", he said.

Maran's party colleague and fellow MP Elango, while suggesting "the arrangement of sections" be maintained as in the existing IPC, also raised objections to "the imposition of Hindi".

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Officials to lawyers, 19 experts heard — all 'welcome initiative'

APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

ALL 19 domain experts invited by a Parliamentary panel to review the three criminal law Bills have "welcomed the initiative of the government", the 246th report by the Standing Committee on Home Affairs said. The reports were submitted to Rajya Sabha on November 10.

Opposition parties had questioned the choice of experts.

"All domain experts welcomed the initiative of the Government to introduce these legislation in the Parliament. They were of the view that the new proposed laws reflect the Government's intention to align the legal system with the 21st century, emphasising citizen centric legal structures, digital transformation, and a focus on justice rather than punishment," stated the report on the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023.

The 19 experts were heard in nine meetings over six days between September and October.

Among them, at least six hold or have held positions appointed by the government — Praveen Sinha, CBI ex-special director; Department of Legal Affairs Joint Secretary Padmini Singh; Additional Director General at Bureau of Police Research & Development Anupama Nilekar Chandra; former director general of police Vikram Singh; National Commission for Protection of

Child Rights Chairperson Priyank Kanoongo and Law Commission Chairman Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi.

The panel also invited 11 lawyers including Justice Satish Chandra, a former Allahabad High Court judge, and former ASG of India Pinky Anand. Anand was an ASG in 2014 and before that was a member of the BJP's national executive. She has served as the national convener of BJP's legal and legislative cell.

The other notable lawyers on the panel include Senior Advocate and SC Bar Association President Adish C Aggarwal; Senior Advocate Sonia Mathur, former additional advocate general of Karnataka Aditya Sodhi; and Mumbai-based senior advocate Amit Desai.

The panel invited two academicians: Prof Naveen Chaudhary, National Forensic Sciences University, Gandhinagar and Prof Faizan Mustafa, Vice-Chancellor of Chanakya National Law University.

TMC leader Derek O'Brien, who has submitted a dissent note, had given the panel chairperson a separate list of 15 domain experts to be invited as witnesses. This proposed list included former chief justice of India U.U. Lalit, former SC judge Madan Lokur and senior advocates Fali Nariman, Siddharth Luthra, Menaka Guruswamy and Rebecca John.

Prof Mustafa and Senior Advocate Aditya Sodhi were the only two who featured on both the Opposition and the panel's list.

Pucca houses, cheaper LPG for 'Ladli Behna', higher MSP in BJP's MP manifesto

ANAND MOHAN JG
BHOPAL, NOVEMBER 11

THE RULING BJP in Madhya Pradesh has promised to build concrete homes for all Ladli Behna beneficiaries — who number to more than 1.3 crore in the state — and hike the financial assistance under the Ladli Laxmi scheme to Rs 2 lakh among other poll promises in its manifesto released on Saturday.

The 96-page 'Sankalp Patra' (vision document) was released by BJP president J.P. Nadda, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Union ministers Prahlad Patel, Jyotiraditya Scindia and Ashwini Vaishnav on the eve of Diwali.

BJP has promised free education to girls belonging to below poverty line families from kindergarten to post graduation. It announced LPG gas cylinders at Rs 450 to the beneficiaries of Ladli Behna Yojana and the Centre's Ujjwala Yojana.

Women voters make up 48 per cent of the 5.52 crore voters. They are crucial in 18 of the 230 Assembly seats in which they outnumber men.

Kush temple and dharamshala in Gwalior, respecting the faith of the Kushwaha community.

BJP has promised Rs 3 lakh crore for the development of tribals. It has promised to hike the rate of tendu leaf collectors to Rs 4,000 per bag, also a Congress promise.

The BJP promised to establish one engineering institute on the lines of IITs in each division of the state. It promised to set up a medical college on the lines of the Centre's AIIMS in each division.

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Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Institute Of Medical Sciences Vibhuti Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow-226010 (UP) Phone: 0522-4918504, 4918512 Website: www.drmlims.ac.in E-mail: director@drmlims@gmail.com Ref No: 2571/RMLIMS/M/2023 Dated: 08.11.2023 Tender / E-Bid Notice E-Bids are invited from "Experienced Contractors/ Agencies" in two bid system for COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL OPERATION & MAINTENANCE WORK OF MEDICAL GAS SUPPLY SYSTEM

KOHINOOR PULP & PAPER PRIVATE LIMITED (IN LIQUIDATION) CIN : U74999WB2008PTC126964 LIQUIDATOR - CVR Krishnaswami (Reg. No. IBBI/PA-001/IP-P01302/2018/1912217) Notice is given to the public in general that the following Asset Lot of KOHINOOR PULP & PAPER PRIVATE LIMITED (in Liquidation) ("Corporate Debtor") (in liquidation vide order of Hon'ble NCLT dated 01.07.2019) is proposed to be sold in accordance with clause (c) of regulation 32, sub-regulation (1) of regulation 33 and Schedule I of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2016 through e-auction platform.

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank HAJIPUR BRANCH POSSESSION NOTICE (SECTION 13 (4)) (For Immovable Property) Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Canara Bank under Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act 54 of 2002) (hereinafter referred to as "the Act") and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued a Demand Notice Dated 09/03/2023 calling upon the borrower M/s Gupta Poultry Farm Proprietor- Sanjay Kumar Gupta & Guarantor- Dhruv Kumar Gupta, Malti Devi W/o- Dhruv Kumar Gupta to repay the amount mentioned in the notice, being Rs. 7.75 Lakh (Rupees Seven Lakh Seventy Five Only) plus int. & Other charges within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

यूनियन बैंक Union Bank of India ASSET RECOVERY BRANCH : 1st Floor, Steel House, Near Police Check Post, Boring Road, Patna-800001 e-mail: arb.patna@unionbankofindia.bank SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY (APPENDIX IV A) E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and proviso to the Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002

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Information & Public Relations Department, Government of Jharkhand Request for Proposal (RFP) Tender No.: 2421 Dated 11.11.2023 Off-line tenders (RFP) under QCBS (Quality and Cost Based Selection) method are invited in Two Bid System from competent Company/Firm/Agency, who satisfy the eligibility criteria enumerated in the Tender Documents (RFP), and having experience of similar nature of work of Conceptualisation, Design, Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Temporary Projection Mapping and/or Multimedia Show on the occasion of Jharkhand state foundation Day on the 15th of November 2023 and the coinciding launch of the next phase of 'Apki Yojna, Apki Sarkar, Apke Dwar' campaign at different locations and/or districts in the state of Jharkhand.

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कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता मैनपुरी वृत्, लोक निर्माण विभाग, मैनपुरी अतिरिक्तकालीन ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना दिनांक 02/11/2023 1. महानगरि राज्यपाल महोदय, उद्देश्य की शक्ति से अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, मैनपुरी वृत्, लोकनिर्माण मैनपुरी द्वारा लोक निर्माण विभाग में मान निर्माण कार्य हेतु प्रस्तावित केन्दरीय से प्रविष्टित दर के आधार पर अनिवादन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदादाताओं को समस्त ही जाति है कि निविदा दालने से पूर्व निविदा के विषये मूलतः अर्हते हेतु निविदा निर्देशिका को कर्तव्य 3 को ध्यानपूर्वक अध्ययन कर ले।

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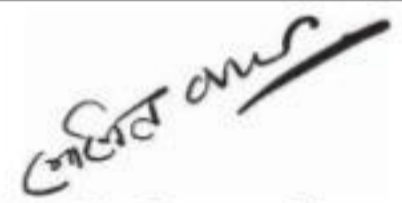
(For political parties to publish in the newspapers, social media platforms & website of the party)

Information regarding individuals with pending criminal cases, who have been selected as candidates, along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates (As per the Commission's directions issued in pursuance of the Order dated 13.02.2020 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in contempt petition(C) no. 2192 of 2018 in WP(C) no. 536 of 2011)

Name of Political Party : **Indian National Congress**
 Name of the Election : **Election to the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan State 2023**
 Name of State/UT : **Rajasthan State**
 (1) Name of the Constituency : **KOTA NORTH - 189**
 Name of the candidate : **SHANTI KUMAR DHARIWAL**

Sl.No.		
1.	Criminal antecedents	
a.	Nature of Offense	Criminal
b.	Case No.	SLP No. 5074/2023 in Supreme Court
c.	Name of Court	Supreme Court of India
d.	Whether Charges have been framed or not (yes/no)	NO
e.	Date of Conviction, if any	Candidate's name did not figure in the FIR or during investigations.
f.	Details of punishment undergone, if any	N/A
g.	Any other information required to be given	N/A
2.	The reasons for the selection of the candidate. Selection shall be with reference to the qualifications, achievements and merit of the candidate, and not mere "winnability" at the polls (not more than 100 words)	The candidate has been an elected representative for a long time. He has been a member of Parliament and member of the Legislative Assembly in the past. The candidate is a sitting MLA and a minister in the government and is known for his development focused approach. The candidate has carried out massive developmental works across the state of Rajasthan and the recently inaugurated Chambal River front in Kota has been one of examples of his work.
3.	Reasons as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates (not more than 100 words)	The candidate was not named in any FIR and his name did not crop up during any investigation but a protest petition was filed in the High Court which named him as an accused. However, Rajasthan High Court dismissed the said protest petition. Now an appeal against the High Court verdict is pending in the Supreme Court. This clearly shows there is no genuine ingredient in the case which is why the High Court dismissed it. Such infructuous litigation should not stop a proven people's representative from carrying out his developmental work in future which is why the Congress party has decided to field him again from this seat.

(2) Name of the Constituency- **KOTA NORTH - 189**
 Name of the candidate- **SHANTI KUMAR DHARIWAL**


(Shri. Lalit Tunwal)
 General Secretary (Organisation)
 Rajasthan Pradesh Congress Committee

Sanitation worker death: Kin seek job for son, refuse to claim body

Rajkot: A day after Rajesh Vegad, a sanitation worker of Bhavnagar Municipal Corporation (BMC), died inside a sewage tank located on the campus of Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute (CSMCR), his family refused to claim his body, insisting that the BMC first give a job to his son and the police lodge an FIR. Rajesh's kin continued their dharna at the hospital Saturday, refusing to claim his body even as the BMC assured them a Rs 30-lakh compensation. "No FIR was lodged against those responsible. Nor have they given an assurance about a job to Rajesh's son... We won't claim the body until he gets an appointment letter," Deepak, Rajesh's younger brother said. Suresh Goradiya, a worker who entered the tank with Rajesh, is in critical condition. **ENS**

UP farmer 'beaten up' by police dies; 6 cops among 10 booked

AMIT SHARMA & MANISH SHAHU
 MEERUT, NOVEMBER 11

SIX POLICEMEN in Uttar Pradesh's Bareilly and four others were booked in a murder case after a 48-year-old farmer they allegedly assaulted succumbed to his injuries on Friday night. The incident took place at Alampur Jafrabad village on November 8 when the police conducted a raid after getting information about gambling in the area. Bareilly SSP Ghule Sushil Chandrabhan suspended seven policemen, including two sub-inspectors on charges of negligence and said ASP (Rural) Mukesh Chand Mishra will conduct a probe.

As per an FIR registered at Bhamora police station, Santosh Sharma, a farmer, was returning home on November 8 when the incident took place. Santosh's younger brother Krishna Kumar Sharma told *The Indian Express* that his brother was passing through a thicket where a few people were playing cards when a police team arrived at the spot in an ambulance. On seeing the police, they escaped and the police caught Santosh. In the FIR, Krishna said that the policemen asked Santosh about the names of those who were gambling with cards. "Fearing enmity if he named villagers in this regard, my brother chose not to name anyone. The police then thrashed him with lathis and rifle butts and fled after he fell unconscious," the FIR said. "I saw the police thrashing my brother. On seeing us, the police escaped in the ambulance in which they came," said Krishna. "A case under IPC Section 302 (murder) has been registered. Seven policemen have been suspended on the basis of the FIR," said SSP Ghule. Locals rushed Santosh to a nearby hospital where he died on Friday. He is survived by his wife and three children. Kin of the deceased and villagers rushed to the police outpost demanding the arrest of the accused police officials. "All the police officials at the outpost fled for fear of being beaten by the enraged crowd," said Parmeshwar Kumari, the in-charge of Bhamora police station. "A probe is underway while a case has been registered against those involved. Action will be taken against them on the basis of the inquiry report," she added. On Krishna's complaint, a case has been lodged against the ambulance driver, two sub-inspectors and four constables and three unknown men on charges of murder and rioting. ASP Mishra said the police are awaiting the postmortem report to take further action.

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Online tenders are invited for Conversion of HT O/H 11 kv Open line (55 sqmm/ 100sqmm) to MVCC overhead conductor in jurisdiction of MGVC under "Kisan suryodaya yojana" (KSY) scheme on turnkey base, as per MGVC Minimum Technical Specifications, terms & condition of tender. Tender documents available on web-site: <https://mgvc.nprocure.com> (for online submission, view and download) and GUVNL / MGVC websites www.gseb.com & www.mgvcl.com (for view and download only). Interested vendors may surf the above web sites. **Note : Be in touch with our websites till opening of tender.**
 Date: 10.11.2023 **Chief Engineer (T&O)**

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Tender Notice No: (ID: 18182, 18367, 18376, 18352, 16873, 18226, 17625, 17260, 16627, 18188, 18206, 18310, 18399, 18433, 18482, 18457, 18580, 18619, 15508, 18753, 18921, 19922 & 19882)

Online tenders are invited from the Indian Manufacturers only for Purchase of (1) HD Rigid PVC Pipe (2) 63-100 KVA LTDB (3) 100A-200A Kit Kat Fuse (4) HT (11 KV) Aerial Bunch Cable of sizes: 3C X 70mm² + 70mm² & 3C X 95 mm² + 80 mm² (5) LT PVC Cable of Sizes: 4CX10mm² & 4CX16mm² (6) LT PVC Cable of sizes: 2C X 2.5 mm², 2C X 4 mm², 4C x 4mm² & 4C x 6mm² (7) 1KV DO Fuse (Poly) (8) 11KV Pin Insulator (Polymeric) (9) 11KV Disc Insulator (Polymeric) (10) 3 Ph. WHC static meter (10-60 Amp) with DLMS without MRI (11) Poly carbonate plastic seals of size: 20mm x20 mm x 8mm and (12) EHV Transformer Grade Oil (13) XLPE Insulated 3C LT Aerial Bunched (AB) Cable of sizes: 3Cx35+1Cx16+25 mm² & 3Cx50+1Cx25+35 mm² (14) 11KV 3C XLPE Cable of sizes: 95 mm², 185 mm² & 240 mm² (15) HT-LT Stay & LT Shackle Insulators (16) G. I. Wire 8 & 10 SWG and GI Stay wire 7/12 (17) VARIOUS CAPACITY OF CTPT Unit (18) XLPE Insulated 1C 35 mm² + 35 mm² LT ABC (19) 11 KV ABEB Switch (Poly) (20) GI Bolts for LT Shackle Insulators (21) 11KV Disc Hardware for 55mm² AAAC (22) HT Static TVM, 3 Ph.4 W -/5 Amp, Class 0.5S System (23) 3 PH LT CT Meter 40-200 Amp as per MGVCL's specifications, specimen, terms and conditions of tender. Tender documents available on web-site: <https://mgvcltender.nprocure.com> (for online submission, view and download) and GUVNL / MGVCL websites www.gseb.com & www.mgvcl.com (for view and download only). Interested vendors may surf the above web sites. **Note: Be in touch with our websites till opening of tender.**
Additional Chief Engineer (Proc)

WESTERN RAILWAY-VADODARA DIVISION
 'E-Tender Notice Electrical (Power) Deptt. Notice Inviting Tender EL/50/1/27 (23-24) Date : 08.11.2023 IMPROVEMENT TO WATERING AND DRAINAGE ARRANGEMENTS

Divisional Railway Manager (Elect), Western Railway, Vadodara Division for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender on Indian Railways website www.irps.gov.in from experienced and reliable contractors for the following works. Sr. No. 1 Tender No.: BRC-EL-P-20-2016-20-23-24-R Name of Work : Vadodara Division : Electrical work in connection with improvement to watering and drainage arrangements at various locations/ stations. Estimated Cost (₹) : ₹ 33,99,008.00 EMD (₹) : ₹ 1,88,000.00 Tender Fees : (₹) : NIL. E-Tender Closing Date : 04/12/2023. Website particulars: www.irps.gov.in 231
 Like us on: [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://www.facebook.com/WesternRly)

Haryana hooch toll rises to 18

Yamunanagar: With the death of six more people in the last 24 hours, the death toll in a suspected case of poisoning due to the consumption of spurious liquor has jumped to 18 in Haryana, officials said on Saturday. Yamunanagar Additional Superintendent of Police Himadree Kaushik on Saturday said seven people have been arrested in this case. More names came up in interrogation and they will be arrested soon, she said. **PTI**

BRIDGE

Dealer: South Vulnerable: Both

NORTH		SOUTH	
♠ D763	♠ A84	♥ QJ1092	♥ A5
♥ AK4	♥ A5	♦ AK5	♦ AK5
♦ 642	♦ A5	♣ 976	♣ AK5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1H		
Pass	2H	pass	4H
pass	pass	pass	

West leads the queen of diamonds and South observes that 3NT is cold and 4H is not. So much for always playing your eight card fits in four of a major. Where can a tenth trick come from?

The West hand: S-KJ5H-83D-QJ73C-J1042
 The East hand: S-Q102H-765 D-K1098C-Q83
 South has five heart tricks. There are no ruffing tricks in dummy. South has one diamond and two clubs and no chances for another trick in these suits. In spades, South has the ace and there is the chance for a second trick if spades divide 3-3.

There is one thing that South must not do. He must not draw too many trumps. If 4H is going to make, South has to lead spades and more spades and get lucky enough to find them dividing 3-3.

South will need hearts to be 3-2. He has to set up a long spade and then he has to have a way to get to dummy to use the spade. And, if he is to use the spade, he needs to be able to draw trumps while ending in dummy.

This means that South can play one round of trumps but not two. If South plays two rounds before attacking spades, the defenders may lead another trump, which will take the only entry out of dummy before you are ready.

Dealer: South Vulnerable: None

NORTH		SOUTH	
♠ 63	♠ AQ5	♥ AK9	♥ KJ
♥ B642	♥ AK9	♦ KJ	♦ KJ
♦ AQ1097	♦ KJ	♣ A9762	♣ A9762
♣ J3	♣ A9762		

West	North	East	South
	2NT		
pass	3C	pass	3D
pass	3NT	pass	pass
pass			

West leads the jack of spades and South wins East's king with the ace. The first thing that South noticed were the five diamonds in dummy. A nice, solid source of tricks. Should South keep his eyes on the diamonds?

SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2451

QUICK CLUES ACROSS

- Givers (6)
- Led Zeppelin's ____ to Heaven (8)
- Dispute, wrangle with (9)
- A minor car crash (colloquial) (5)
- Stream of water (5)
- The top figure in a fraction (9)
- Bungled (7)
- Told a whopper (4)
- Bric-a- ____ : a curio (4)
- Out of sorts (3,4)
- Inherent (9)
- Arrange the feathers (5)
- Fetch (5)
- Go beyond the limit, "To Hoover's" anagram ? (9)
- Demolishes (8)
- Constrictor snake (6)

DOWN

- Tirade (8)
- Birth of Christ (8)
- Less common (5)
- Rising air current (7)
- Flawed (9)
- Riches (6)
- Curdled milk, U.S. style (6)
- Mended socks (6)
- Forerunner (9)
- Any huge creature (8)
- Tiny sea organisms (8)
- Care (7)
- Stole (informal) (6)
- Teased; made fun of (6)
- Top-floor rooms (6)
- Annoying (5)

CRYPTIC CLUES ACROSS

- Renegade pedals madly (6)
- Puts lips out and separates (6,2)
- Placed Castro in charge of a republic nearby (5,4)
- City of judgment ? (5)
- Relating to deliveries some maintain at a loss (5)
- Original expert to knock out the words (9)
- Condensed to dopes outrageously (7)
- Whistle for a cask of wine (4)
- Gangs require a doctor qualified in surgery (4)
- Cry because one's fat? (7)
- Just like the original, Paul cited as being different (9)
- Father of the Parisian, one from an Italian city (5)
- Deposit for a house (5)

Solutions to 2450

QUICK CLUES 1 Edwina, 4 Disciple, 9 Terms, 10 Arthritis, 11 Echo, 12 Lawn, 13 Earns, 15 Typhoon, 16 Isy, 19 Mimi, 20 Nunney, 23 Tribe, 24 Sold, 25 Limp, 27 Temporary, 28 Canto, 29 Christen, 30 Szygy Down, 1 Entreaty, 2 Worships, 3 Noxy, 5 Intentionally, 6 Correspond, 7 Petard, 8 Excess, 10 At a snails pace, 14 Vociferous, 17 Leniency, 18 Symphony, 21 Static, 22 Dimmer, 26 Achy **CRYPTIC CLUES** Across: 1 Aubade, 4 Rissoles, 9 U-boat, 10 Tequilas, 11 Hack, 12 Wore, 13 Dream, 15 Bambino, 16 RSV, 19 Clue, 20 Turn-out, 23 Throw, 24 Co-ed, 25 Fla, 27 Mother-wit, 28 Cereh, 29 Call-boys, 30 Doesn't Down: 1 Abu Dhabi, 2 Boot camp, 3 Duty, 5 Inquest, 6 Skindivers, 7 Lulled, 8 Sesame, 10 Two bob each way, 14 Willow herb, 17 Tow-lines, 18 Straw hat, 21 Atomic, 22 Brutal, 26 Octo

If it's your Birthday

Sunday November 12

You may have decided to break free from a tired old routine but are currently undecided as to what to do next. Try out all the options on friends and family.

Monday November 13

Lunar patterns are building up and you're heading for an exciting and volatile period. You can get whatever is bugging you off your chest.

Tuesday October 14

Take the lead. Your planetary formations highlight the need for clear communication if you're accepting responsibility for group decisions.

Wednesday November 15

You're able to alternately charm people with your winning ways or threaten them with a proverbial big stick. You

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
 You must now pay greater attention to work, even if this goes against the grain. It may not be your responsibilities which come under scrutiny but those of someone with whom you are intimately involved.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
 The big change is triggered by Mercury's alignment with a sector of your chart which is profoundly creative. This gives you the chance to rethink your plans and proposals in the broadest sense, no matter whether they are strictly personal or purely professional.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
 In many respects life has been a bit gruelling over recent weeks, mainly because the planets have been in unhelpful positions. Now that Mercury, your planetary ruler, is changing signs, your fortunes will improve. Plus, your stars might be about to gain some more prosperous dimensions.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
 It's energetic Mars and mystical Neptune which get you going this week and next. One moment you'll be floating on cloud nine, the next you'll be down in the dumps after your hopes are deflated. Try and find a middle way.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
 You have much to boast about, but you must remember the virtues of humility. The effects of recent lunar alignments are still too strong for you to abandon important commitments or break arrangements. Remember that as a Leo, you have a duty to protect friends and relatives who are less well-off than you.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
 Very gradually the stars are moving from a creative and personally fulfilling position, to one that is going to bring more in the way of hard work. In the meantime, make the most of children's company. Moneywise, you're approaching a period of rewards and windfalls but not just yet, first of all you have to sow the seeds.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
 Travel still seems to be very strongly indicated in your stars. However, journeys undertaken for purely personal reasons will be much more significant than those connected to work and other responsibilities.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)
 Mercury, the planet of communication, takes up a more encouraging aspect to your sign, an indication that your mood is about to improve. Put forward your own unique ideas with the confidence they deserve. If you're frustrated at work, you must be prepared to wait another month.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 23)
 With Jupiter, your ruling planet, so strongly placed, what can go wrong? Not much is the answer, so you can afford to be confident. That doesn't mean that you must start throwing your money around, though. There is every opportunity for getting out and meeting new people. Take advantage of bright and bubbly invitations.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
 Energetic Mars forms its next alignment with nebulous Neptune very soon, causing much confusion. This is, to put it mildly, not the best time to deal with any complicated practical issues unless you first check out the legal background. Do your best to put colleagues, associates and friends at their ease.



AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
 Mercury, that most witty and versatile of planets, has entered your sign, bringing a much-needed shot of energy. Use this time wisely by arranging meetings, interviews and discussions at which you can put over your point of view. And vivacious Venus lends an air of mystery to romantic encounters.

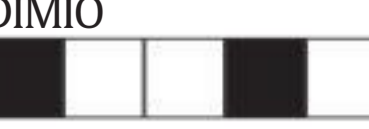

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
 Enthusiastic stars are shining, and inspired contacts with new friends and even with complete strangers should now start to bear fruit. Somehow you will begin to feel much more optimistic about your future.

JUMBLED WORDS

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

____ the root and stem of all evil. - Plato (9)

OTAER AETTNN
 

DIMIO AINSCG
 

ANSWER: ORATE, IDIOM, TENANT, CASING

SUDOKU 5379

Difficulty Level 2s
Instructions
 To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

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

1								9
6		7	3		1	8		5
		5			3			
		1	6		5	4	3	
			9	8				
		8	4		6	2	9	
			9			5		
8		1	7		5	9		6
2								4

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5378

2	1	6	3	4	9	5	7	8
3	7	8	5	1	6	9	4	2
9	4	5	2	7	8	6	3	1
6	5	7	8	2	3	1	9	4
4	3	9	6	5	1	2	8	7
8	2	1	7	9	4	3	5	6
1	9	3	4	6	7	8	2	5
7	6	2	9	8	5	4	1	3
5	8	4	1	3	2	7	6	9

9 EXPRESS NETWORK

Rajasthan cop, arrested in minor girl's rape case, dismissed

DEEP MUKHERJEE
JAIPUR, NOVEMBER 11

A POLICE sub-inspector in Rajasthan's Dausa district was dismissed from service on Saturday after he was arrested for allegedly raping a minor Dalit girl. The incident took place Friday afternoon, and led to massive protests outside a police station, with protesters roughing up the accused police officer, identified as Bhupendra Singh (54), who was posted on election duty when the incident took place, police said.

"The accused sub-inspector was posted on election duty and was staying at a rented room. The incident took place Friday afternoon after he had completed his duty," Dausa Additional SP Bajrang Singh said Saturday.

"The parents of the minor girl said the girl came to them crying, which led them to suspect that something untoward had happened. She was holding a Rs 50 note. Based on the information, we identified Singh as the accused," the ASP said, adding that the girl was aged 4-5 years.

"A case has been registered against the accused sub-inspector under sections including IPC section 376 (rape) and relevant sections of the POCSO and SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. We have arrested the accused and the protests have ended," the ASP added. On Saturday, the Rajasthan Police said in a statement that the accused officer was dismissed from service.

After the incident came to light, BJP Rajya Sabha MP Kirodi Lal Meena reached the spot and sat on a dharna, along with his supporters. BJP has slammed the Ashok Gehlot-led Congress government in Rajasthan over the incident.

Condemning the incident, Congress leader Sachin Pilot said Saturday that strict action should be taken.

"I feel that strictest action should be taken... It would be good if justice is served as soon as possible after taking action," he said.

Valley houseboat fire: 3 Bangladeshi tourists dead

BASHAARAT MASOOD
SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 11

THREE TOURISTS, who officials said were from Bangladesh, died Saturday when a massive fire gutted five houseboats in Srinagar's Dal Lake. Three bodies, one of them believed to be of a woman, were recovered when State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) personnel were clearing debris following the fire, officials said.

"Three tourists from Bangladesh, namely Anindaya Kowshal, Das Gupta and Mohammad Moinud, who were staying in houseboat 'Safeena', lost their lives in the devastating fire," police said in a statement. Officials said DNA samples had been taken from the bodies to

further confirm their identities. The fire is believed to have begun in one houseboat before it engulfed surrounding houseboats as well. The cause of the fire has not yet been established.

Apart from the five houseboats being gutted, the blaze also damaged seven huts in the surrounding area. Fire and emergency services, along with the SDRF, had rushed to the spot. Senior civil and police officials, including Srinagar Deputy Commissioner Ajaz Asad, visited the site to take stock of the situation. Officials said records with travel operators suggested that the three people who died hailed from Bangladesh and were on a tourist trip to the Valley.

Police said several other tourists were evacuated from the



Five houseboats anchored in the Dal Lake were gutted. ANI

nearby houseboats immediately after the fire erupted.

J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha condoled the deaths. "I am deeply pained by the loss of lives due to the unfortunate fire incident at Dal Lake, Srinagar. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. I have directed the District Administration to provide all necessary assistance to the affected persons," Sinha said.

Houseboats, made of wood, are vulnerable to fire incidents. In April this year, seven houseboats were burnt in a blaze in Nageen Lake, which is also in Srinagar. Officials said they are yet to assess the damage caused by the blaze but estimated that property worth crores of rupees was likely destroyed.

Land-for-jobs case: ED arrests Tejashwi aide

Businessman Amit Katyal questioned by the agency six times in the past

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate (ED) has arrested businessman Amit Katyal, a close aide of Bihar Deputy CM and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav, in connection with the land-for-jobs case. Katyal is the promoter of AK Infosystem, an official said, confirming the arrest.

Katyal and AK Infosystem have been under the scanner of the CBI and the ED in connection with the land-for-jobs scam.

Katyal was detained by the ED Friday after questioning. A Delhi Court Saturday sent Katyal to ED custody till November 16. The ED case, filed under the PMLA, stems from a CBI probe into allegations that people were given employment in railways — when former Bihar CM Lalu Prasad was the railway minister — in return for land parcels gifted or sold at cheap rates to his family and associates.

In March this year, the ED had searched multiple premises linked to Katyal. After registration of the enforcement case in information report (ECIR), the ED summoned Katyal on several occasions and he was questioned six times by the agency.

An ED official said Katyal's family owns the Krishi group of companies and has been in the business of breweries and distilleries since 1983, and in the real estate business since 2008. "It was found that the company, M/s Iceberg Industries Ltd, which was previously known as Iceberg Consultants Limited, was incorporated in 1994 and Katyal had become its whole-time director from the date of its incorporation. The company, for the purpose of setting up a distillery and brewery plant, had purchased a land of

around 12 acres in Bihar's Bihta. He then set up a plant for distillery under the company M/s Iceberg Industries Ltd," the official said.

"It was also found that since Katyal's distillery was operating in Bihar, he had started purchasing small chunks of lands/plots in Bihar in the name of several companies such as M/s In-Shape Health & Resorts Pvt. Ltd., M/s Iceberg Hotel & Resorts Ltd., and M/s AK Infosystem Pvt. Ltd. during 2006-2011," the official added.

ED has found during its investigation that Katyal was the director and major shareholder of M/s AK Infosystem Pvt Ltd (AKIPL) at the time when the company had received a land parcel from a relative of a candidate, who was selected as a Group-D substitute in the Railways. Later, Katyal handed over the company to the family members of Lalu Prasad in 2014.

A property in New Friends Colony, New Delhi, which was searched by the ED in March, is said to be the registered address of AKIPL. According to the CBI FIR, AKIPL got a land parcel in lieu of a railway job given to a candidate. In 2014, majority shares of company were purchased by Rabri Devi, who was appointed a director in the firm along with Tejashwi's sisters Chanda and Ragini, ED officials said. Sources said though the New Friends Colony property is shown in the records as the registered address of AKIPL, it is being "used as a residential property by Tejashwi Yadav."

According to ED officials, Rabri Devi and Hema Yadav separately received two land parcels each from candidates who got railway jobs. These land parcels were bought at a price of Rs 7.5 lakh and were then allegedly sold to M/s Meridian Constructions India Ltd, a company run by Abu Dojana, for Rs 3.5 crore.

One dies in stampede at Surat station for Bihar-bound train

KAMAAL SAIED
SURAT, NOVEMBER 11

A 36-YEAR-old man was killed and two other people, including a woman, were injured in a stampede while trying to board a Bhagalpur-bound train from the Surat railway station Saturday morning. The injured were taken to a hospital while a few others were given timely CPR by GRP at the Surat railway station. The railway station has been witnessing huge crowds due to the festive season with the migrant workers heading home.

The deceased, Ankit Virendrakumar Singh, 36, worked in a diamond factory, while his brother Ramprakash Virendrakumar Singh, 42, was injured. A woman, Sujia Singh, 30 also sustained injuries. The brothers lived in Lal Darwaja area of Surat. Ramprakash works as a security guard in a textile factory. Sujia stays in the Saroli area and was on her way to her native place at Chitrukoot in UP. SMIMER hospital doctors said Sujia and Ramprakash are stable.

On Saturday morning, over 5,000 passengers were waiting to board trains on platform number



A passenger tries to enter a train through a window at Surat Railway station on Saturday. PTI

4 and were struggling to get into the coaches of Surat-Bhagalpur express train.

Western Railway GRP Superintendent Sarojini Kumar said, "There was overcrowding of passengers boarding the Surat-Bhagalpur train. In a bid to enter into the coaches, people were pushing each other, which led to one death and injuries to two. These passengers had tickets, and they intended to get on the train. We have deployed our teams in dif-

ferent areas and see that the stations do not get more crowded. We have also requested railway authorities not to issue passengers more waiting (list) tickets to overcome such overcrowding. Our teams are well trained in giving CPR. At present, our main focus is reducing overcrowding at the Surat Railway station; for that, we have planned a strategy and guided our staff to work on it. We will do it in coordination with railway officials and the RPF."

AMU authorities said neither the UP Police nor the ATS so far verified the credentials of the arrested persons. The ATS statement said the fresh arrests were made based on information collected from the three accused arrested earlier. ATS said Nazim came in contact with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the agency said in a release.

One AMU student, 2 alumni among 4 held over 'ISIS link': ATS

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, NOVEMBER 11

DAYS AFTER arresting three alleged ISIS operatives, the Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) of the Uttar Pradesh Police Saturday arrested their four associates, including two former and a present student of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), for their alleged links with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the agency said in a release.

Rakib Imam Ansari, a 29-year-old B.Tech and M.Tech graduate from AMU from Aligarh Friday, the statement said. The ATS nabbed Naved Siddiqui (23), who was pursuing a BSc from Aligarh Muslim University; Mohd Noman (27), a BA (Honours) from the university; and 23-year-old Mohd Nazim, a graduate; from Sambhal on Saturday, it said.

ADG, ATS, Mohit Agarwal said, "UP ATS has so far arrested seven persons of the module. Further investigation into the

case is on." Banned ISIS literature, mobile phones and pen drives were seized from the arrested accused, the ATS added.

AMU authorities said neither the UP Police nor the ATS so far verified the credentials of the arrested persons. The ATS statement said the fresh arrests were made based on information collected from the three accused arrested earlier. ATS said Nazim came in contact with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the agency said in a release.

"The accused came in contact with each other during meetings of SAMU (Students of Aligarh Muslim University) (SAMU)," he added.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

In a first for Odisha, minor found guilty in drugs case

SUJIT BISOYI
BHUBANESWAR, NOVEMBER 11

A JUVENILE justice board in Odisha has convicted a juvenile over seizure of contraband heroin from him — in the state's first conviction of a minor under the narcotics law.

The board held the minor guilty Friday and sent him to a special home in Berhampur for three years for the offence under Section 21 (c) of the NDPS Act, 1985.

Police officers said conviction of a juvenile in an NDPS case is rare in India. A senior STF source said that this is the first such con-

viction in the state.

The court has directed officials to provide the child with reformative service including education, skill development, counselling, behaviour modification therapy and psychiatric support during the minor's stay in the special home.

The Special Task Force (STF) in Bhubaneswar had seized 1.26 kg of brown sugar from three persons including the minor on August 12, 2021, said officials. STF is a special Odisha Police wing to curb organised crime.

The STF apprehended the three persons, said to be dealers, and seized the contraband and other incriminating articles.

Blaming state govt for his debt, Kerala farmer ends life

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, NOVEMBER 11

A PADDY farmer in Kerala's Kuttanad region died by suicide on Saturday and left a note blaming the state government for leaving him in debt.

K G Prasad (55), from Thakazhy, part of the Kuttanad region in Alappuzha district, died early Saturday after having allegedly consumed poison Friday night. He was the district president of the Kisan Sangh, a farmers' body linked to the RSS. Police recovered his "suicide note", in which he said banks were denying him loans citing a pending "PRS loan", which the government had not paid off.

A paddy receipt sheet, or PRS, is issued to farmers after the state government agency, Supplyco, procures paddy from them. Farmers can use the PRS to avail bank loans equivalent to the price of procured paddy. The state government is then supposed to pay the bank and close the loan.

"Now banks are denying me loans on the grounds that I have a

PRS loan. I had availed a PRS loan towards the cost of the paddy I had supplied to the government. The government is responsible for repaying the PRS loan along with the interest. Hence, the government is responsible for my death," the suspected suicide note said.

Before his death, Prasad had sent a voice message to a friend, in which he blamed the government for not repaying the loan, and said: "I have lost. I am a failed farmer. Now I am a farmer with debt." Kerala Civil Supplies Minister G R Anil told reporters in New Delhi he would comment after looking into the matter.

Leader of Opposition, VD Sathesnan, alleged that the state government failed in paddy procurement and payments for farmers have been due. After visiting a hospital in Thiruvalla, where the farmer's mortal remains were kept, BJP state chief K Surendran blamed the Pinarayi Vijayan government for Prasad's death. Governor Arif Mohammed Khan visited the hospital. He said he would take up farmers' issues with the state and central governments.

—WITH PTI INPUTS

KTF case: Four named in NIA supplementary chargesheet

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

THE NIA filed a supplementary chargesheet before the Special NIA Court in Delhi against four persons in connection with the Khalistan Tiger Force recruitment and arms smuggling case.

According to the NIA, the persons named in the chargesheet are Amritpal Singh alias Ammy, Amrik Singh, both deported from the Philippines, Jassa Singh and Gagandeep Singh alias Mithi. Earlier, the agency had filed a chargesheet against nine accused in the case on July 22.

"Twelve other members of the Khalistan Tiger Force (KTF) terrorist outfit and their associates, linked to Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) and the KTF, are under investigation," an NIA spokesperson said. "Canada-based Arshdeep Singh alias Arsh Dala, designated a listed individual terrorist, in association with accused Manpreet Singh alias Peeta, had indoctrinated and recruited Amritpal, Amrik, Jassa and Gagandeep," the spokesperson said.



UP Governor Anandiben Patel and CM Yogi Adityanath receive a certificate from Guinness World Records during 'Deepotsav' celebrations in Ayodhya on Saturday. PTI

Ayodhya lit up by record 22L diyas for Deepotsav

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, NOVEMBER 11

THE CITY of Ayodhya on Saturday witnessed the celebration of the seventh Deepotsav with CM Yogi Adityanath appealing to residents to ensure a "historic welcome" to PM Narendra Modi when he visits to seat Lord Ram in his grand temple on January 22. "It's the responsibility of the people of Ayodhya that when the PM comes on January 22 to seat Lord Ram in his grand temple, his welcome in Ayodhya should also be historic," said

Adityanath during the Deepotsav celebration where more than 22 lakh diyas were lit on the banks of the Saryu setting a new world record.

He said "people of Ayodhya should start preparations for that historic programme (inauguration of the Ram temple) from now". He claimed work is "being done on 178 development projects worth Rs 30,500 crore in Ayodhya. If the private sector is also added, in the coming time, projects worth Rs 50,000 crore will be seen taking shape here.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Pinarayi on Gaza war: Centre's position does not reflect sentiments of people

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, NOVEMBER 11

ADDRESSING A Palestine solidarity rally in Kozhikode, state Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Saturday said the Centre is standing with the assailants while people of the country have been expressing pro-Palestine sentiments.

Vijayan said though BJP has a politics in which that party finds pride in siding with Israel, that should not become the stand of the country. "The people of India are with the people of Palestine... But the Indian government is not

reflecting the sentiments of the people," Vijayan said.

Vijayan accused the Centre of not siding with the global position in the United Nations asking the heinous massacre of Palestine people be stopped.

He said the BJP government has "insulted the country in front of the world by abstaining from voting on the resolution demanding a ceasefire". The rally was held under the aegis of the CPI(M) and the event marked the death anniversary of Palestine leader Yasser Arafat.

Apart from Left leaders, representatives of various Muslim organisations, including pro-IJML SAMASTHA, addressed the rally.

Referring to Congress' stand on the Israel-Palestine conflict, Vijayan said "certain parties which claim influence across the country are missing... There is no unity in their voice. We had already seen that in Kozhikode... It is not due to any confusion, but due to lack of a clear and concrete stand," he said.

The chief minister said for a long period, India had only recognised Palestine.

"But that stand was watered down and India began recognizing Israel during the days of Narasimha Rao. India was then succumbing to the US pressure. What then began has been given a strong figure by BJP," he said.

2 sisters 'die by suicide' at Agra's Brahma Kumaris ashram, 2 held

AMIT SHARMA
MEERUT NOVEMBER 11

TWO EMPLOYEES of a Brahma Kumaris ashram in Agra have been arrested and the search is on for two others after two sisters staying at the ashram died by suicide late Friday night, accusing them of usurping their money to the tune of Rs 25 lakh in the suicide notes left behind, police said.

ACP, Kheragarh in Agra, Mahesh Kumar said, "Elkta (37) and Shikha (34), living at the Brahma Kumaris ashram on the Jagner-Basai road in Agra for the past one year, hanged themselves with sarees from the ceiling of their room around 11 pm Friday. The sisters had sent suicide notes to the Brahma Kumaris group and their family members on WhatsApp before taking the extreme step."

"After getting their WhatsApp message, their brother Sonu, who lives around 13 km away, rushed to ashram only to find his sisters hanging. We have taken in our possession the two suicide notes and the victims' phones. The victims accused four employees of the ashram of usurping their money to the tune of Rs 25 lakh," the ACP said. "In her suicide note, my younger sister Shikha asked me to bring the four accused to book and ensure they get stringent punishment. My sisters said the evidence of all prevailing corrupt practices at the ashram is present on its premises," Sonu said. According to police, the sisters, in their notes, accused Neeraj Agarwal, Guddan, Poonam and Tarachand of the ashrams of usurping their money.

"The sisters alleged Neeraj usurped Rs 25 lakh collected from different sources for needy women and bought a flat. A case under IPC section 306 (abetment to suicide) has been filed at Jagner police station against the ashram employees named in the notes. We have arrested Guddan and Tarachand and effort is on to nab the other two," the ACP said. Ashram officials could not be reached for their comments.

Smart Cities ranking: Surat tops, UTs, N-E cities in bottom 10

TRACKING CITIES



A bird's eye view of Ahmedabad. Express

TOP 10

■ SURAT ■ AGRA ■ AHMEDABAD ■ VARANASI
■ BHOPAL ■ TUMAKURU ■ UDAIPUR ■ MADURAI ■ KOTA
■ SHIVAMOGGA

BOTTOM 10

■ KAVARATTI ■ PUDUCHERRY ■ PORT BLAIR
■ IMPHAL ■ SHILLONG ■ DIU ■ GUWAHATI ■ AIZAWL
■ GANGTOK ■ PASIGHAT

Source: Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs data as on Nov 10

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

AS THE Smart Cities Mission approaches the June 2024 deadline, cities in Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan account for the top 10 in terms of completion of projects and financial progress, while UTs and cities in Northeastern states are in the lowest 10 of the 100, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

As per the Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry data as on November 3, about 22% of total projects (1,745 of 7,947) that account for 33% (Rs 57,028 crore of Rs 1.70 lakh crore) of the total cost are still ongoing. The majority of projects (6,202) have been completed, data shows. As of November 10, ministry data showed Surat (Gujarat) topped in terms of completion of projects, fund usage and other criteria, followed by Agra (UP), Ahmedabad (Gujarat),

Varanasi (UP) and Bhopal (MP) in the top five. The rest of the top 10 include Tumakuru (Karnataka), Udaipur (Rajasthan), Madurai (TN), Kota (Rajasthan) and Shivamogga (Karnataka).

On the other hand, the UTs and Northeastern cities have continued to trail. The bottom 10 cities are Kavaratti (Lakshadweep), Puducherry, Port Blair (Andaman and Nicobar Islands), Imphal (Manipur), Shillong (Meghalaya), Diu, Guwahati (Assam), Aizawl (Mizoram), Gangtok (Sikkim) and Pasighat (AP). Sources said this was due to lack of capacities in smaller cities. However, an official said the ongoing projects are likely to meet the June 2024 deadline. Launched in 2015, the Smart Cities Mission selected 100 cities through a competition in phases from January 2016 to June 2018. The selected cities were expected to finish all their proposed projects in five years from their selection. In May this year, the deadline for all cities was extended to June 2024.

Across THE AISLE



PCHIDAMBARAM

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Government in denial, economy in distress

THERE ARE economists and economists. There are also bank economists. If you believe some economists, nothing is wrong with India's economy or its management and, even better, nothing can go wrong ever. If you believe bank economists, RBI is in heaven and all is well with India's economy (until the RBI drops a hint to the contrary). I wish they were as true as they are loyal.

On October 1, 2023, we stepped into the last half year of the present government that will complete 10 years on May 30, 2024. April and May 2024 will be a virtual holiday for governance. It is therefore a good time to review the state of the economy.

In a developing country like India, the GDP growth rate is the one number, more than any other metric, that reflects the state of the economy. Let me therefore begin with the growth rate in the ten years of BJP's rule. According to NSO's figures, in the first nine years the average growth rate was 5.7 per cent. Adding the growth rate projected by the government of 6.5 per cent in 2023-24, the average for the ten years will be 5.8 per cent. Compare this to the growth rates achieved under UPA-I and UPA-II. The average of the five years of UPA-I was 8.5 per cent and the average of the ten years of UPA-I and UPA-II was 7.5 per cent.

Some economists may dismiss the decline of 1.8 per cent as inconsequential. That would be completely wrong.

The decline has grave implications for national security, infrastructure spending, investments, job creation, welfare measures, household consumption, savings, poverty reduction, and improvements in education and health.

TWO TOP CONCERNS

The two concerns uppermost in the minds of the people are *price rise* and *unemployment*. Thanks to rising prices, every family, except the rich — say, the top 10 per cent — finds it difficult to balance the household budget. The All India Consumer Prices Index (New Series) that stood at 112 in 2013-14 rose to 174 in December 2022. Food inflation is close to 10 per cent. The immediate consequence is a cut in household consumption. At every level of income, households are economising on expenditure or dipping into their savings. Net financial assets of households have plummeted to a low of 5.1 per cent. FMCG companies have introduced smaller packages for the same price to retain brand loyalty. The reduced numbers in the sale of two wheelers is a good indicator of the impact of price rise on household consumption.

The other top concern is unemployment. Contrary to claims, millions of jobs have not been created in the last 10 years and certainly not the promised 2 crore jobs a year (since explained as an

election *jumla*). The data shows that in every year of the last 10 years, except one, the unemployment rate has been above 7 per cent. The unemployment rate among graduates is 42 per cent according to the State of Working India 2023 report. The unemployment rate among youth (15-24 years) stood at 23.22 per cent in 2022. Most 'employment' today is self-employment (57 per cent). The proportion of regular wage employees has fallen from 24 per cent to 21 per cent.

CMIE data shows that the number of government jobs declined by 22 per cent under the present government (during 2015-2023).

READING TEA LEAVES

The Ministry of Finance publishes a monthly review. The September 2023 Review released on October 23 speaks in code language: risks to the near term global outlook, persistent cost pressures, upward drift in inflation expectations, policy rates higher for longer, abrupt reassessment of liquidity and credit risks, adverse supply shocks in commodity markets and spike in energy prices. In plain English, the Review's sombre conclusion is that the economic outlook is gloomy, growth will slow down, prices will rise, interest rates will be higher, household consumption will be reduced, savings will decline and borrowings will increase.

An economist of a rating agency wrote, recently, "Bank credit growth remains strong at over 15 per cent, with retail credit growth at over 18 per cent." Impressive indeed, until one drills into the data and discovers that credit growth is driven by growth in personal loans (23 per cent) and gold loans (22 per cent). Credit growth to industry in August 2023 was just 6.1 per cent. The average monthly income has fallen by 9.2 per cent over the last four quarters (from Rs 12,700 to Rs 11,600) and the average daily wage for a rural casual labourer has fallen from Rs 409 to Rs 388. It is a fair inference that the growth in personal loans and gold loans was for consumption. Reading the tea leaves can be a hazardous exercise.

THREE ENGINES STALLED

Economists have pointed out that the engine of government investment alone seems to be working while private investment, private consumption and exports have stalled. There are ways and means to accelerate exports, stimulate private investment and encourage more consumption. As long as the government is in denial of the weaknesses and threats it cannot find the strengths and the opportunities. It has been a hard autumn, the winter could be harsh and we can only hope that spring will bring cheer.

Fifth COLUMN
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Dark shadows over Diwali

THE ONLY way to begin a column that appears on Diwali morning is to start by wishing all of you the very best for this most auspicious and beautiful of our festivals. My personal wish today is that next year brings a Diwali that is less shadowed by war and death. I do not know about you but when I light the 'diyas' tonight and seek the blessings of the Goddess Lakshmi I will find it hard not to think about the horrors unfolding in Gaza. It is heartbreaking to see children dying for reasons they cannot understand, and horrifying to see people fleeing from homes that they may not return to because they may have been destroyed by bombs.

Having said this I would like to reiterate what I have said before in this column, that the reason why the people of Gaza are suffering is because of Hamas. This would not be happening, and could stop quickly, if Hamas freed the Israeli hostages that it has now hidden in its dreadful network of tunnels for more than a month. Why do they not do this? And why are countries like Iran, Russia, China, and every Islamic country not putting pressure on Hamas to stop this evil war? There is pressure on Israel from its allies and because these are democratic countries, there have been huge protests in London, New York, Paris, and Berlin in support of Palestine. This does not make Israel the villain of this horror story. The villain remains Hamas and far too many people seem to have forgotten this.

For me, this Diwali is not the happiest for domestic reasons as well. Since today is when we celebrate the Goddess of Wealth it has worried me to see that in the past week there have been political leaders who appear to celebrate the survival of poverty. Poor people and poverty are handy props in election season, because then politicians who have failed to deliver prosperity spend their time promising scraps from the high table to those living in poverty. Chief Ministers, desperate for re-election, have been distributing charity in the name of welfare as if it was their personal money that they were spending.

Promises of monthly pocket money for women and promises of more quotas based on caste have been so recklessly made that in doing these things they have virtually admitted that India is still a very, very poor country. The Prime Minister who often rails against freebies has joined the 'povertarian' club by promising that cheap food grain will continue to be supplied to 80 crore Indians for another five years. Are there 80 crore Indians too poor to buy food at market prices? And, if there are then we need to forget about that dream of becoming a developed country in the next decade.

When political leaders spend taxpayers' money on handing out charity, they fail to tell voters that if they were not spending money this way, there would be more money to spend on schools, hospitals, roads and creating real jobs. They fail to tell them that no country in the world has ever got rich from distributing largesse to poor people instead of helping them escape poverty. Countries that are rich have invested wisely in prosperity and not poverty. If India is not yet counted among them, it is because of 'socialist' economic policies that made our unwise leaders squander money on giving the poor charity. Socialism of this kind has proved to be a failure. But because most of our leaders have spent their formative years in socialist times, they remain stuck in ideas that should have died long ago.

As the only civilisation in the world that worships the Goddess of Wealth and Prosperity on our most important festival, we should instead celebrate the creation of wealth. This is something we have not learned to do because it is not just our political leaders but our 'intellectuals' who continue to cling to economic ideas that belong in the garbage bin. Perhaps our political leaders and thinkers will only discover they were wrong when we spend more decades distributing charity without getting any closer to helping our most desperate citizens escape the shackles of poverty.

That is a truly gloomy thought, but it is a gloomy time. At a personal level I admit that I have been so depressed by events in the Middle East, and the low quality of the campaign promises being made in this election season that I have found it hard to enjoy Diwali festivities like I usually do. When I light my 'diyas' tonight and pay my obeisance to the Goddess I shall make a wish that by next week someone like the Israeli hostages have been miraculously freed. And, that the bombing of Gaza miraculously ends and there can be the first glimmers of peace between Israel and Palestine. I will make this wish knowing in my heart that peace will only be possible if Hamas and other jihadi terrorist organizations are crushed once and for all.

Meanwhile may you have a wonderful Diwali and may the coming year bring prosperity and good fortune to your families, to our country and to the world. If things get better, I promise that next Diwali I will write a piece full of joy and sparkle. This year it has been too hard to do.

Nitish's remarks are crude, but don't insult women

She SAID
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EVER SINCE Nitish Kumar made his ill-thought-out remarks on birth control in the Bihar Assembly, there have been many gesticulations and expressions of disgust. Worthies have wrung their hands and raised their fists, appalled at this abominable low in public discourse.

Leading the charge was Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who at a rally in Madhya Pradesh's Guna said, "One of the big leaders of INDI Alliance, who roams around with the flag of their alliance... that leader said indecent things in the Assembly, where mothers and sisters were also present... He doesn't have any shame... Those who have such an attitude towards mothers and sisters, can they ever do good for you? How low will you stoop? And you are humiliating the country in the world. My mothers and sisters, I will not back down and will do whatever possible for your respect."

The same rhetoric, about the Bihar CM disrespecting women — more specifically, "mothers and sisters" — has been repeated by many BJP leaders.

But here's the thing: While what Nitish said is undoubtedly crude and graphic, it in no way insults women. The idea that anything related to sex insults "mothers and sisters" is rooted in patriarchy.

When considering a "vulgar" remark, the context in which it was uttered is important. Nitish was speaking about the relative autonomy over reproduction that educated women have, and it is an important and valid point. He was not smirking and looking at women while he said so, he was elaborating upon his argument, although without the proper vocabulary to do so. Even the Supreme Court, in a 2014 obscenity trial, had pointed out that the potentially obscene material has to be "taken as a whole" and seen within the context of what it wants to convey.

As stated earlier, the remarks are indeed crude and rather juvenile. But crassness is equally distasteful to anyone, regardless of their gender. Where does the question of insulting women come in? From the idea that the fairer sex is too delicate to hear all things carnal, lest it corrupt their innocent minds.

The whole rhetoric of "mothers and sisters" is based on the patriarchal notion of "honour", the one concept that has done the

most disservice to women. It is this notion of honour that is behind our society's collective failure to grow up about sex. It reduces all conversations about sex to something vulgar and salacious, not meant for respectable women like "mothers and sisters", and prevents much-needed dialogue on safe sex and birth control.

Nitish Kumar talked of educated women asking their husbands to pull out before ejaculation, so as to prevent unwanted pregnancies. He said this can control population. The point is very much about women empowerment, about giving women information and control over their reproductive decisions. To see something prurient and suggestive in this — which would definitely have been offensive — simply shows that in the listener's repressed mind, any straight talk about sex is automatically dirty talk.

This, of course, is related to another issue: the extreme difficulty of having a conversation in Hindi about sex, without sounding like an incomprehensible Biology textbook or a C-grade movie character. North India is among the most populous regions of the most populous nation in the world. If the dominant language here lacks the vocabulary for holding non-squirming conversations about birth control, it shows how enmeshed in shame and honour sex still is. And the brunt of this is of course borne by women, made to bear child after child without being physically, emotionally, or financially up to it. We need more political leaders to talk about sex and birth control, and it is shushing such conversations that actually harms mothers and sisters.

Much worse has been said about women by political leaders before this, and the fact that the heaviest of our political heavyweights chose to lend his weight to this raises a Rs 50-crore question: Are remarks that outrage the patriarchal notion of our modesty really a bigger problem than those that outrightly attack our bodies, autonomy, and rights as equal human beings?

This is not to say Nitish Kumar deserves no blame at all. He is a seasoned politician who has tailored policies for women throughout his tenure. He should have known he was making an important point, and should have made the effort to come up with an effective — and scientifically accurate — way to make it. His words, his laughter, and silly hand gestures have deflected attention to something else altogether, and the row will possibly prevent other politicians from raising similar issues. Amid the massive backlash, the Bihar CM has apologised with folded hands. The only saving grace is he did not direct his apology to "mothers and sisters" alone.

history
HEADLINE
ADRIJAROY CHOWDHURY

THAT THE premier engineering institute IIT-Madras found its first home abroad on a small archipelago located on the East coast of Africa is hardly surprising. Zanzibar, a semi-autonomous Tanzanian province, shares historical links with India that go as long back in time as the 16th century or even further. Indians did not just form a robust diaspora community in Zanzibar in terms of numbers, they were also prosperous, politically active and found themselves in a racially privileged position.

Social scientist Saada Wahab, in a paper published by the Gottingen University Press in 2022, has suggested that traders from India along with those from Persia and Arabia had commercial links with the East African coast that went as long back as the first millennium CE.

A Greek written record dated to the first century CE mentions Indian goods on the east coast of Africa. Travellers such as al-Masudi in the ninth century CE and al-Idrisi in the 12th century narrated stories of Indian trade links with East Africa. Indian-made glass beads, cotton clothes, measuring scales, weighing systems and cowries found in archaeological excavations in this region point to the extent of the involvement of those from the Indian subcontinent in East Africa's economic history.

Records suggest that by the time the Portuguese explorer Vasco Da Gama reached the coastal cities of East Africa in the 15th and early 16th centuries, he was surprised to find a large number of Hindus and Muslims from India in the region, most of them being traders from Gujarat.

The Portuguese arrival and intervention in East African coastal trade, in fact, destroyed the African and Arabic trade links, but was less disruptive towards trade links with India. Traders from India of non-Muslim lineage are known to have found themselves at an advantageous position under the Portuguese.

Historian Edward Alpers in his article, 'Gujarat and the trade of East Africa' (1976) noted that "the Portuguese were determined to eliminate Muslim merchants, especially Arabs. Accordingly, the Hindu and Jain merchants of Gujarat were ideally suited to further increase their domination of the traditional trade of Asia."

In the case of Zanzibar though, the real fillip for Indian migration happened in 1648 when Saif bin Sultan of the Yaruba dynasty of Oman defeated the Portuguese at Mombasa and drove them away from East Africa. Zanzibar then turned into an overseas territory of Oman. Perhaps the most important event that helped consolidate

Zanzibar: For centuries, a home to Indians; now an IIT



The House of Wonders at Stone Town in Zanzibar. Source: Wikipedia

Indian diaspora in Zanzibar happened in 1840 when the Omani ruler, Said bin Sultan, shifted his capital there from Muscat.

As noted by historian Ned Bertz in his article, 'The Indian Diaspora in Tanzania' (2021), at that time, there were over a thousand Indians, mostly from peninsular Gujarat and adjacent Kutch in residence in the Omani court in Muscat, plus a few hundred already in Zanzibar in addition to scattered small settlements in the African mainland opposite to the archipelago. Said convinced the Indians settled in Muscat to move with him to Zanzibar and settle and spread their commerce there. Consequently, he also offered them tax-free trade, protections and incentives, apart from installing them in important government positions such as that of the collector of customs at Zanzibar port.

Indians invested heavily in commercial enterprises based in Zanzibar, profiting abundantly from them and finding themselves in possession of significant property. They also financed slaving expeditions and were known to be slave owners themselves. Bertz writes that the "booming economy and abundant opportunities to garner wealth attracted migrants from India, especially those possessing capital, and their population in Zanzibar topped two thousand in the 1850s, three thousand in the 1860s, four thousand in the 1870s and totaled about 5,500 by 1880".

In an interview with The Indian Express, Bertz explained that "this relative prosperity marked them (the Indian diaspora), as a privileged, but sometimes resented, minority in the transition to African-led independence."

In 1890, Zanzibar came under British influence and remained a protectorate until

1963, when it gained independence. Under the British, the Indians played a significant role in pushing for their own political rights as well as fighting for the Independence of Zanzibar. The first organised Indian protest against the British administration at Zanzibar took place in 1909 to oppose higher taxes and the new laws. In 1914, some members of the community came together to form the Indian National Association (INA) to represent the economic and political rights of Indians in the region.

By the 1930s, a rather bitter and long drawn out struggle emerged and was carried out against colonial policies regulating the clove industry, which was largely dominated by Indians. The incident drew sharp responses from the strongest of nationalist leaders in India at that time, including Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Chandra Bose and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The episode has been noted by Bertz in his article to have been the "most sustained effort ever undertaken in India on behalf of Indians overseas".

In addition, several individual Indians joined political parties such as the Afro-Shirazi party and the Zanzibar National Party to demand the Independence of Zanzibar. The role of the Muslim Association, formed in the 1940s by Indian Muslims, in fighting for the Independence of Zanzibar too was significant.

Notwithstanding the life of privilege and prosperity experienced by Indians at Zanzibar, there were also moments of inter-racial conflicts. The conflicts are known to have exploded during the Zanzibar Revolution of 1964 that was mainly targeted at the Arab population, but many Indians bore a significant brunt and many fled to the Tanzanian mainland after Zanzibar merged with Tanganyika.

On the LOOSE
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IN A meeting to discuss allegations that she took favours to raise questions in Parliament, TMC MP Mahua Moitra was subjected to entirely unnecessary personal questions. It's the oldest tactic in the world; defame a woman by throwing some totally random mud because in this viral age, some of it is bound to stick. All it took was casting character aspersions with queries bordering on innuendo, about hotel bills and travel expenses. Somehow, when the details are published in a newspaper or broadcast on the news, the tendency for our over-fertile imaginations is to come up with all sorts of sordid

The dour and Dior

scenarios that do the needful; plant a seed of doubt about someone's motivations.

Calling the Ethics Committee's attack a "proverbial *vastharahan*", Moitra "invited" the CBI to raid her home. "I invite CBI to count my pairs of shoes," she said on X. (According to the accuser, Moitra received 35 pairs of Salvatore Ferragamo shoes besides cash, jewellery, an Hermes scarf and Gucci handbags.)

Moitra is hardly the first politician to face (sketchy) allegations of corruption. However, it's interesting to note that lately, luxury accessories, usually associated with nouveau riche socialites in Delhi and Mumbai, have become de rigueur in political circles. Old school politicians were more likely to be hauled up for acquiring benefits in land or coal; they saw no value in slinging faux leather embossed with

glaring L and V initials. Clearly, something's changed; like everywhere among people of discernment, a penchant for the finer things of life has permeated the hallowed halls of the Lok Sabha. Last year, the Centre's favourite punching bag, Rahul Gandhi, had to bear the wrath of social media when he wore a Burberry T-shirt on the Bharat Jodo Yatra (price tag, Rs 41,000). In the past, RG himself has taken potshots at the PM's wardrobe by calling the government the "suit-boot ki sarkar". Fashion-shaming the Opposition doesn't sound like it could be a deadly weapon, except, optics matter in public life.

When paid trolls gleefully put out images of Moitra in cool pairs of sunglasses, the narrative on X becomes that this is somebody frivolous (hence, unfit for fixing the problems of our great nation). What

anyone's sartorial choices have to do with their ability to perform at their job is inexplicable until one considers the larger context. Despite having millions of HNIs, India is considered the toughest luxury market in Asia. This is because Indians, even the ones who've done well remain value conscious, always keen for a deal. For crores of others, it's unconscionable that a handbag may cost tens of lakhs. Indeed, it's hard to shake off a long history of wretched scarcity. So, the political lot, viewed with contemptuous suspicion by the middle class in any case, don't do themselves any favours by flaunting expensive brands; the automatic assumption is that the source of wealth is dodgy and unfair means are involved.

These arbitrary judgments disregard that whether we know it or not, we're all influenced by symbolic markers of style —

for example, when we see a Deepika Padukone endorse Cartier, that conveys a rarefied exclusivity. Virtual culture provides a steady stream of fashionable people whose purchases are proudly on display. 24/7. Indians are just about making sense of this, accurately described in the imminently watchable hit, *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara*, where a 12,000 pound Hermes bag becomes a satirical character, Bagwati. The three friends on a road trip gaze at it with bemused incomprehension; the (truthful) joke being that the prized accessory for Indian women of high stature are expensive handbags. For the last decade the family jeweller has been cast aside in favour of Dior and Chanel. The march of time? More like baby steps towards exploring sophistication.

The writer is director, Hutkay Films

ECONOMY

AIMS DOMESTIC VALUE ADDITION OF AT LEAST 50%

Centre likely to give direct sops to get EV manufacturing in top gear

MUKESH JAGOTA & ROHIT VAID

NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

THE CENTRE is considering a new policy for electric vehicles (EVs) that will incentivise manufacturers, including foreign original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) looking to set up base in India, as part of a comprehensive policy for the sunrise sector, said official sources.

While the government currently runs different schemes for EV promotion, including the FAME and PLI schemes, the proposed policy will differ from these as it will roll out direct incentives linked to quantum of investments rather than offer consumer subsidies, sources said. The policy would aim at increasing the domestic value addition in EV ecosystem to at least 50 per cent, and seeks to expedite adoption of EVs in the country.

"Various government departments are conducting preliminary discussions to evaluate the need (for an overarching EV policy). The



The discussion process is being led by the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade. File

broad contours of the policy are also being discussed. Since we already have a few schemes, the question is whether we need to frame a new policy or tweak the existing schemes," an official who did not wish to be identified told FE. The discussion process is being led by the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIT). Some of the ideas being floated are the quantum of investments to be eligible

for incentives and the nature of the incentives. The intent is to encourage investments in the entire supply chains, rather than just assembly operations.

Among existing schemes for the sector, the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles in India (FAME) Scheme provides financial incentives to both EV manufacturers and buyers. The scheme will run till 2024 with a total budget of \$1.3 billion.

Whether the FAME scheme gets extended with some tweaks or is replaced with a new policy is being considered. Past data and future projections for the auto sector are being examined and a study is underway to determine the impact such a policy will have on existing auto manufacturers.

While promoting the EV sector, the government does not want to disturb the existing ecosystem of automobile manufacturing in the country that has built up over the years. It would, therefore, be holding consultations with automobile and component manufacturers before finalising any EV-specific policy. The idea is not to favour one segment over the other, the sources said. Like any policy that seeks to build up new capabilities and capacities, the proposed successor to FAME would have incentives to enable research and development, new technologies and economies of scale.

Apart from FAME, the Phased Manufacturing Programme (PMP) of the government aims to promote the localisation of EV

production in India. The PMP has different timelines for different components of EVs, with the aim of making India self-sufficient in EV production by 2030.

The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Automotive Sector has an outlay of \$3.1 billion and provides incentives to manufacturers of advanced automotive technology (AAT) products, including EVs. Another PLI for advanced chemistry cell (ACC) battery storage provides incentives to manufacturers of ACC batteries, which are a key component of EVs. The scheme has a budgetary outlay of \$2.1 billion.

Though PLI for batteries is yet to take off, the Indian EV manufacturing sector is growing rapidly. In 2022-23, India produced over 4,50,000 EVs, up from 2,30,000 lakh in the previous year. The Economic Survey 2023 predicts that India's domestic electric vehicle market will see a 49 per cent compound annual growth rate (CAGR) between 2022 and 2030, with annual sales of 10 million by 2030. FE

'PLI for recycling needed alongside scheme for battery manufacturing'

NITIN GUPTA, Chief Executive Officer of Noida-based Attero Recycling, sees immense potential for growth in the lithium-ion battery recycling space in the coming years, especially with the notification of the Centre's Battery Waste Management Rules (BWMR), 2022, which makes Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) compliance mandatory for OEMs. In an interaction with AGGAM WALIA, Gupta highlighted the need for incentives for the recycling industry and dismissed South Korea's concerns pertaining to BWMR, 2022 raised at WTO. Edited excerpts:

How do you see the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) compliance for lithium-ion battery waste incentivising battery recycling in India?

Lithium-ion batteries have an even higher residual value compared to lead-acid batteries, which makes their recycling commercially attractive. The challenge, however, is that extracting cobalt, lithium carbonate, nickel, and graphite from used lithium-ion batteries is not everybody's cup of tea. Even if EPR rules were not there, the collection of lithium-ion batteries would have happened in itself because of the fact that it is a high value product. With EPR rules, it will get accelerated. If the supply chain was getting created in, let us say, a 7-year time frame, now it will get created in a 1.5-year time frame.

At the World Trade Organisation, South Korea has objected to BWMR, 2022 on the grounds that ensuring the use of recycled materials in batteries sold in India will lead to Korean OEMs incurring "excessive costs". What is your view on this?

I think South Korea is unnecessarily raising this issue. If you look at what is happening internationally, the European Union has already mandated that every single battery pack sold in Europe starting this year has to have 5 per cent recycled content,



THE EXPRESS

INTERVIEW

WITH

NITIN GUPTA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
ATTERO RECYCLING

going up to 70 per cent by 2030. The reasons for that are fairly simple. First, the dominance of China over the entire battery metal supply chain. Today, 90 per cent of battery grade graphite, 90 per cent of battery grade lithium carbonate hydroxide, and 60 per cent or more of battery grade cobalt comes from China. Various countries around the world are taking notice of this and saying that it is not a good policy from a geopolitical perspective. Europe has said that it will ensure a certain amount of recycled content metals are reused primarily to drive its local economy and stop reliance on China.

In India, similarly, the minimum recycled content requirement is a step in that direction. Also, from the perspective of carbon footprint reduction, it's extremely important that we use recycled metal as the carbon footprint of recycled metal is much lower than the carbon footprint of virgin metals.

Why should we not use recycled metals here? South Korea is just raising the issue because of the dominance of its battery cell manufacturers and they think

they can bully the Indian government. Given today's Indian government, they cannot be bullied.

Does the recycling industry need government subsidies and incentives to support growth?

Given the geopolitical context of the day, I think incentivising the creation of a circular economy is definitely needed. The government has been pushing on EVs largely because of two factors—pollution in this country and the forex import bill, to which a major constituent is oil. Today, Saudi Arabia is a major supplier of oil. If we do not create a domestic battery industry, we're essentially replacing Saudi Arabia with China, because the majority of crucial materials needed for battery manufacturing come from China. To incentivise faster development of capacity and given the fact that USA has pumped in a \$500 billion subsidy bill for this industry, the Indian government necessarily needs to come out with subsidy packages.

"Take a look at what the government has already done—they came out with the PLI scheme for setting up gigafactories for the manufacturing of battery cells.

Once that scheme gets implemented, they will obviously in parallel need a PLI policy for recycling as well. The PLI policy for recycling should basically foster a circular economy and a domestic critical mineral supply chain.

What is the scope for investments in this industry?

Battery recycling has great macros going for it, largely because of EV demand and also the broader lithium-ion demand in ESS and consumer electronics.

On top of this, 50 per cent of the cost of an EV is the cost of the battery and 45 per cent is the cost of raw materials that make up the battery. These raw materials are in short supply, which is something the recycling industry can fix.

FULL INTERVIEW ON www.indianexpress.com

Market share gains tough in competitive auto sector space

VIKRAM CHAUDHARY

NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

MARUTI SUZUKI has never been so busy. It has launched 10 models in less than two years, but despite this model onslaught—of which four are SUVs—the carmaker's market share hasn't changed much.

The company ended the January-October 2023 period with 42.3 per cent market share, having sold 1,468,792 cars in a total market of 3,476,082 units. This isn't very different from the 41.8 per cent share it had in the same period last year (when it sold 1,331,620 cars in a total market of 3,187,340 units).

However, according to analysts the 0.5 percentage point gain the carmaker has recorded is substantial, considering the intense competition and little room for growth.

"Competition has been intense. From January-October 2022 to the same period in 2023, carmakers like Toyota Kirloskar Motor have grown their market share from 4.3 per cent to 5.3 per cent, and Mahindra from 8.7 per cent to 10.3 per cent," an analyst said, adding: "Maruti Suzuki and these two carmakers have grown

at the cost of Tata Motors (whose market share reduced from 13.8 per cent to 13.3 per cent), Kia India (which went from 6.8 per cent to 6.3 per cent), and smaller players."

But launching four new SUVs—new Brezza, Grand Vitara, Fronx and Jimmy—has made Maruti Suzuki a significant SUV player, and within SUVs, its market share has almost doubled—from about 12 per cent in January-October 2022 to about 23 per cent in January-October 2023. Armed with Fronx—the Baleno-based mini-SUV—and rising sales of the new Brezza, its sub-4 metre SUV sales grew substantially.

Shashank Srivastava, senior executive officer, marketing & sales, Maruti Suzuki India, told FE that a late full-fledged entry into the SUV space did lead to some market share loss, but the carmaker has more than made up for it by launching SUVs across segments in quick succession.

The 10 models the carmaker has launched post-Covid-19 are the new Celerio (November 2021), six models in 2022—new Baleno (February), new Ertiga and XL6 (April), new Brezza (June), new Alto (August) and Grand Vitara (September)—and three so far this year (Fronx, Jimmy and Invicto). FE



GOLD SALES RISE

The purchase of gold and silver gathered pace from the second half on Friday, with traders and retailers expecting sales volumes to increase by up to 20 per cent over last year due to the softening prices from the recent peak. PTI

Future Retail heads for liquidation as lenders fail to get buyer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

FUTURE RETAIL, once the crown jewel of Kishore Biyani-led Future Group, is now heading for liquidation as its lenders could not get any reasonable buyer of the debt-ridden firm.

As the Committee of Creditors (CoC) rejected the sole resolution plan submitted by Space Mantra

after four extensions in the deadline to complete the corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP), the RP of the company has now approached NCLT to initiate liquidation of Future Retail (FRL).

"The resolution plan submitted by Space Mantra Private has not been approved by CoC of FRL, kindly note that, the Resolution Professional (RP) has filed an application, before the National Company Law Tribunal, Mumbai

Bench, for initiation of liquidation of FRL," said a regulatory filing from FRL.

Last month FRL had informed that Rs 550 crore bid submitted by Space Mantra for FRL, failed to get the required number of votes in the e-voting process of the CoC.

The NCLT had granted four extensions to FRL for completion of CIRP and the last date was September 30, 2023, and after that there was no extension in the

time frame.

The insolvency proceedings against FRL were started by the tribunal on July 20, 2022.

The Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code (IBC) mandates the completion of CIRP within 330 days, which includes time taken during litigations.

As per Section 12 (1) of the Code, the CIRP shall be completed within a period of 180 days from the date of initiation.

However, NCLT may grant a one-time extension of 90 days. The maximum time within which CIRP must be mandatorily completed, including any extension or litigation period, is 330 days.

Earlier, FRL had said it had received six bids from prospective buyers by May 15, which was the last date for submission of resolution plans.

The deadline for submission

of resolution plans was May 15, 2023, for 48 companies, which were in the final list of 'Eligible Prospective Resolution Applicants'.

This has happened despite FRL lenders coming with revised Expressions of Interest (EOIs) and inviting fresh bids after dividing its assets into clusters.

Future Retail has a debt of around Rs 30,000 crore and the company is going through CIRP

BRIEFLY

Shriram Properties Q2 sales bookings up 40%

New Delhi: Shriram Properties Ltd has clocked 40 per cent growth in its sales bookings to Rs 608 crore in the second quarter of this fiscal year on better demand for its housing projects. Higher sales values reflect the change in product mix and improved pricing, it said. PTI

India's forex reserves rise by \$4.67 bn

New Delhi: India's forex reserves jumped by \$4.67 billion to \$590.783 for the week ended November 3, the Reserve Bank said on Friday. Foreign currency assets, a crucial part of the reserves, rose by \$4.392 billion. The overall value of the gold held was up at \$46.123 billion. The special drawing rights increased to \$17.975 billion, while its reserve position with the International Monetary Fund rose to \$4.789 billion. PTI

Festive demand leads to best-ever PV dispatches

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 11

PASSENGER VEHICLE wholesalers surged to a record high in October riding on robust festive season demand, auto industry body SIAM said on Friday.

The overall passenger vehicle dispatches to dealers last month rose 16 per cent year on year to 3,89,714 units as compared to 3,36,330 units in October 2022.

Similarly, the three-wheeler segment also witnessed the highest ever monthly dispatches in October at 76,940 units, a growth of 42 per cent over 54,154 units in the year-ago period.

"Both passenger vehicles and three-wheelers have posted the highest ever sales of October, while the two-wheeler segment has also posted good sales in the month of October 2023," Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) President Vinod Aggarwal said.

All the three segments have posted double-digit growth and this growth momentum is encouraging for the industry which has been enabled by sustained conducive policies of the government and the ongoing festive season, he added.

Gold exchange-traded funds as an investment avenue: What advantages do these provide?

HITESH VYAS

MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 11

SAFE-HAVEN appeal and good returns have attracted investors towards physical gold as well as gold exchange-traded fund (ETF) as an investment avenue. Gold ETFs saw net inflows of Rs 1,660 crore in the second quarter of the current fiscal. Risk-off sentiments caused due to the Middle East conflict, which started in early October, also ensured flows into gold ETFs continued in the month.

What is gold ETF?

Gold ETF—a fund that's traded on the stock exchange—aims to track the domestic physical gold price. They are passive investment instruments that are based on gold prices and invest in gold bullion. In short, gold ETFs are units representing physical gold which may be in paper or dematerialised form. One gold ETF unit is equal to 1 gram of gold and is backed by physical gold of very high purity. Gold ETFs combine the flexibility of stock investment and the simplicity of gold investments, as per the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI).

Gold ETFs are represented by 99.5 per cent pure physical gold bars. Gold ETF prices are listed on



One gold ETF unit is equal to 1 gram of gold and is backed by physical gold of very high purity. File

the website of BSE/NSE and can

be bought or sold anytime through a stock broker. Unlike gold jewellery, gold ETF can be bought and sold at the same price pan-India, according to AMFI.

How have been the inflows in gold ETFs?

Gold ETFs witnessed net inflows to the tune of around Rs 1,660 crore during the July-September 2023 period, as against net outflows of close to Rs 165 crore during July-September 2022, according to data from ICRA Analytics. The net inflows have increased by nearly 457 per cent from Rs 298 crore registered dur-

ing the April-June 2023 period.

The net assets under management (AUM) under gold ETF as on September 30, 2023, grew by nearly 20 per cent to touch Rs 23,799 crore, as against Rs 19,861 crore in the same period last year, ICRA Analytics Ltd (IAL) said in a recent report. In October, inflows into gold ETFs stood at Rs 841.23 crore. Inflows into domestic gold ETFs surged even as global gold ETFs saw outflows.

What led to higher inflows into gold ETFs?

With the ongoing festive season, especially Dhanteras, investors are buying gold. However,

it is not just physical gold that is drawing investor interest, there is a growing appetite for investing in gold ETFs, which are not only considered to be safe investments governed by tight regulations, but some of these ETFs have been generating one-year returns of more than 22 per cent, ICRA Analytics said in the report.

According to N S Venkatesh, the outgoing Chief Executive of AMFI, the higher inflows in gold ETF are as gold prices saw some correction in October. Investors bought gold ETFs in anticipation of the festive season when gold prices generally surge because of higher demand, he said.

The rising interest in gold ETFs is notwithstanding the recent changes in tax norms which makes investment in physical gold more tax efficient. According to the revised norm, gains from investments in gold funds will be taxed at the slab rate irrespective of the holding period while in the case of physical gold, the long-term capital gains after three years are taxed at 20 per cent with indexation benefit, ICRA Analytics said.

What is the outlook for gold ETFs?

AMFI's Venkatesh expects gold ETF will continue to attract

funds going forward because of the geo-political tensions. Gold is considered a safe haven asset and investors will buy paper gold which is gold ETF and gold. "We will see more inflows coming in gold ETFs over the next three months," Venkatesh said.

What advantages do gold ETFs provide to investors?

Buying physical gold has its own risks, including impurities, storage and theft, which impact the returns on the asset.

"Gold ETFs are comparatively safer as they are governed by tight regulations and are traded on exchange on a real-time basis. Moreover, the price of gold and its returns in an ETF is the same as physical gold and the cost of buying gold ETF is lower as compared to buying the yellow metal," Ashwini Kumar, Head Market Data, ICRA Analytics, said, highlighting the reasons behind growing investor interest in investing in gold ETFs.

When one invests in gold ETFs, purity of gold is guaranteed and each unit is backed by physical gold of high purity. Investment in gold ETFs is a tax-efficient way to hold gold as the income earned from them is treated as long-term capital gain. There is no wealth tax and no security transaction tax.

12 THE WORLD

TOP OF THE WORLD



A supporter of Trump in Claremont. AP

UNITED STATES Trump wants poll interference trial televised

New York: Donald Trump is pushing for his federal election interference trial in Washington to be televised, joining media outlets that say the American public should be able to watch the historic case unfold. The Justice Department is opposing the effort to broadcast the trial, scheduled to begin in March, and notes that federal court rules prohibit televised proceedings. News organisations have argued there has never been a federal case that warrants making an exception to that rule more than a former president standing trial. AP

JAPAN Philippines joins naval drills as observer

Tokyo: Japan led an annual multinational naval exercise that included the Philippines as an observer for the first time, as Filipino coast guard vessels are increasingly harassed by China in the disputed South China Sea. The annual exercises that began on Saturday off Japan's coast also included the United States, Australia and Canada. Their aim is to demonstrate and increase ways the navies can work together, and show their presence and commitment to defend a "free and open" Indo-Pacific. AP

UKRAINE Missiles target Kyiv as Russian train derails

Kyiv: Russian forces targeted Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, as part of an overnight bombardment felt across the country, local officials said Saturday, while drones that Russian officials blamed on the Ukrainian military targeted areas around Moscow and the region of Smolensk. Meanwhile, trains carrying cargo in Russia's Ryazan region were derailed Saturday morning due to "unauthorised interference," Moscow rail operator MZHD said. Russia said 15 train carriages had been derailed. AP

UNITED STATES Texas cop, suspect killed in shooting

Houston: A Texas police officer was killed early on Saturday in a shooting that left the shooter dead, a second officer wounded, authorities said. Two other people were later found dead inside a home in Austin, according to interim Police Chief Robin Henderson. An emotional Henderson, who paused often during a news conference and appeared to be choking back tears, said officers were called to the home shortly before 3 am by a woman screaming that she was being stabbed. One person escaped the home before officers arrived, Henderson said, and told police the man in the home was armed. AP

MACRON PUSHES FOR CEASEFIRE AND URGES other world leaders to join his call

Gaza hospital goes dark as Israel attacks put it at odds with allies

Five, including a premature baby, die at Shifa after generator runs out of fuel

ASSOCIATED PRESS
GAZA STRIP, NOVEMBER 11

ISRAELI TROOPS and Hamas gunmen battled Saturday outside Gaza's largest hospital where frantic doctors said the last generator had run out of fuel, causing the death of a premature baby and four other patients.

Thousands of war-wounded, medical staff and displaced civilians were caught in the fighting. The Israeli military has alleged that Hamas has established command posts in and underneath hospitals, using civilians as human shields.

Medical staff at Shifa have denied such claims. Shifa hospital director Mohammed Abu Selmia said the facility lost power Saturday. "Medical devices stopped. Patients, especially those in intensive care, started to die," he said.

He said Israeli troops were "shooting at anyone outside or inside the hospital" and prevented movement between buildings. An Israeli officer, Col. Moshe Tetro, confirmed clashes outside the hospital but denied Shifa was under siege or direct attack. He said troops had offered safe passage for those willing to leave through the hospital's east side.

Elsewhere, the Palestinian Red Crescent said Israeli tanks were 20 meters from al-Quds hospital in Gaza City's Tal al-Hawa neighborhood, causing "a state of extreme panic and fear" among the 14,000 displaced people sheltering there.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the responsibility for any harm to civilians lies with Hamas. He said that while Israel has urged civilians to leave combat zones, "Hamas is doing everything it can to prevent



Palestinians fleeing north Gaza move southward, in the central Gaza Strip on Saturday. Reuters

DEATH, DESTRUCTION	
ISRAEL	PALESTINE
TOTAL DEAD	11,078
1,240+	
TOTAL INJURED	20,000+
5,400+	

them from leaving."

His statement came after French President Emmanuel Macron pushed for a ceasefire and urged other leaders to join his call, telling the BBC there was "no justification" for Israel's on-going bombing.

The US has been pushing for temporary pauses that would allow for wider distribution of badly needed aid to civilians in the besieged territory. However, Israel has only agreed to brief daily periods during which civilians can flee the area of ground combat.

NETANYAHU: RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY harm to civilians lies with Hamas

80 held as pro-Palestinian march draws counter-protests in London

REUTERS
LONDON, NOVEMBER 11

MORE THAN 100,000 pro-Palestinian protesters marched through central London on Saturday, with police making more than 80 arrests as they sought to avert clashes between the marchers and groups opposed to the rally.

The pro-Palestinian march drew counter-protesters from far-right groups on Armistice Day, the anniversary of the end of World War One, involving commemorations of Britain's war dead.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said it was disrespectful to hold the rally on Armistice Day, and ministers had called for the cancellation of the march - the



A rally in solidarity with Palestinians, in London; counter-protesters react in front of police officers. Reuters

biggest so far in a series to show support for the Palestinians and call for a ceasefire in Gaza.

Police said there were "significant numbers" of counter-protesters present in central London, and skirmishes broke out between them and police near the Cenotaph war memo-

rial, close to the Houses of Parliament and in Westminster.

Some of the right-wing protesters threw bottles at officers, and police vehicles sped around the city to respond to reports of tensions in the streets. London's Met Police said later it had made 82 arrests of counter-protesters.

TURKEY CALLS FOR GLOBAL MEET



"An international conference should be convened to find a permanent solution to Gaza war. Israel is taking revenge...on Gazan babies, children and women"

RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN
TURKEY PRESIDENT

urged the US to end Israeli "aggression".

Raisi hailed the Hamas for fighting against Israel and urged Islamic countries to impose oil and goods sanctions on Israel.

"There is no other way but to resist Israel. We kiss the hands of Hamas for its resistance against Israel," Raisi said in his address.

Raisi's trip to Saudi Arabia is the first by an Iranian head of state in more than a decade. Tehran and Riyadh formally ended years of hostility under a Chinese-brokered deal in March.

Qatar's emir said his country, where several Hamas leaders are based, was seeking to mediate the release of Israeli hostages and hoped a humanitarian truce would be reached soon.

'ICJ should probe Israel war crimes': Arab leaders call for immediate Gaza ceasefire

REUTERS
RIYADH, NOVEMBER 11

SAUDI ARABIA and other Muslim countries called on Saturday for an immediate end to military operations in Gaza, rejecting Israel's justification of its actions against Palestinians as self-defence.

The extraordinary joint Islamic-Arab summit in Riyadh urged the International Criminal Court to investigate "war crimes and crimes against humanity that Israel is committing" in the Palestinian territories, according to a final communique.

Saudi Arabia has sought to press the US and Israel for an end to hostilities in Gaza, and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman,



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman welcomes Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi in Riyadh on Saturday. Reuters

the kingdom's de facto ruler, gathered Arab and Muslim leaders to reinforce that message.

Dozens of leaders including Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, who was welcomed back into the Arab League this year, attended.

Prince Mohammed affirmed the kingdom's "condemnation and categorical rejection of this barbaric war against our brothers in Palestine". "We are facing a humanitarian catastrophe that proves the failure of the Security Council and the international community to put an end to the flagrant Israeli violations of international laws," he said.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said Palestinians were facing a "genocidal war" and

In a rare move, Pope dismisses conservative US bishop Strickland

PHILIP PULLELLA
VATICAN CITY, NOVEMBER 11

POPE FRANCIS has dismissed Bishop Joseph E Strickland of Tyler, Texas, one of his fiercest critics among US Roman Catholic conservatives, a Vatican statement said on Saturday.

It is very rare for a bishop to be relieved of his duties outright. Usually bishops in trouble with the Vatican are asked to resign before submitting a resignation, which the pope accepts.

Popes make such moves, considered drastic, when a bishop refuses a request to resign. Strickland is 65, 10 years shy of the usual retirement age for bishops. Strickland had said earlier this year that he would refuse to resign if asked.

Strickland, a prolific user of social media who was named to the diocese by the late Pope Benedict in 2012, tweeted earlier this year that he rejected Pope Francis' "program undermining the Deposit of Faith".

He has been particularly critical of the pope's attempt to



Bishop Joseph Strickland. AP

make the Church more welcoming to the LGBT community and attempts by Francis to give lay people more responsibility in the Church and opposed a recent synod. The dismissal followed a Vatican investigation earlier this year into the administration of the Tyler diocese, which Catholic media reports said included a review of his handling of financial affairs. There was no immediate response from Strickland.

Strickland is a strong supporter of former US president Donald Trump and is seen as a hero by conservative US Catholic media outlets that are aligned with Trump. Pope named the bishop of Austin, Texas, Joe Vasquez, as the interim administrator of the Tyler diocese.

Sikh man, son shot dead in Canada gang violence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
OTTAWA, NOVEMBER 11

AN INDIAN-ORIGIN Sikh man, described as a "higher-level figure" in the organised crime scene in Canada, and his 11-year-old son were shot and killed in what police have called a "sick and twisted" escalation of gang violence in the city of Edmonton.

Harpreet Singh Uppal, 41, and his son were gunned down outside a gas station Thursday afternoon in a brazen, daytime shooting, Edmonton Police Service acting Supt. Colin Derksen told the media on Friday.

The boy's young friend, who was in Uppal's car at the time, survived with no physical injuries.

Derksen said police do not know whether the shooter or shooters knew children were in

the car when they began following Uppal. "But what we do know, sadly, is that once the shooter or the shooters learned that the son was there, they intentionally shot and killed him," the *Edmonton Journal* quoted Derksen as saying.

He added killing children was once a "line in the sand" gang members refused to cross, but that is changing.

As of Friday morning, police had made no arrests and identified no suspects.

Derksen said Uppal was a "higher-level figure" in Edmonton's organised crime scene but declined to say if he was affiliated with any specific groups, the report said.

Uppal was facing charges related to cocaine possession and trafficking, as well as illegal possession of body armour. A trial was set to start in April 2024, *CBC News* reported.

Pak stays till Dec 31 its decision to deport legal Afghan residents: Official

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KARACHI, NOV 11

THE PAKISTAN government on Saturday put on hold till December 31 its decision to also repatriate the legal Afghan refugee residents whose legal residency documents expired this year.

The decision came after a caretaker information minister of Pakistan's Balochistan province Jan Achakzai on Friday said that the government had decided to also send those Afghans back to their country who were living with legal documents in the coun-

try for years now after their documents expired.

"It has been put on hold until 31st December to also deport those Afghan refugees whose Proof of Registration or the PoR cards had expired this year," said an official announcement.

The deportation of illegal Afghan refugees staying in Pakistan has been going on since the government gave an ultimatum to all unregistered foreign nationals to leave Pakistan by November 1. Till now as many as 250,000 Afghans had voluntarily returned home while another 80,000 were deported.

ECONOMY, AND PARTICULARLY INFLATION, HAS SOURED VOTERS ON BOTH LEADERS WELL AHEAD OF UPCOMING VOTES

For both Trudeau and Biden, polls suggest an uphill political path

IAN AUSTEN
NOVEMBER 11

WHEN PRIME Minister Justin Trudeau and President Biden next meet, they will have something to commiserate over: their dismal standings in polls.

For months now, Trudeau's Liberal Party has been rapidly sinking in public opinion surveys, while more recent polls suggest that the Conservatives under Pierre Poilievre would win any election held now.

Similarly, new polls by *The New York Times* and Siena College have found that Biden is trailing Donald Trump in five of the six most important battle-

ground states. Comparing the political situations in Canada and the United States is a fraught business because of a variety of differences between the countries and their political systems. And, of course, Americans don't vote for another year, and Canada's next federal election is likely to be two years off.

But disaffected voters in both countries share a major concern: inflation, and the economy in general. "There's ample evidence that inflation is destructive to an incumbent government's performance and how people feel about it," David Coletto, the chairman and chief executive of Abacus Data, said.

Coletto's latest poll found

that 39 percent of committed voters would vote for the Conservatives and 26 percent would vote Liberal, while the New Democrats were backed by 18 percent of those voters.

That is a long way down for Trudeau from his early days as prime minister, when his leadership approval ratings hit an eye-watering 73 per cent in one poll. The current Abacus poll found that 53 percent of respondents had a negative view of Trudeau, with just 29 percent holding a favorable view.

Many factors, Coletto said, contribute to that dissatisfaction, but inflation, higher interest rates, housing costs and a general feeling of ennui about the



US President Joe Biden and Canada Prime Minister Justin Trudeau have seen their poll ratings slump. NYT

economy are at the top.

Voters polled in the *Times/Siena* survey, by a 59 percent to 37 per cent margin - the largest gap relating to any issue in the survey - said they had more trust in Trump than Biden on the economy.

Some of the criticism of Trudeau's economic record, Coletto said, is based on perceptions that don't match reality. In an earlier Abacus survey, Coletto found that most Canadians incorrectly believed that inflation was higher in Canada than in other countries. International Monetary Fund statistics for October show that Canada's 3.6 percent rate is well below Germany's 6.3 percent or

France's 5.6. Similarly, Biden gets little or no credit for the significant job creation.

The other big factor for Trudeau, Coletto said, is simply that many voters are tiring of a leader like him, who has been around since 2015 and led his party through three successful elections.

Biden may only be in his first term as president, but he has been a national political figure since first being elected to the Senate 50 years ago. Biden's age, 80, is also an issue. In the *Times/Siena* survey, 71 percent of respondents said he was "too old" to be effective as president. Only 39 percent thought that of Trump, who is 77. NYT

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I, Mohammad umair, s/o mohammad saeed, r/o-1464, hakim ji katra mallah kalana mahal daryaganj, delhi-110002, have changed my name to Muhammad Umer

I, Mohammad uzaif, s/o mohammad saeed, r/o-1464, hakim ji katra mallah kalana mahal daryaganj, delhi-110002, have changed my name to Mohammad Uzeif

I, Mohd Aslam, S/o Riazuddin, R/o-3910, Gali Jagat Cinema Wali, Darya Ganj, Central-Delhi, Delhi, 110002, have changed my name to Aslam Khan, for all, future purposes.

I, Neelam Rani, W/O Surender Kumar Sharma R/O-79, State Bank Nagar Paschim-Vihar Delhi-110063, have changed my name to Sarita Sharma, for all purposes.

I, Priyanka Goel, D/o Vinod Kumar Goel, W/o Vishal Kumar Goyal R/o-C-58/59, Right Side, Third-Floor, Chanakya Place Part-1, Uttam-Nagar, Delhi-110059, have changed my name to Priyanka Goyal.

It is for general information that I, Megha Maheshwari W/o Sumant Gera, R/O Flat No-218, Pocket-1, Sector-23, Rohini, Rithala, Delhi-110085, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as Megha in my minor daughter Lavanya Gera aged 15 years in her Secondary School Marks Statement Cum Certificate. The actual name of mine is Megha Maheshwari, which may be amended accordingly.

I, hitherto known as Deepak Guliani alias Deepak Kumar Guliani, S/o Raj Kumar Guliani, R/O B-11/54, Sector-18, Rohini, North West-Delhi, Delhi-110089, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Karan Deep Guliani.

I, hitherto known as Ashana Singhal alias Ashana Singhal Jain, D/O Pradeep Singhal, W/O Akshat Jain, R/O B-1/615, Janakpuri, B-1, S.O West-Delhi-110058, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Ashana Jain.

I, Usha Rani Dhiman, W/o Rajender Prashad R/O-G-26/81, Sector-3, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Usha Rani.

I, Umesh, S/o Shyam Singh, house no. 1126/44, 33 feet-road Sanjay-Colony sec 23 Faridabad Haryana-121005, changed my name to Umesh Singh.

I, Taranjeet W/o Harpal Singh, R/o H 2/4, Second Floor, Vikaspuri, New Delhi-110018, have changed my name to Taranjeet Kaur.

I, ATAUULLAH CHOUDHARY, S/O. ABDUL AZIZ HOUSE-NO-353, MOHALLA GIYYAN, NAHAL-DISTRICT GHAZIABAD, UTTAR PRADESH-201015, changed my name to ATAUULLAH CHOUDHARY, for all, future purposes.

I, Tinamoni Das alias Tina Moni Deka, W/o Bimal Das, R/o Flat-701, Tower-A, 6th Avenue, Gaur City-1, Greater Noida West, UP, have changed my name to TINA MONI DEKA DAS for all future purposes.

I, Manmeet Chadha S/O Mr Darshan Singh Chadha R/O H.no 111/2 B block naraina vihar, Naraina village Delhi 28. Have changed my name to Manmeet Singh Chadha for all purposes.

I, Vineeta Singh D/o Rajnarayan Singh and W/o Kunvar Bahadur Singh R/o Laipur, Atesua, Atesua, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-227205, have changed my name to Kamla Devi

I, Ravi Bhoshan Matapher Sharma S/O, Matapher Sharma R/O B-77 Second Floor Sector 20 Noida 201301 have changed my name to Ravi Bhoshan Sharma for all future purposes.

I, Neha Anand W/o Amit Kumar Vohra R/O DE-131, Third Floor, Tagore Garden, Delhi-110027 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Neha Anand.

I, Suleman Khan S/o Ahmed Khan Saiyyad R/O Khundawas, Rupawas, Pali, Rajasthan-306401, have changed my name to Suleman Khan Saiyyad

I, hitherto known as SHAHAMUDDIN S/O LATE SHAMSUZZAMMAN R/O B-31C, GALI NO. 3, KANTI NAGAR EXTN., BIHARI COLONY RED LIGHT, KRISHNA NAGAR, EAST DELHI, DELHI-110051 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SHAHAMUDDIN ZAHRI

I, Tajinder Kaur, D/o Late Amrik Singh R/o H.No. G-349, Shakur Pur, J.J. Colony, Saraswati Vihar, North West-Delhi-110034, have changed my name to Son's name, from Harman Singh Sijher to Harman Singh.

I, Ashish Aggarwal S/O A K Aggarwal R/O Flat 2503 Tower C4 Cleo County Sector 121 Noida UP Have Changed My Name To Ashish Aggarwal Son Anand Kumar Aggarwal.

I, Swati Gupta, w/o Amit Goel, R/o 159, Sandesh Vihar, Pitam Pura, Delhi-110034, have changed my name to Swati Goel.

I, Sudha W/O: Raj Kumar Kainth R/O, C-4A/2C, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058, have changed my name to Sudha Rani for all purposes.

I, Saurav Kumar s/o Devennder Kumar Sharma, R/o E-105, 1st-Floor, KW Sriшти Raj Nagar Extension, Ghaziabad-201017, Uttar Pradesh, have changed my name to Saurav Kumar Sharma, Permanently.

I, Salma W/o-Mohammad Farman, R/o-D-18/7, 4th Floor, Okhla Vihar, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi-110025, have changed my name to Salma Mansuri.

I, Rashmi Agarwal, D/O-Shri Surendra Agrawal, R/O-11/3, Madhuvan Apartment, Pitam Pura, Delhi-110034, have changed my name to Rashmi Agrawal for all future purposes.

I, Rajender Prashad Dhiman, S/O Amar Nath Dhiman, R/O-C-26/81, Sector-3, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Rajender Prashad.

I, Shaveta, W/O-Aditya Kathpalia, R/O-BR-54 A, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-110088, have changed my name to Shaveta Bhatia for all purposes.

I, Ashish S/O-Anil Kishore R/O, Wings Apartment, Flat. No. 703, Sector-9 Gurugram-122001 (HR), have changed my name Ashish Duggal, for all purposes.

I, DHULAM LATHA, D/O K GOPALA RAO, R/O B2, STAFF-QUARTERS, JASWANT SINGH LANE, ANDHRA PRADESH BHAVAN, NEW DELHI-110001, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO DULAM LATHA, FOR ALL, FUTURE PURPOSES.

I, DHULAM YADA GIRI BABU, S/O DULAM LAXMAIAH, R/O-B2, STAFF QUARTERS, JASWANT SINGH LANE, ANDHRA PRADESH BHAVAN, NEW DELHI-110001, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO DULAM YADA GIRI BABU, FOR ALL, FUTURE PURPOSES.

I, Kamal Jeet S/O Chhuni Lal, R/O. Flat.No.-19, 4th-Floor, Deepmal Apartment, Sector-10A, Gurgaon (Haryana), have changed my name to Kamal Jeet Gabrani.

MATRIMONIAL

Looking for a tall, beautiful doctor girl from a high status Jat Sikh family who is pursuing MD in a top clinical branch. Our son is 28 years old, 6'2" tall & is very handsome. He is convent educated & is pursuing MD Paediatrics. Father is a class-1 retired govt officer. We own a very beautiful 3 kanal house in a very posh locality of Ldh & have many other urban, suburban & large rural properties. Contact: 98728-18815 or gm.grewal@gmail.com

DOCTORS

Looking for a tall, beautiful doctor girl from a high status Jat Sikh family who is pursuing MD in a top clinical branch. Our son is 28 years old, 6'2" tall & is very handsome. He is convent educated & is pursuing MD Paediatrics. Father is a class-1 retired govt officer. We own a very beautiful 3 kanal house in a very posh locality of Ldh & have many other urban, suburban & large rural properties. Contact: 98728-18815 or gm.grewal@gmail.com

JAT

For Jat Gursikh Kaur with Dastar, Canadian PR, 1990 born, Height 5'-5", PhD from American University, currently working as Assistant Professor in USA at University, finding well educated Gursikh Singh from only USA or Canada, Contact WhatsApp only +919816785406

SIKH/PUNJABI

Need Canadian or American Girl Jatt Sikh Sandhu Boy Canadian PR DOB- 1992 Height- 6' Hometown Mohali 7986094347

SUKH/AGGARWAL

SUITABLE MATCH FOR Fair, Slim/1993 born/5'2"/IRPS Officer (2018 Batch)/ B.Tech Graduate (Computer Engg.) and looking for a suitable groom preferably a Civil Servant, Doctor, IIT/IIIM Graduate, Contact: 9871606871 (parent) Email ID: del_par1@hotmail.com

GUPTA/ AGGARWAL

SUITABLE MATCH FOR Fair, Slim/1993 born/5'2"/IRPS Officer (2018 Batch)/ B.Tech Graduate (Computer Engg.) and looking for a suitable groom preferably a Civil Servant, Doctor, IIT/IIIM Graduate, Contact: 9871606871 (parent) Email ID: del_par1@hotmail.com

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SIKH/PUNJABI

Need Canadian or American Girl Jatt Sikh Sandhu Boy Canadian PR DOB- 1992 Height- 6' Hometown Mohali 7986094347

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY Open Tender Notice No.: SrDEE-TRD-BSB-2023-24-T27 Date 10-11-2023 Divisional Electrical Engineer/ TRD, North Eastern Railway, Varanasi for and on behalf of President of India invites sealed "OPEN" E-tender for the following work:-

WESTERN RAILWAY-VADODARA DIVISION ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT "E" TENDER NOTICE DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT WORKS e-Tender Notice No. DRM-BRC 096 2023-24. Sealed Tenders for and on behalf of the President of India are invited by Divisional Railway Manager (WA/C), Western Railway, Pratnagar, Vadodara-390004 for the following works.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY E-Procurement Tender Notice No.-JHS/DYCM/2023-24/19 Date. 08.11.2023 On behalf of the President of India, The Dy Chief Material Manager, General Store Depot, Jhansi are invite the following E procurement tender.

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution, DRM's Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi for & on behalf of President of India, invites open e-tender for the under noted work:

WESTERN RAILWAY E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE No.S/32/2023 Date 09.11.2023

Table with 4 columns: SR.NO., SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM, QUANTITY, T.O.D. containing various technical specifications and quantities for railway tenders.

Regarding detailed notice EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions, please visit website www.ireps.gov.in and www.westernrailways.gov.in

GENERAL

SUITABLE Match- Mumbai based good looking Girl, Kshatriya Vanjari (Palghar) 37/5-4" BE, MA., Working MNC Annual: 55,00,000/- Contact: 9892811374.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whilst care is taken prior to acceptance of advertising copy, it is not possible to verify its contents. The Indian Express (P) Limited cannot be held responsible for such contents, nor for any loss or damage incurred as a result of transactions with companies, associations or individuals advertising in its newspapers or Publications.

"IMPORTANT"

Whilst care is taken prior to acceptance of advertising copy, it is not possible to verify its contents. The Indian Express (P) Limited cannot be held responsible for such contents, nor for any loss or damage incurred as a result of transactions with companies, associations or individuals advertising in its newspapers or Publications.

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that one female Namely Sudesh w/o Ramesh R/o H.No. C-6/186 Sultanpuri, Delhi, has been missing /kidnapped from her house. Since 18.05.2023 In this regard, a case DD. No. 92A dated 19.05.2023 has been registered at P.S. Sultanpuri, Delhi. The description of the missing female is as under.



Age: 37 Year, Height: 5'1", Complexion: Fair, Built: Medium, Face: Round, Wearing: tolyia color suit salwar and sleeper in feet. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out her but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone has any information about the missing female then please inform P.S. Sultanpuri, Delhi at following Tel No./ e-mail: cbc@cbi.gov.in and Website: http://cbi.nic.in, providing clue about the person.

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General Public is hereby informed that a male Rahim Khan S/o Ajmeri Khan R/o H.No. A2/448, Sultanpuri, Delhi has been missing since 23.10.2023 from Javed Habib Institute 65A, 1st Floor, Laxmi Nagar, in the area of PS Laxmi Nagar, Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 88A, dated 27.10.2023 has been lodged at PS, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi. The description of missing male is as under:



Name: Rahim Khan, Father's Name : Ajmeri Khan, Age : 23 years, Height : 5'5", Face : Round, Complexion : Fair, Built: Normal, Wearing : Black Shirt, Blue Jeans, Sport Shoes in feet. If anyone having any clue/information, kindly inform the undersigned at following phone numbers.

U.PRAJYA VIDYUT UTPADAN NIGAM LTD HARDUAGANJ THERMAL POWER STATION, KASIMPUR (ALIGARH)

E-Tender Notice SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, O&MC-I, 'D'TPS, KASIMPUR 1. ET-01/O&MC-I/AHD/DTPS/HTPS/2023-24, (Re-Tender ID: 2023_RVUNL_841982_2). Online e-bids are invited for the work of "Round the Clock Operation, Routine, Preventive Breakdown Mechanical Maintenance Works of Ash Handling Plant of Unit No. 8 & 9 of 2x250 MW, HTPS, Kasimpur, Aligarh. E-Tender has been uploaded on 07.11.2023 on http://etender.up.nic.in, Estimated Cost of work Rs. 2,07,94,444.00. Time period- Two years, E.M.D. Rs. 2,10,000.00. Last date of Bid submission 27.11.2023 at 14:00Hrs.

on 16.11.2023 at 18:00 hrs on portal www.uprvnl.org./ etender.up.nic.in. Estimated cost Rs. 2,73,083.00, Earnest money Rs. 4500.00, The bid online submission End date is: 16.12.2023 (16:00 PM). 13. E-Tender No.- ET 109/MMC/EPD/DTPS/HTPS/2023, Online e-bids were invited for the 'Supply of Ferrule for APH of Unit No. 07 for O&M of 'C' TPS, HTPS, Kasimpur (Aligarh), Uttar Pradesh' E-Tender will be uploaded on dated 16.11.2023 on https://etender.up.nic.in, Estimated Cost of Material Supply is Rs. 4,35,000.00, Earnest Money is Rs. 8,700.00, Last date of bid submission 16.12.2023 (16:00 Hrs)

Format C-7

(For political parties to publish in the newspapers, social media platforms & website of the party)

Information regarding individuals with pending criminal cases, who have been selected as candidates. along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates (As per the Commission's directions issued in pursuance of the Order dated 13.02.2020 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in contempt petition(C) no. 2192 of 2018 in WP(C) no. 536 of 2011)
Name of Political Party : **Indian National Congress**
Name of the Election : **Election to the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan State 2023**
Name of State/UT : **Rajasthan State**
(1) Name of the Constituency : **KAMAN - 70**
Name of the candidate : **ZAHIDA KHAN**

Sl.No.		
1.	Criminal antecedents	
a.	Nature of Offense	Criminal
b.	Case No.	
c.	Name of Court	Special Court Jaipur Metro
d.	Whether Charges have been framed or not (yes/no)	NO
e.	Date of Conviction, if any	NA
f.	Details of punishment undergone, if any	N/A
g.	Any other information required to be given	N/A
2.	The reasons for the selection of the candidate. Selection shall be with reference to the qualifications, achievements and merit of the candidate, and not mere "winnability" at the polls (not more than 100 words)	The candidate is sitting MLA and has been an MLA in the past as well. The candidate was also a minister in the previous government and is known for her work in the field of science and technology. The candidate has proven herself to be an able administrator during her stint as a minister and she is also known for her tireless service to the common public of the entire state.
3.	Reasons as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates (not more than 100 words)	No charges have been framed in the cases against the candidate so far. The cases against the candidate were filed out of political rivalry which were filed on some frivolous complaints. The Congress party believes in women empowerment and this candidate is a strong emerging woman leader which is why she is given ticket from this seat again.
(2) Name of the Constituency- KAMAN - 70 Name of the candidate- ZAHIDA KHAN		
 (Shri. Lalit Tunwal) General Secretary (Organisation) Rajasthan Pradesh Congress Committee		

Format C-7

(For political parties to publish in the newspapers, social media platforms & website of the party)

Information regarding individuals with pending criminal cases, who have been selected as candidates. along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates (As per the Commission's directions issued in pursuance of the Order dated 13.02.2020 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in contempt petition(C) no. 2192 of 2018 in WP(C) no. 536 of 2011)
Name of Political Party : **Indian National Congress**
Name of the Election : **Election to the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan State 2023**
Name of State/UT : **Rajasthan State**
(1) Name of the Constituency : **LADPURA - 191**
Name of the candidate : **NAIMUDDIN GUDDU**

Sl.No.		
1.	Criminal antecedents	
a.	Nature of Offense	1. Criminal - FIR No. 543/2011 PS Mahaveer Nagar Kota - Section - 323,325,341,504,506,427,147 IPC 2. Criminal - FIR No. 28/2013 PS Mandana, Ladpura, Kota - Section- 147,148,149,332,353,283 IPC 3. Criminal - FIR No. 10/2020 PS Nayapura Kota - Section - 323,341,147,149,109 IPC
b.	Case No.	1. 918/2012 2. 75/2015 3. 6842/2023
c.	Name of Court	1. ACJM 6 Kota 2. ACJM 4 South Kota 3. ACJM 7 Kota
d.	Whether Charges have been framed or not (yes/no)	1. YES 2. YES 3. NO
e.	Date of Conviction, if any	1. N/A 2. N/A 3. N/A
f.	Details of punishment undergone, if any	1. N/A 2. N/A 3. N/A
g.	Any other information required to be given	1. The candidate has filed a revision petition before Hon'ble High Court Jaipur & the same is pending before High Court Jaipur.
2.	The reasons for the selection of the candidate. Selection shall be with reference to the qualifications, achievements and merit of the candidate, and not mere "winnability" at the polls (not more than 100 words)	The candidate had contested elections in the past and lost but he did not stop working for the common public of this area. The loss in the election did not stop this candidate from his social and political work. In fact, he never stopped working for the common public despite narrow losses in elections and has a strong connection with local people.
3.	Reasons as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates (not more than 100 words)	The candidate has been active in social work and politics for a long time and it is not unusual to face cases when one is working for a public cause. The same thing happened with this candidate as most of the cases against him were filed out of political vendetta and local rivalries which should not stop a promising social worker from being a people's representative.
(2) Name of the Constituency- LADPURA - 191 Name of the candidate- NAIMUDDIN GUDDU		

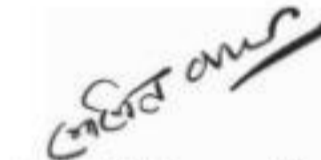

 (Shri. Lalit Tunwal)
 General Secretary (Organisation)
 Rajasthan Pradesh Congress Committee

Format C-7

(For political parties to publish in the newspapers, social media platforms & website of the party)

Information regarding individuals with pending criminal cases, who have been selected as candidates. along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates (As per the Commission's directions issued in pursuance of the Order dated 13.02.2020 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in contempt petition(C) no. 2192 of 2018 in WP(C) no. 536 of 2011)
Name of Political Party : **Indian National Congress**
Name of the Election : **Election to the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan State 2023**
Name of State/UT : **Rajasthan State**
(1) Name of the Constituency : **NASIRABAD - 102**
Name of the candidate : **Shiv Prakash Gurjar**

Sl.No.		
1.	Criminal antecedents	
a.	Nature of Offense	Criminal - FIR No. 259/2017 PS Pushkar District Ajmer - Section - 147,149,341,323,451,352,427,325 IPC
b.	Case No.	131/2018
c.	Name of Court	Judicial Magistrate Pushkar Ajmer
d.	Whether Charges have been framed or not (yes/no)	NO
e.	Date of Conviction, if any	N/A
f.	Details of punishment undergone, if any	N/A
g.	Any other information required to be given	N/A
2.	The reasons for the selection of the candidate. Selection shall be with reference to the qualifications, achievements and merit of the candidate, and not mere "winnability" at the polls (not more than 100 words)	The candidate is a young emerging leader of this area and state secretary of the Indian Youth Congress. The candidate has been extremely active in raising issues related to students as the candidate has himself being an active student leader. The candidate has also been president of Students' Union of a college in the past and has been extremely popular among the students of not only this area but of the entire district.
3.	Reasons as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates (not more than 100 words)	The only FIR against this candidate was filed due to a family dispute. There is no other FIR pending against this candidate apart from the one mentioned above and even in this case charges have not been framed. Such cases arising out of family disputes should not stop a promising and emerging young leader from being a people's elected representative which is why the Congress party has chosen him to represent this seat.
(2) Name of the Constituency- Nasirabad - 102 Name of the candidate- Shiv Prakash Gurjar		

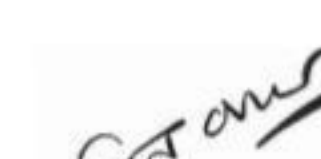

 (Shri. Lalit Tunwal)
 General Secretary (Organisation)
 Rajasthan Pradesh Congress Committee

Format C-7

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Information regarding individuals with pending criminal cases, who have been selected as candidates. along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates (As per the Commission's directions issued in pursuance of the Order dated 13.02.2020 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in contempt petition(C) no. 2192 of 2018 in WP(C) no. 536 of 2011)
Name of Political Party : **Indian National Congress**
Name of the Election : **Election to the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan State 2023**
Name of State/UT : **Rajasthan State**
(1) Name of the Constituency : **BARI - 78**
Name of the candidate : **PRASHANT SINGH PARMAR**

Sl.No.		
1.	Criminal antecedents	
a.	Nature of Offense	1. Criminal - FIR No. 33/2022 PS EOW Bhopal Section - 13(1)(B) / 13 (2) Of Prevention of Corruption Act 1988 2. Criminal -FIR No. 442/2019 PS University Gwalior Section - 30 of Arms Act 1959
b.	Case No.	1. 3109/2020 2. Not known to the candidate
c.	Name of Court	1. District & Sessions Court Gwalior 2. Not known to the candidate
d.	Whether Charges have been framed or not (yes/no)	1. NO 2. NO
e.	Date of Conviction, if any	1. N/A 2. N/A
f.	Details of punishment undergone, if any	1. N/A 2. N/A
g.	Any other information required to be given	N/A
2.	The reasons for the selection of the candidate. Selection shall be with reference to the qualifications, achievements and merit of the candidate, and not mere "winnability" at the polls (not more than 100 words)	The candidate is a prominent political activist of this area and has been at the forefront of many political and social agitations for the common public's cause. The candidate was extremely active in helping the needy people during the time of pandemic without caring for his own safety which made him very popular in the area.
3.	Reasons as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates (not more than 100 words)	No charges have been framed in both the pending cases against this candidate. Both the FIRs against the candidate were filed out of some personal grudge and due to local rivalries. The Congress party believes that cases filed out of rivalries should not stop a political activist from contesting elections which is why he has been filed by the party from this seat.
(2) Name of the Constituency- BARI - 78 Name of the candidate- PRASHANT SINGH PARMAR		


 (Shri. Lalit Tunwal)
 General Secretary (Organisation)
 Rajasthan Pradesh Congress Committee


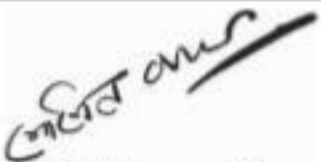
Format C-7

(For political parties to publish in the newspapers, social media platforms & website of the party)

Information regarding individuals with pending criminal cases, who have been selected as candidates. along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates

(As per the Commission's directions issued in pursuance of the Order dated 13.02.2020 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in contempt petition(C) no. 2192 of 2018 in WP(C) no. 536 of 2011)

Name of Political Party : **Indian National Congress**
 Name of the Election : **Election to the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan State 2023**
 Name of State/UT : **Rajasthan State**
 (1) Name of the Constituency : **KOLAYAT -15**
 Name of the candidate : **BHANWAR SINGH BHATI**

Sl.No.	Criminal antecedents	
1.	a. Nature of Offense	Criminal - FIR No. 168/2018 PS BAJJU, Section 307, 336, 283, 341, 143, 27 of I.P.C.
	b. Case No.	F.R. NO. 197/2021
	c. Name of Court	Judicial Magistrate No. 1 KOLAYAT, District Bikaner
	d. Whether Charges have been framed or not (yes/no)	NO
	e. Date of Conviction, if any	N/A
	f. Details of punishment undergone, if any	N/A
	g. Any other information required to be given	After Investigation police found the complaint false and final report (FR) was filed with No. 197 on date 21-09-2021 in the court of Judicial Magistrate-1, Kolayat, Bikaner.
2.	The reasons for the selection of the candidate. Selection shall be with reference to the qualifications, achievements and merit of the candidate, and not mere "winnability" at the polls (not more than 100 words)	
	The candidate is a sitting MLA and a minister in the government. The candidate is an MLA two times and is known to be one of the best performing MLAs in Rajasthan. His mass connect and 24/7 availability for people has made him extremely popular among masses and has secured him a huge following in this area.	
3.	Reasons as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates (not more than 100 words)	
	There is only one case pending against this candidate and after Investigation police found the complaint to be false and final report (FR) was filed with No. 197 on date 21-09-2021 in the court of Judicial Magistrate-1, Kolayat, Bikaner. There is no other criminal case pending against this candidate in any other police station or court which is why Congress party has again given him ticket from this seat.	
(2) Name of the Constituency- KOLAYAT -15 Name of the candidate- BHANWAR SINGH BHATI		
  (Shri. Lalit Tunwal) General Secretary (Organisation) Rajasthan Pradesh Congress Committee		

Format C-7

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Information regarding individuals with pending criminal cases, who have been selected as candidates. along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates

(As per the Commission's directions issued in pursuance of the Order dated 13.02.2020 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in contempt petition(C) no. 2192 of 2018 in WP(C) no. 536 of 2011)

Name of Political Party : **Indian National Congress**
 Name of the Election : **Election to the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan State 2023**
 Name of State/UT : **Rajasthan State**
 (1) Name of the Constituency : **MALPURA - 94**
 Name of the candidate : **GHASIAL CHAUDHARY**

Sl.No.	Criminal antecedents	
1.	a. Nature of Offense	1. Criminal - FIR No. 513/2012 PS Bajaj Nagar Jaipur - Section - 323,341,504 IPC 2. Criminal - FIR No. 204/2013 PS Bagru Jaipur - Section - 406, 120B IPC 3. Criminal - FIR No. 270/2023 PS Malpura Tonk - Section - 332,535,143 IPC
	b. Case No.	1. Not known to the candidate 2. Not known to the candidate 3. Not known to the candidate
	c. Name of Court	1. ACMM 7 Jaipur Metro 2nd 2. Not known to the candidate 3. Not known to the candidate
	d. Whether Charges have been framed or not (yes/no)	1. NO 2. NO 3. NO
	e. Date of Conviction, if any	1. N/A 2. N/A 3. N/A
	f. Details of punishment undergone, if any	1. N/A 2. N/A 3. N/A
	g. Any other information required to be given	N/A
2.	The reasons for the selection of the candidate. Selection shall be with reference to the qualifications, achievements and merit of the candidate, and not mere "winnability" at the polls (not more than 100 words)	
	The candidate is a grassroot social worker of the constituency. It was only due to the candidate's hard work that many development projects have been completed in this area. The candidate is always available for the common public in this area which has made him extremely popular in this area and there was massive demand from local people to that he should be given a chance to represent people at a bigger platform.	
3.	Reasons as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates (not more than 100 words)	
	The pending cases against the candidate pertains to Commercial dispute & were only filed due to political vendetta & ill will. The candidate is an extremely popular party worker from this area and no charges have been framed in the cases against him which clearly shows that the FIRs filed against him did not have strong basis.	
(2) Name of the Constituency- MALPURA - 94 Name of the candidate- GHASIAL CHAUDHARY		
  (Shri. Lalit Tunwal) General Secretary (Organisation) Rajasthan Pradesh Congress Committee		

Format C-7

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Information regarding individuals with pending criminal cases, who have been selected as candidates. along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates

(As per the Commission's directions issued in pursuance of the Order dated 13.02.2020 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in contempt petition(C) no. 2192 of 2018 in WP(C) no. 536 of 2011)

Name of Political Party : **Indian National Congress**
 Name of the Election : **Election to the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan State 2023**
 Name of State/UT : **Rajasthan State**
 (1) Name of the Constituency : **DEEG - KUMHER - 72**
 Name of the candidate : **VISHVENDRA SINGH**

Sl.No.	Criminal antecedents	
1.	a. Nature of Offense	1. Criminal - FIR No. 285/2017 PS BHUSAWAR DISTRICT BHARATPUR
	b. Case No.	Not Known to the candidate
	c. Name of Court	Not Known to the candidate
	d. Whether Charges have been framed or not (yes/no)	NO
	e. Date of Conviction, if any	N/A
	f. Details of punishment undergone, if any	N/A
	g. Any other information required to be given	This matter pertains to Jat Reservation Agitation.
2.	The reasons for the selection of the candidate. Selection shall be with reference to the qualifications, achievements and merit of the candidate, and not mere "winnability" at the polls (not more than 100 words)	
	The candidate belongs to the royal family of Bharatpur which has a long history of public service. The candidate is a descendant of Bharatpur King Surajmal and is actively involved in social and political activities for public welfare in this area which has made him extremely popular in the area. Despite hailing from a royal family, the Candidate is known for his grassroot connect and work for underprivileged sections of the society.	
3.	Reasons as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates (not more than 100 words)	
	The only case against the candidate is that of a political protest and it dates back to 2017 when the Congress party was in opposition. There is no other criminal case pending against this candidate apart from this one political case. The Congress party believes that such frivolous cases for protests filed by the then ruling political party just out of vengeance should not prevent a promising political worker from being a people's representative which is why the Congress party has chosen this candidate from this seat.	
(2) Name of the Constituency- DEEG - KUMHER - 72 Name of the candidate- VISHVENDRA SINGH		
  (Shri. Lalit Tunwal) General Secretary (Organisation) Rajasthan Pradesh Congress Committee		

Format C-7

(For political parties to publish in the newspapers, social media platforms & website of the party)

Information regarding individuals with pending criminal cases, who have been selected as candidates. along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates

(As per the Commission's directions issued in pursuance of the Order dated 13.02.2020 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in contempt petition(C) no. 2192 of 2018 in WP(C) no. 536 of 2011)

Name of Political Party : **Indian National Congress**
 Name of the Election : **Election to the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan State 2023**
 Name of State/UT : **Rajasthan State**
 (1) Name of the Constituency : **CHAKSU (SC) - 58**
 Name of the candidate : **VED PRAKASH SOLANKI**

Sl.No.	Criminal antecedents	
1.	a. Nature of Offense	1. Criminal - FIR No. - 233/2023 PS Bajaj Nagar Jaipur - Section - 420,406,120B IPC 2. Criminal - Complaint Case (Negotiable Instruments Act)
	b. Case No.	1. Not known 2. 329/2015
	c. Name of Court	1. Not known 2. ACJM Behror Alwar
	d. Whether Charges have been framed or not (yes/no)	1. NO 2. NO
	e. Date of Conviction, if any	1. N/A 2. N/A
	f. Details of punishment undergone, if any	1. N/A 2. N/A
	g. Any other information required to be given	N/A
2.	The reasons for the selection of the candidate. Selection shall be with reference to the qualifications, achievements and merit of the candidate, and not mere "winnability" at the polls (not more than 100 words)	
	The candidate is sitting MLA and is a highly educated person. The candidate has been carrying out multiple social activities like organizing blood donation camps and pilgrimages for poor people. The candidate is a popular social activist in the area who is known for his work for the downtrodden sections of the society.	
3.	Reasons as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates (not more than 100 words)	
	Only two cases have been pending against this candidate out of which one is a frivolous case filed out of some minor monetary dispute. The other case against this candidate was filed due to political rivalry. Politically motivated cases should not stop a people's representative from continuing his good work which is why the party has selected this candidate again from this seat.	
(2) Name of the Constituency- CHAKSU (SC) - 58 Name of the candidate- VED PRAKASH SOLANKI		
  (Shri. Lalit Tunwal) General Secretary (Organisation) Rajasthan Pradesh Congress Committee		



SHORT TAKES

STANDINGS

Team	M	W	L	T	PTS	NRG
Ind	8	8	0	0	16	2.465
SA	9	7	2	0	14	1.261
Aus	9	7	2	0	14	0.841
NZ	9	5	4	0	10	0.743
Pak	9	4	5	0	8	-0.199
Afg	9	4	5	0	8	-0.336
Eng	9	3	6	0	6	-0.572
SL	9	2	7	0	4	-1.087
Ban	9	2	7	0	4	-1.419
Ned	8	2	6	0	4	-1.635

LEADING SCORER

QUINTON DE KOCK: 591 RUNS

M	INN	NO	RS	SR	100S
9	9	9	174	109.24	4

LEADING WICKET-TAKER

ADAM ZAMPA: 22

M	INN	OVS	RUNS	BBI	ECON
9	9	79	416	4/8	5.26

SCOREBOARD

ENGLAND VS PAKISTAN

EDEN GARDENS, KOLKATA

Toss: England, elected to bat first

ENGLAND

D Malan	c Rizwan b Iftikhar	31	(39b, 5x4)
J Bairstow	c Salman b Rauf	59	(61b, 7x4, 1x6)
J Root	c Shadab b Afridi	60	(72b, 4x4)
B Stokes	b Afridi	84	(76b, 11x4, 2x6)
J Buttler	run out (Rauf)	27	(18b, 3x4, 1x6)
H Brook	c Afridi b Rauf	30	(7b, 2x4, 2x6)
M Ali	b Rauf	8	(6b, 1x6)
C Woakes	not out	4	(4b, 1x4)
D Willey	c Iftikhar b Wasim	15	(5b, 2x4)
G Atkinson	b Wasim	0	(1b)
A Rashid	not out	0	(1b)
Extras	(b 5, lb 2, w 12)	19	
Total	50 Ov (RR: 6.74)	337/9	
FoW:	1-82 (David Malan, 13.3 ov), 2-108 (Jonny Bairstow, 18.2 ov), 3-240 (Ben Stokes, 40.1 ov), 4-257 (Joe Root, 42.2 ov), 5-302 (Harry Brook, 46.4 ov), 6-308 (Jos Buttler, 47.2 ov), 7-317 (Moeen Ali, 48.4 ov), 8-336 (David Willey, 49.4 ov), 9-336 (Gus Atkinson, 49.5 ov)		
Bowling:	Shaheen Shah Afridi 10-1-72-2, Haris Rauf 10-0-64-3, Iftikhar Ahmed 7-0-38-1, Mohammad Wasim 10-0-74-2, Shadab Khan 10-0-57-0, Agha Salman 3-0-25-0		

PAKISTAN

A Shafique	lbw b Willey	0	(2b)
F Zaman	c Stokes b Willey	1	(9b)
A Azam	c Rashid b Atkinson	38	(45b, 6x4)
M Rizwan	b Ali	36	(51b, 2x4)
S Shaeel	b Rashid	29	(37b, 4x4)
A Salman	c Stokes b Willey	51	(45b, 6x4, 1x6)
I Ahmed	c Malan b Ali	3	(5b)
S Khan	b Rashid	4	(7b, 1x4)
S Afridi	lbw b Atkinson	25	(23b, 3x4, 1x6)
M Wasim	not out	16	(14b, 2x4, 1x6)
H Rauf	c Stokes b Woakes	35	(23b, 3x4, 3x6)
Extras	(lb 1, w 5)	6	
Total	43.3 Ov (RR: 5.60)	244	
FoW:	1-0 (Abdullah Shafique, 0.2 ov), 2-10 (Fakhar Zaman, 2.4 ov), 3-61 (Babar Azam, 13.6 ov), 4-100 (Mohammad Rizwan, 22.3 ov), 5-126 (Saud Shaeel, 27.5 ov), 6-145 (Iftikhar Ahmed, 30.1 ov), 7-150 (Shadab Khan, 31.4 ov), 8-186 (Agha Salman, 36.4 ov), 9-191 (Shaheen Shah Afridi, 37.4 ov), 10-244 (Haris Rauf, 43.3 ov)		
Bowling:	David Willey 10-0-56-3, Chris Woakes 5.3-0-27-1, Adil Rashid 10-0-55-2, Gus Atkinson 8-0-45-2, Moeen Ali 10-0-60-2		

He learns every day with his captaincy. He's growing and we have to allow him the time to grow. And in order to do that, you (have to allow him to) make mistakes."

MICKEY ARTHUR, ON BABAR

No miracle at Eden

Pakistan's sorry campaign ends with a 93-run loss to England after defending champs set a target of 338, which Pakistan had to chase in 6.4

SAYAK DUTTA

KOLKATA, NOVEMBER 11

FEW OUTCOMES in cricket are influenced so much by a mere toss of a coin. But when England won the toss and Joss Buttler elected to bat, the already-improbable chances of Pakistan making it to the semi-finals looked even unlikelier.

And when three-and-a-half hours later, England batsmen returned to the dressing room setting a mammoth target of 337, thanks largely to Ben Stokes' fireworks, Pakistan's fate was sealed. They had to chase down the total in just six over to displace New Zealand from the fourth spot and sneak into the last four. Even with Pakistan's unfailing ability to surprise all, this was one miracle too many.

The 93-run defeat to a struggling England meant Pakistan's campaign ended with a whimper. Their much-hyped pace attack barely troubled the English batsmen and the batsmen endured another collapse.

With Mohammad Rizwan and Abdullah Shafique's centuries against Sri Lanka along with Fakhar Zaman's 126 against the Kiwis being the only bright spots in an otherwise below par campaign, winds of change may already be blowing in Pakistani cricket.

Saturday turned out to be more of the same as Shafique was dismissed for a duck in the very first over, with Pakistan needing to chase down 337 in 6.4 overs if they wished to qualify for the semi-finals. Zaman would be the next man to depart after he was caught by Stokes as Pakistan were reduced to 10/2 inside the first three overs.

Skipper Babar Azam and Rizwan then built a 50-run partnership before the Pakistan captain failed to convert a solid start yet again, falling for 38. The latter would follow him after a few overs when he went for a wild swing, completely missed the ball and saw his stumps shattered by Moeen Ali.

The remaining batters would offer little resistance, except Agha Salman, who scored 51, with England's spin twins Ali and Adil Rashid accounting for four wickets between them.

Pacers flatter to deceive

Their woes went much beyond toothless batting displays. The Pakistan pace attack, which was compared to the legendary unit led by Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis, flattered to deceive and the match against England epitomised all that has gone wrong for them.

Though pacers Haris Rauf, Shaheen Afridi and Mohammad Wasim took seven wickets among them at Eden Gardens, they conceded a bucketload of runs with Rauf going for 64, Afridi 72 and Wasim 74.

In the last match against New Zealand, they had conceded 85, 90 and 60 respectively which paints a worrying picture. Granted, Pakistan had lost Naseem Shah before the tournament but they did a very poor job in identifying and executing a proper backup plan with replacement Hasan Ali unable to plug the gaping hole in the pace battery.

Even their spinners have let them down with Shadab Khan's form a major concern going forward.

Improbable equation

Coming into the match, the equation for Pakistan was simple: Bat first and win by 287 runs or field first and chase down England's target with 284 balls to spare. The first situation was still plausible if they rained fire on the England bowlers. But the second? Not so much.

As it transpired, not much as a collective groan reverberated around the crowd as soon as the Men in Green were sent out



England pacer David Willey celebrates with captain Jos Buttler after dismissing Pakistan's Abdullah Shafique.

Partha Paul

Called time on my career... but it is with deep regret: Willey after last hurrah

SAYAK DUTTA

KOLKATA, NOVEMBER 11

to field. Pakistan gave it a shot with the express pace of Afridi and Rauf initially troubling the England pacers Dawid Malan and Jonny Bairstow, yielding just eight runs from the first three overs.

But there was a moment in the very first Rauf over that appeared to show what lay ahead for the players in green. Steaming in, the Pakistan pace bowler let loose a wayward delivery that ended up fetching England 5 wide runs and in retrospect, set the tone of the match.

The England batters would then soon find their feet on a historically batting-friendly surface, slowly and steadily taking the match away from Pakistan.

Bairstow, who had a tournament to forget, suddenly became the embodiment of confidence, something that was put on show when he nonchalantly played an uppercut shot for a six over third man off Afridi in the seventh over. He would twist the knife further into Pakistan's collective hearts with a half-century off 52 deliveries before ultimately going down to Haris Rauf for 59.

On the other end, Malan, who recently said that this match might be his last in an England jersey, gave a glimpse of what he's capable of as he pulled and stroked the Pakistan bowlers all around the ground, putting up an 82-run first wicket stand with Bairstow before departing for 31.

Stokes and Joe Root would then anchor the 'Three Lions' innings, carefully picking and choosing their spots and shots as their opponents' shoulders dropped further. The stalwarts would bring up a solid 132-run partnership with Stokes scoring 84 with Root holding up his end with a gritty 60. To put into context Root's innings, here's a little stat: When Stokes reached his half century, he was on 35 and by the time he departed for 84, Root was on 51.

By the time the two were dismissed, the semifinal hopes were well and truly beyond Pakistan with England posting an insurmountable target.

ENGLAND PACER David Willey cut an emotional figure after England's last league match against Pakistan in Kolkata. The medium pacer, who had already announced his international retirement, then talked about the circumstances that led to this decision, in an emotional post-match press conference on Saturday.

"My time is done because I've called time on it, but it's with deep regret. I think anybody looking in has probably looked at the way I've gone about my business and probably playing the best cricket of my career. I'm 33, as fit as I've ever been. So, one of the reasons that I wasn't offered a contract was them going in a different direction after the World Cup. I don't know why," he said, when asked if there was any frustration of walking out of the team way ahead of his time.

The decision to retire came after the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) announced the men's central contracts with the 33-year-old the only one omitted from the list among those in the England squad in the World Cup.

'Always a fringe player'

Talking about going into the field as an England player one last time, Willey admitted: "I have mixed emotions. It was nice to go out there with clarity on what I am doing beyond this. My situation with England has always been that I am on the fringe. Very much a squad player. I have been very much at peace with that but that does not mean that it has been easy. Being in that position,



Contract snub and 'life as a fringe player' prompted David Willey's decision to retire from England cricket team at the age of 33.

Partha Paul

never knowing where you stand from toss to toss. So look, it was lovely to go out there and enjoy my last game of cricket as an England player."

The seamer who has represented

England since 2015, also delved further on when he thought he would call it quits, saying that the uncertainty surrounding his place in the 2024 T20 World Cup also played a big part in coming to his decision. "I think being told that they're likely to go in a different direction after the World Cup. I think that was the final nail in the coffin for me," he said. In eight years, he mustered only 72 games despite an average 29 and a strike rate of 32.

The uncertainty of future played a big role in his decision. "I believe I could still be a part of that World Cup. An injury or two, and they're going to be calling on someone with very little to no experience in World Cups. I think I could still have played a part in that World Cup. I feel like I'm probably playing my best cricket. So that was part of my decision-making with my family. But it's been a period for some time now and like I've just touched on not knowing quite where I stand with England and it's just taken its toll and becomes very tiring," Willey said.

Willey, who got to 100 wickets in the match against Pakistan and was awarded the player of the match, wasn't sure if he would join the World Cup team due to his contract situation. "I wasn't sure whether I was going to come to the World Cup even at the 11th hour. The morning that we were joining up at Lords, I still wasn't sure whether I'd make the trip or not," he said.

"It's not just that I haven't been offered a contract. It's sort of how I feel valued as an England player there when I look down that list of other guys that have got contracts. So yeah, it had been on my mind. I'd spoken with my family, I'd spoken with Jos, Motty - and then it came to the decision that the time was right for me to call it a day," he added.

PURPLE PATCH

Australia fabulous after fumble as Marsh's ton seals seventh straight win

SHIVANI NAIK

PUNE, NOVEMBER 11

THEY WERE an unglamorous set of cramps, compared to the other night. When Mitchell Marsh's feet started feeling funny in a terrible way, while leading Australia's chase of 307 against Bangladesh in Pune's scorching afternoon, he rationed his celebrations upon reaching 100. He was consciously trying to control his heart-rate, so the cramps wouldn't go out of control.

After the wobble of 91/7 at Wankhede against Afghanistan, the Australian top order was on high alert and determined to get a seamless chase under its belt. It's why captain Pat Cummins chose to field first on a belter. And Marsh made the run-a-ball pursuit almost uneventful with his unbeaten 177 after Glenn Maxwell had had to pull them out of a serious batting funk against Afghanistan and sat out this one, grabbing a breather. The Aussies won by 8 wickets in a much-needed saunter.

It took Marsh time to win the Pune crowd over, though the 'Bison' as he is called, teed off whacking the Bangla bowlers from the fourth over itself. Mahedi Hasan, who opened the bowling with Taskin, was creamed through the covers first, then edged past first slip with a chunky bat on the stroke and fi-

nally Marsh rose to his full height to drive between mid-off and extra cover in one over that went for 13.

Bookended by solid knocks from David Warner (53 off 61) and Steve Smith (63 off 64 of which he ran 41), Marsh was merely slotting in at his No. 3 and getting the job done after the fumble of Wankhede.

He was asked about support from the crowd that got behind him when he got to 94 pulling a short one from Mehdi Hasan Miraz and then dealt in singles till he got to 100, getting stuck a tad on four dot balls from the other offie, Mahedi Hasan. The unassuming batter would chuckle, "I'm not sure they came to watch us, they came for guys like Maxwell and Warner. Even Steve Smith is very grand in India!"

Heading into yet another World Cup semifinal, and with the Aussie penchant for back-to-back top performances when knockouts fetch up, South Africa will be wary of the least-heralded batsman amongst the top order with big names.

It's a sign of just how relaxed and happy this Aussie unit quitted by Pat Cummins, coach Andrew McDonald and other support staff Dan Vettori and Andy Flower is, that humour is their first recourse when they get asked about pressure innings.

The chase was steep, and Australia had lost Travis Head in the third over playing away



Mitchell Marsh slammed an unbeaten 177 off just 132 balls.

Daniel Stephen

from the body and onto the stumps. Marsh who walked in next, would be concerned with settling his sin account, he'd joke when asked about his century.

"Well, I started with 50 when I bowled (he actually conceded 48 from his 4 overs). So

thought I needed to give back those!" he smiled. Towhid Hridoy had gotten stuck into the all-rounder, smacking him early for three boundaries and then Mahmudullah swung him for two almighty sixes in his second spell.

For the longest, Marsh struggled to find

his place in that Aussie batting order. First, he got stuck for being persisted with, with nasty sides about that being owing to his famous father. Then, when he started scoring, injuries would strike at the worst times.

He even broke his hand punching a wall after having taken 5 wickets in an Ashes Test. Cameron Green would nudge him out, before he got included in the squads to Bangladesh and West Indies, and scored a tonne of runs, getting an extended run at the top of the order with the big names skipping these outings.

He scored a Test century on returning after a 4-year gap, and was player of the final when Australia won the T20 World Cup last. But despite being the most loved guy inside the team, who is the life of the party and good mates with most teammates, Marsh simply didn't register as a big name or a tough threat to the outside realms.

Marsh is now indispensable to the Aussie one-day side, and has over the last few seasons corrected the skew that was once heavily in favour of scoring off pace bowlers. For someone who thrived on bounce and speed, Marsh has done enough to counter spin struggles and moved onto scoring heavily off them. He averages 52.8 against spinners now in ODIs as against 33.5 against pacers.

On Saturday as 19,064 turned up to get a glimpse of Australia, Marsh scored 62 in

boundaries against slow bowlers, and 34 against the pacers. His career strike rate of 80.7 vs spinners (it's 108.9 playing pace) points to him seeing out spinners, to then go after his favoured bowling. But there's no doubt, Marsh has levelled up his counter-spin game.

After packing offie Mahedi out of the attack early with his early charge, Marsh would skip down the track to left-arm slow bowler Nasum Ahmed and loft Miraz over long off for a pair of sixes as Bangladesh were never allowed to settle or contain the Australians.

Not that Taskin and Mustafizur were spared as Marsh accumulated 17 fours and 9 sixes. The most glorious amongst them came when Mustafizur was flattened as his half volley on the first ball of the 33rd over was lofted straight over the bowler. The ball went over the sight screen and climbed two steps on bounce on a staircase.

But no bowler was spared as Australia reached their target with five overs to spare. Bangladesh wasn't the most incisive of spin attacks. But the Aussie top order needed reassurance that they weren't prone to crumbling. Maxwell sat the game out, but Australia had Marsh.

Brief scores: Bangladesh 306 for 8 (Hridoy 74, Shanto 45, Zampa 2-32, Abbott 2-61) lost by eight wickets to Australia 307 for 2 (Marsh 177*, Smith 63*, Warner 51)



MCC backs umpires in Mathews's 'time out' dismissal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NOVEMBER 11

CUSTODIANS OF the laws of cricket, the Marylebone Cricket Club have issued a statement on the Angelo Mathews timed out saga in the Sri Lanka-Bangladesh 2023 ODI World Cup match.

On the all-rounder getting dismissed for not being ready to face the first ball in the stipulated time of under two minutes, the MCC have noted in their statement, "Having taken more than 90 seconds to get to the 30-yard circle, Mathews appeared to notice that he was short on time, jogging the final few yards to the wicket. His helmet malfunction has since been shown to have taken place 1 minute and 54 seconds after the previous wicket had fallen. He had not, at this stage, begun to take guard and was not close to being in a position to receive the ball.

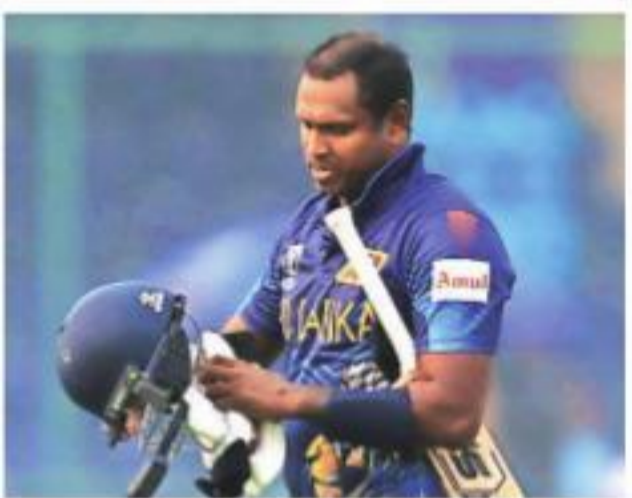
"When the helmet broke, it appears that Mathews did not consult with the umpires, which a player would be expected to do when seeking new equipment. Rather, he just signalled to the dressing room for a replacement. Had he explained to the umpires what had happened and asked for time to get it sorted out, they might have allowed him to change the helmet, perhaps calling Time and thus removing any possibility of being Timed out. Given that Time had not been called, and that at the time of the appeal more than two minutes had elapsed, the umpires correctly gave Mathews out. In fact, there was no other action for the umpires to take within the Laws of Cricket." it further added.

The incident which took place earlier this week at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in Delhi has been the talk of the cricket town since. Mathews, who would leave the field livid after being deemed out, would say afterwards that the incident was "Absolutely disgraceful. We all play to win but I never thought a team or player would stoop to such levels to get a wicket." Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan, who'd appealed against Mathews off his own bowling stood by his decision. "I have no regrets. I have been playing against Angelo since our U-19 days. I think it was 2006 when we played against each other for the first time. What happened was unfortunate for him, but rules are rules," he said.

On the spirit of cricket

A big part of the discourse against Shakib and Co has been the 'spirit of cricket'. Was it right of Bangladesh to claim a wicket in that manner? On the debate, the MCC have offered their stance.

"At the Spirit of Cricket's core are the values of respect and fair play, yet its application is interpretive, as issues considered to be totally reasonable in the eyes of some may be deemed unacceptable to others," the club said in its statement. "It is recognised that there are times when players will choose not to complete certain dismissals, not to appeal or, upon reflection, to withdraw an appeal. Provisions exist within the Laws of Cricket to facilitate these choices," it added.



Angelo Mathews. Reuters

As they prepare for another semi-final vs a team that has caused them trouble in big-ticket events, India should bowl first against the Dutch

VENKATA KRISHNA
BENGALURU, NOVEMBER 11

IRONY IS blowing in the Bangalore winds. Before the start of the World Cup, it had seemed that India were better off chasing, trusting their batsmen. The bowling form wasn't exactly clear: there was hesitancy about using Mohammad Shami, concerns about Jasprit Bumrah's touch and endurance after return from injury, the insistence on using Shardul Thakur for his batting ability, and whether Hardik Pandya will last and be effective across 10 overs in Indian conditions.

But now, a wondrous role-reversal has occurred. Such has been Indian seamers' venom under lights, and the spinners Ravindra Jadeja and Kuldeep Yadav's skill, that now India look a side suited to defend totals with aplomb. And we are now at a stage, just before the semi-final, talking about how they should test their chasing skills and bowling upfront effectiveness in the game against Netherlands on Sunday.

When Mohammad Shami came in for the injured Pandya in the game against New Zealand, he immediately struck rhythm, grabbing a five-for in the game India bowled first. From then on, they have been batting first in the following games.

India are averaging an incredible 8.63 with the ball while bowling second. Bowling first, they average 25.95, which although is exceptional, is worth testing again before the knockouts.

In the past, it's at the knockout stages when they are slightly pulled out of their comfort zone that India have shown a tendency to crumble. Be it in 2015 or 2019, they finished as the top placed team in the group stages, only to bow out in the semi-finals. As they prepare for another semi-final against an opponent that has caused them trouble in big-ticket events, there is still one more box India would be happy to tick-off -- to bowl first and be prepared for all possibilities against New Zealand.

Ready for all scenarios

Rahul Dravid didn't want to be seen fussing too much about the scenario. "We've done both things. To be honest with you, we have bowled first, we batted first in this tournament. I think that's been the really good thing for us in eight games. I think in the first five we batted first and then we had to chase in the last three. So, we've actually done both things and we're pretty comfortable with both things. So, I'm not too worried about it," Rahul Dravid said on the eve of the Netherlands game.

While India have bowled out opponents in each of the three matches they have bowled under lights, they have done so on three out of the five innings when bowling first. So far a bowling unit that has taken only 34.5 overs vs England, 19.4 overs vs Sri Lanka and 27.1 overs vs South Africa, bowling second at the Wankhede in the semi-final against New Zealand wouldn't bother them much.

But it would indeed help India to go into that semi-final with some overs behind their back while bowling first. What if New Zealand win the toss? To no-one's surprise, they will chose to bat first to avoid facing Indian seamers under lights. If New Zealand end up with a big score and given the bowling disposal they have, they are

Contingency plan



India coach Rahul Dravid with Rohit Sharma at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore on Saturday. Reuters

While India have bowled out opponents in each of the three matches they have bowled under lights, they have done so on three out of the five innings when bowling first.

Behind the unbeaten march, a fearless captain Rohit shaping the India way

VENKATA KRISHNA
BENGALURU, NOVEMBER 11

SOON AFTER Rahul Dravid came on board as India's head coach, he made a case for changing their white-ball template, especially in the ODIs. Despite enjoying favourable results in bilateral ODIs, in successive World Cups, Down Under and in the UK, India's old-school approach of preserving wickets for the later half of the innings was found too outdated. With all the resources they had, it appeared they were batting with a hand-break, shifting to the fifth gear only in the last 10 overs. They posted big totals, in excess of 300, but still appeared to have left some runs behind because of their cautious approach at the start.

Even as recently as the last T20 World Cup, they seldom seemed to come out of the shell. But since then, there has been a total shift in their approach. After showing glimpses of their template in the lead-up whenever a fully-fit side was available, this World Cup India have been on an encore.

And at the forefront of this change is skipper Rohit Sharma. For someone who usually prefers to get set in the crease before exploding, the template that has helped him score three double-centuries, Rohit has become the opposite of the batsman he was.

At this World Cup, in the first powerplay alone, the India captain has had a strike rate of 130.54, which is 39.01 more than his career strike-rate of 91.53. Rohit's strike-rate in the powerplay is nearly 20 more than that of Mitchell Marsh, who is in second spot at 111.94.

This approach of Rohit makes, that even when they have been chasing, he has single-

ly **We've talked about playing in a particular way. You cannot do that unless your leader really buys in and actually shows by example. And it's been terrific to see the way Rohit's done that."**

RAHUL DRAVID
INDIA COACH

handedly ensured the game is done and dusted in the first powerplay. And even when batting first, his explosive starts mean, even in the case of pitch easing out, the middle-order hasn't been forced to take undue risks. India's last game against South Africa was a classic example where despite making only 40 at the top, he set the base for Virat Kohli and Shreyas Iyer to bat freely without worrying about run rate.

"Rohit has certainly been a leader, you know, without a doubt," Dravid said. "He's led by example both on and off the field. Some of the starts that he's given us, the way he's cracked open games for us. There have been some games where it could have been tricky for us, but the fact that he's been able to get us to those kinds of starts has literally cracked open the game.

"So, in the end, it's actually looked easy, but on reflection, as a coaching staff, we've realised the impact his innings have had on games like that, that have made it look easy for us and certainly made it easier for the guys who followed in that department," he added.

This start of Rohit is in complete contrast to what he did during the 2019 World Cup, where he became the first batsman to score 5 centuries in a single edition. With plenty of

holes in the middle-order, and Shikhar Dhawan missing, he went with a more cautious approach in seaming conditions. But in this edition, where swing has been hard to find for new-ball bowlers, Rohit has wasted no time to get going and has scored a staggering 31 boundaries and 16 sixes in the first powerplay alone.

Off the 203 deliveries he has faced so far in the first powerplay at this World Cup, Rohit has scored 265 runs. This is the new-age template that in effect had made England's approach the fearsome it was at the last edition. And this time, it isn't surprising that India are doing it, with Rohit leading the way.

"We've talked about playing in a particular way. You cannot do that unless your leader really buys in and actually shows by example. And it's been terrific to see the way Rohit's done that. And I think his captaincy has obviously been fantastic as well. It's been very good for a long time. He's someone who's certainly got the respect of the group and the team. And it's been a pleasure to see him operate the way he has, both on and off the field, like I said. And I think he's truly someone who's, you know, deserves all the success that he's been getting. And hopefully, it may continue," Dravid said.

This template of Rohit means it has also allowed Kohli to bat the way he knows in the ODIs -- without taking risks. With other stroke-makers around him, Kohli entrusted with the responsibility of batting out the overs, has gone about with any fuff, tallying 543 runs, the most he has scored in a single edition of a World Cup. As was the case in 2015 and 2019, it is their top order that is doing all the runs this time too, but there is a total change in the way they have gone about it, which has also allowed the middle-order to flourish.

FAILED TO SPIN FATE

Inefficiency of spinners has been a letdown for Pakistan this World Cup

SANDIP G
NOVEMBER 11

INA heated television studio in Lahore, where former captains and legends of Pakistan are tearing into their batsmen's ineptness to deal with a semi-turner, the surreally serene Mushtaq Ahmed, calmly intervenes: "Hamare spinners kahan hain?" The rhetorical one-liner contained one of Pakistan's biggest letdowns in this World Cup, a catalyst of their premature doom. His co-panelists, Shahid Afridi and Mohammed Yousuf, would take over the thread with considerable angst and detailed theories. From bland captaincy and global warming to changed soil nature and insufficient tending of the surfaces, they fish out every possible point behind the inefficiency of spinners. Mushtaq's deduction is simple: "They were bowling to stop runs and not to pick wickets. They were bowling like in T20s, not attacking enough and always scared of the boundaries."

The long lineage of Pakistan twirly-men, at the peak of their white-ball domination, were not like them. Apart from their splendorous skills and vibrant imagination, taking wickets was their sole pursuit. Abdul Qadir once whipped up an anecdote to *The Daily Telegraph*: "We were defending a low total in the West Indies and I suddenly started to bowl defensive lines. We won the game and I didn't concede too many runs, but Imran old me that you bowled poorly. It's a crime for spinners to bowl with the fear of getting hit," he recollected.

Thereafter, from Qadir to Mushtaq and Saqlain Mushtaq to Saeed Ajmal, spinners from Pakistan replicated the same aggression as their pacers would. Even Shahid Afridi, a modern-day leg-spinner, would hunt for wickets rather than be content just stopping boundaries. Not surprisingly, a spinner featured prominently in their golden age in most World Cups from 1987 to 2011. In 1987, Qadir (16) finished the second-highest wicket-taker; in 1992 and 1996, Mushtaq Ahmed was his country's second-most lethal bowler (16 and 10 wickets each); in 1999 Saqlain Mushtaq topped his



Pakistan captain Babar Azam (L) speaking with spinner Shadab Khan. AP

country's bowling charts In 2011, Afridi, after retooling himself from an attacking opening batsman to a middle-over leg-spin destroyer, claimed 21 wickets to charge his side to the semifinals in 2011. Twelve years later, their quartet of spinners winkled out only 12 wickets, each costing a nudge under 90 runs, con-

ceding 6.2 an over, and striking once every 88th ball. That their most trusted spinner was a part-timer -- Iftikhar Ahmed -- captures the story of Pakistan's declining spin stocks.

At the heart of their shuddering performance was the fallacy that efficient T20 spinners could be influential 50-overs practitioners too.

The driving logic seemed to be that if they can be thrifty in a format as demanding as T20s, where the margin for error is supposedly high, they could be more impactful in ODIs too. Little doubt that the pair is terrific in T20s, a format that launched their fame and international career. Aside from the World Cup, they were reasonably economical too. Nawaz concedes just 5.09; Shadab 5.23. But they average 35.88 and 34.15. It is no coincidence that each of the four teams in the semifinal has a spinner capable of picking wickets. Australia's Adam Zampa is the leading wicket-taker of this tournament (22); New Zealand's Mitchell Santner has 16; Ravindra Jadeja and Kuldeep Yadav have 14 and 12; Keshav Maharaj has 14.

Watching each of them has been a spectacle. On the contrary, their Pakistan counterparts have looked to rush in and complete the overs like they do in T20. Bowl flat, on the stumps, keep mixing the lengths. Such methods don't work in ODIs because batsmen have time to gauge a bowler and then line him up. Shadab burst forth with the reputation as a big turner of the ball, but in his pursuit for T20 ex-

cellence, he forsook his natural gifts. Former opener Aamir Sohail noticed in *The Dawn* that "Shadab is gripping the ball very tightly which is locking his wrist and as a result, he is not getting the spin and delivering (unintentional) full-pitched balls."

Nawaz was the typical utility player, flat and quick, whose biggest motive is to pile on the dots, without much subtlety of lengths or variations. Among them, Mir was the most attacking-minded, but the leg-spinner in a study in progress. The lack of quality spinners has been a larger concern. In Tests too, they have been struggling for a stable spinner after the fading of leg-spinner Yasir Shah so much so that Shah himself was recalled after a year in the wilderness. So dire that the last five of their 13 Test debutants have been spinners of one hue or the other. One among them is Abrar Ahmed, a leg-spinner who many in Pakistan tout as the inheritor of Pakistan's spin-bowling legacy. Mushtaq brought up his name in the show, as did Afridi. Perhaps, he could answer Mushtaq's rhetoric: "Hamare spinners kahan hain?"

There were moments I thought 'is my career done... am I history?': Gujrathi

29-year-old says self-doubts nagged him before winning FIDE Grand Swiss and qualifying for Candidates

AMIT KAMATH
NOVEMBER 11

ABOUT A month back, around the Asian Games, Vidit Gujrathi decided to take stock of his career. In particular, he was trying to remember when he had last won a tournament. His mind stopped at a few junctions as he journeyed back in time, but those turned out to be either one-off games — like his win over Peter Svidler at the Maharashtra Challenge Match 2023 — or second-placed finishes. Finally, he found it: his title at the Biel Chess Festival, which had come four years ago in 2019.

At the recently-concluded FIDE Grand Swiss tournament — one of the toughest open tournaments in the world — Vidit ended that streak with a stunning comeback. He started off as the 15th seed and shrugged off a defeat in the opening round to claim the title and earned a spot at the prestigious eight-man Candidates tournament, which will be held in April 2024 to anoint a challenger for World Champion Ding Liren.

"Winning the title means a lot more than sealing a Candidates spot. It has been a while since I had won an event of such stature. In fact, not even such a stature! Won any tournament! There were decent performances here and there, but no titles. So this win was reassuring. I got a lot of confidence from it, because I was getting quite discouraged. As a player I was losing a bit of hope in my journey," Vidit tells *The Indian Express*.

When Vidit speaks of decent performances in the past few years, he means the win he had over former World Champion Magnus Carlsen in a chess league; the triumph over World Championship contender Ian Nepomniachtchi at the FIDE World Cup, and making it to the



Swiss Grand Chess was Vidit Gujrathi's first title in four years. *Fide*

quarters of the FIDE World Cup in successive editions.

"That win against Nepo at the World Cup was good, but the job was to reach the Candidates. At the Asian Games in Hangzhou, I couldn't even finish on the podium while I had gone there hoping to win gold. There were moments of brilliance (over the years). But I couldn't capitalise on them. I knew I was doing something right, but it just wasn't adding up. It left a bitter taste," admits Vidit.

Over the recent years, as those sparks of brilliance repeatedly fizzed out without igniting into something bigger, a lot of self-doubt crept in. "There was a thought sometimes, 'is this worth doing?' But I had decided, I have to do this for the next couple of years. There was no conflict in my mind that I had to stop playing," he says.

One of those bitter pills of self-doubt came

at the Chess Olympiad last year, when the India A team, with Vidit in it, ending fourth.

"Something was off! There was something fundamentally wrong which I had to fix. I knew I was better than what the results were saying about me."

At the recent Tata Steel Chess India event in Kolkata, Vidit had said during a ceremony how it was not long ago that he used to be youngest player at the Indian team's national camp for tournaments like the Olympiad and Asian Games. Then, just before the Tata Steel event, as the Indian team huddled in Kolkata for a camp ahead of Hangzhou 2023, he found himself as the second oldest player in the camp. "Post-COVID when the youngsters started doing really well — their results were well deserved, of course — but for me it was a little hard to normalise to that in the beginning. I wondered: is my time done?"

The rise of teenaged Indian prodigies also had an impact in other ways: there were lesser requests for him to play at cash-rich invitational tournaments.

"So it did bother me in regards to my career. I wondered, is my career done? Am I history?"

It's a lonesome pursuit, chess. Even though many players travel with family members to tournaments for emotional sustenance, these chaperones are not always fully-equipped to understand what a chess player goes through mentally over the course of a tournament.

Over the years, though, Vidit has forged a kin-ship with other players like Dutch GM Anish Giri, who is the same age at 29.

Giri was one of the first ones to congratulate Vidit after the title. But it was the 35-year-old from USA, Hikaru Nakamura, who offered up a very succinct line about the significance of Vidit's triumph at FIDE Grand Chess.

"Amongst the Indians, Vidit is the player who is overlooked all the time because of Praggnanandhaa, Arjun Erigaisi, Gukesh and Nihal Sarin. He gets lost amongst the others so it's nice to see him shining for once," Nakamura told *FIDE*.

"Ek sense of tribe hota hai na? So definitely this (happiness) must be coming subconsciously or consciously from the knowledge that the success has come to someone from my generation. You feel like one of our guys is doing well," chuckles Vidit.

That self-doubt which had nagged him for all these years is finally relegated to a tiny corner of his mind. There are no more questions about whether his time is done. Vidit's next big challenge before the Candidates is shifting base to Mumbai to grow his chess career. "That's a very tough job. Possibly tougher than winning Grand Swiss," he smiles.

Wolves stun Tottenham with stoppage time goals

REUTERS
NOVEMBER 11

WOLVERHAMPTON WANDERERS stunned Tottenham Hotspur 2-1 with stoppage-time goals from Pablo Sarabia and Mario Lemina on Saturday, thwarting the visitors in their bid to reclaim top spot in the Premier League table.

Gary O'Neil's decision to bring on Sarabia as a late substitute paid off handsomely as the Spaniard scored the equaliser in the 91st minute and provided the pass for the 97th-minute winner.

The result left Spurs second in the standings behind Manchester City, while Wolves climbed to 12th ahead of the weekend's other fixtures.

"It is an amazing feeling, we've been pushing so hard. We deserve this game," Lemina told TNT Sports.

"We had the best tactics to play against them and we showed it today. I scored the winner and I'm really happy."

Spurs boss Ange Postecoglou was forced to field a makeshift back four due to injuries and suspensions, with the only regular in the

starting lineup being Pedro Porro. But the right back made an impact inside three minutes when he combined with Dejan Kulusevski to cross the ball into the box and set up 22-year-old Brennan Johnson for a tap-in from close range - his first goal for the club.

Arsenal outclass Burnley

Arsenal handed Burnley a sixth straight defeat in all competitions with a 3-1 home win on Saturday to move up to second in the Premier League table, level on points with leaders Manchester City.

Arsenal dominated possession and encountered stiff resistance in the first half from Burnley but they took the lead on the stroke of halftime when Leandro Trossard headed home before clattering into the post.

Burnley equalised nine minutes into the second half when Josh Brownhill scored with a deflected effort but centre back William Saliba restored Arsenal's lead two minutes later from a corner.

Oleksandr Zinchenko made it 3-1 with an improvised volley but Arsenal's night afternoon on a sour note when Fabio Vieira was sent off for a high boot.



Wolves' Mario Lemina celebrates after scoring the winning goal against Spurs. *AP*

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unparalleled enthusiasm and devotion, Diwali transcends religious and cultural boundaries to unite communities in a luminous celebration that heralds the triumph of light over darkness.

This ancient festival holds deep significance, symbolizing the victory of good over evil and the illumination of inner light. Families come together to clean and decorate their homes, adorning doorways with vibrant rangoli and decking the halls with strings of twinkling lights. The air is filled with the sounds of joyous laughter and the crackle of firecrackers, creating a symphony that echoes the collective jubilation.

Diwali is not just a visual spectacle; it is a sensory journey. The palate is tantalized with an array of delectable sweets and savory treats, and the festive attire adds a kaleidoscope of colors to the streets. The exchange of gifts and greetings fosters bonds of love and camaraderie, reinforcing the sense of community that lies at the heart of Diwali.

In the midst of the festivities, there is a palpable sense of gratitude and reflection. Diwali encourages individuals to express gratitude for the

blessings in their lives and to seek a renewed sense of purpose and positivity. As the last echoes of fireworks fade away, Diwali leaves in its wake a profound sense of renewal, unity, and the enduring power of light to dispel even the darkest corners of our lives.

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POINT OF VIEW, PAGE 2

A Date With Humanity

Suvir Saran on taking time to pause and appreciate the world, and holding on to what we wish to cherish and preserve



SPOTLIGHT, PAGE 3

Hairy, not Scary

Ahead of Children's Day, writers and artists share memories of the first animals they bonded with, from crawly caterpillars to a mouse

THE MAGIC OF A 100 DIYAS LIT

How ghee lamps cleaned the air, millets made us lighter and the *atta-gud-ghee* synthesis became a potent carrier of memories of Diwali

Ranveer Brar

DIWALI AT home, in Lucknow where I grew up in the '80s, would begin with the aroma of ghee wafting through the house, drawing us kids to the kitchen. What would bring a gleam in my eyes would be the sight of Biji (my grandmother) working her magic with *atta* (wheat flour), *gud* (jaggery) and ghee; no measuring cups, no recipe book, nothing; head down and hands synchronously aiding each other — one mixing and the other adding ingredients. We used to hover around, hoping for a nibble or to pick up some crumbs, but, of course, our elders were cleverer.

We would be given errands in return for Biji's treats. Ours was a large household, a typical farming landlord's *ghar*. The home had to be prepped for the festival and visiting relatives.

The treats were naturally too good to miss, so the children would set off with an errand each. This is a memory I cherish even today.

My tasks would usually be cleaning the windows and the *aangan* and help making *baatis* (cotton wicks) for the diyas. Fresh cotton from the fields would arrive in sacks. Amidst sorting the cotton seeds and playfully blowing it around (which ended up with more cleaning work for us), we would have a healthy banter on who would make the most *baatis*. What made it more appealing was that we would be given 10 paise *inaam* (reward) for each *baati* made.

I've always believed that our festivals and the associated rituals and their food have a scientific significance. For instance, the two Navratris (Vasant and Sharad) occur around major season changes, when our immunity and digestive capacities would be quite vulnerable. No wonder then that we are advised *vrat ka khana* (food for fasting) during this time. Millets and grains that make way into the *vrat* dishes help fortify our immunity and are easy to digest, while helping us feel full for longer.

Likewise, Diwali comes at a time when most regions in India transition into winter. Studies now prove that lighting oil lamps or even ghee lamps humidify the dry winter atmosphere and clears up the air, too.

I recall asking my grandfather why we needed so many diyas around the house. He would explain how both oil and ghee contain powerful anti-bacterial and cleansing properties when burnt, so you can imagine, what lighting up hundreds of diyas can do for the environment.

Add to that, all the house cleaning clears the clutter and dust, something our lungs would be grateful for in the upcoming



FESTIVAL READY
Ranveer Brar

My tasks would usually be cleaning the windows and helping make *baatis* for the *diyas*. Amidst sorting cotton seeds and playfully blowing it around, there would be a healthy banter on who would make the most *baatis*

colder months.

Re-painting the house, a mandatory custom in almost all of India, is again significant. Considering that monsoon would mostly be phasing out towards the final quarter of the year, just before Diwali, plastering and re-painting the house helps dry out any moisture stuck in the walls and demoulding them.

Incredible, isn't it? Everything ties in together and makes sense, so beautifully.

Back to the topic of diyas, another memory that comes to mind is the *gud-atte ke diye* Biji used to make. It takes just three-four ingredients and is fairly easy to make. I remember assisting in the kitchen with my share of what I believed looked like diyas.

Ghee would be poured in these diyas, lighted and placed at the altar of worship, as a remembrance and gratitude to both, God and ancestors.

Well, truth be told, that was more for the elders. We kids would just be watching and waiting for the wicks in those diyas to burn out so we could grab our share. Trust me when I say, the burnt-out ghee in those diyas added a truly spectacular layer to the already heady aroma of warm flour and jaggery.

This would be followed by urns and urns of other *mithai* and *pakwaan*. And this was not just for our family but for anyone and everyone who would drop in to wish us and seek the blessings of elders.

The health-conscious generation today sadly tends to become a little wary of indulging in the food festivities, while back in our younger days, we would hardly worry about these cravings.

But practically viewed, this is actually a 'treat time' for us after nearly a month-long observance of austerity. And, wait for it, there is science involved here too!

During the colder months, our body needs more energy to keep us warm. Sweeteners like jaggery, and fat mediums, such as oils and ghee, become your natural sources of energy. Ever wondered why we tend to crave more sweets and fried foods during winter? Or just inclined to eat more in general. This is why.

I always say that our body is actually quite intelligent and knows what it needs and when. Our task then, is to listen to our body and honour its culinary needs. Our ancestors knew this well and seasonal cooking continues till date in most of our home kitchens, especially during festivals.

I often get asked how to eat healthy during festivals. My answer — eat what is cooked at home. Our traditional recipes are already well balanced. As long as you eat in moderation and avoid too much refined foods, nothing should deter you from enjoying Diwali as you should.

Ranveer Brar is a chef, restaurateur, author and popular television host



Boondi Éclair

Prep time 30 minutes
Cooking time 15 minutes
No of portions 4 to 5

INGREDIENTS

FOR ÉCLAIR
Water 125 ml, Milk 125 ml, Butter 125 gm, Caster sugar 12 gm, Flour 165 gm, Eggs 5 no, Salt 2 gm

FOR PASTRY CREAM
Milk 500 ml, Sugar 100 gm, Egg yolks 120 gm, Vanilla few drops, Flour 50 gm

- White chocolate for sheet 60 gm
- Boondi to spread 60 gm

METHOD

FOR ÉCLAIRS: 1. Heat the water, milk, butter and sugar together and bring to boil

2. Take the pan off the heat and add the sifted flour and salt

3. Use a spatula to stir until completely combined

4. Return the pan to the hob, reduce the heat to low and continue stirring with a spatula until the dough leaves the sides of the pan

5. Take off the heat; transfer the dough to mixing bowl and leave to cool for 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally

6. Gradually add the beaten eggs into the dough

7. Beat with a spatula until the mixture is smooth. The consistency should be neither too soft nor too hard; it should drop off the spoon leaving a smooth 'V' shape

8. Pipe into shape and bake at 200c for 12-15 minutes then reduce temperature and let them dry on 180c

FOR PASTRY CREAM: 9. Put the milk in a saucepan, add vanilla to the milk

10. Bring to the boil

11. In a mixing bowl, whisk together the egg yolk, caster sugar. Add the flour and whisk well till smooth

12. Pour half of the infused milk in egg mixture and whisk again until there are no lumps

13. Pass the mixture through the sieve, and then return the mixture back to the remaining milk in the pan

14. Continuously whisk the mixture until it comes to boil (cook till 80c)

15. Take the pan off the heat and pour the *crème patisserie* into a shallow tray

16. Cover with cling film and cool

17. Make a cylinder using a plastic sheet and fill with pastry cream and set in the freezer to make pastry cream log

ASSEMBLING

18. Spread thin layer of white chocolate on a paper

19. Sprinkle boondi on chocolate before chocolate sets

20. Place frozen pastry cream log on chocolate sheet and wrap it. Keep in fridge

21. Slit the éclair and fill it with the frozen pastry cream log. Garnish with shaved chocolate and boondi

RANVEER BRAR

Deewlas and halwa sohan tikiyas in Shahjahanabad

How a family in the red city celebrates Diwali with traditional sweet shops, idol makers and homemade preparations

Ashok Mathur

"*Ram jeeti Ram rau aayen / sanuj sakal sasiya aayen / Avadh anand manaye*"

THESE BEAUTIFUL lines from a traditional *bhajan* depict the return of Lord Rama along with Sita and Lakshman after winning the battle against Ravana, bringing glory and happiness to the people of Awadh. The jubilation of this victory over evil is what we celebrate as Diwali. It is a festival celebrated with equal fanfare in all states of India with their traditional manners and cultures.

Shahjahanabad, the capital of the Mughal empire after shifting from Agra, was inhabited by people of various castes and professions. The city still, though having lost its old

charm and sheen, celebrates Diwali with fervour. Celebrations start with preparing for the Ram Leelas and *savari* (processions on old Delhi streets), lasting 10 days, portraying the life of Lord Ram from the Ramayana. This practise started in Mughal days and still happens even during Navratris. Diwali *melas* and bazaars are lit with street food, temporary kiosks selling Lakshmi and Ganesh idols, and toys brought from across the country.

Traditional small-time *halwais* make sweets made with their forefathers' recipes and big ones boast of the same practise. I belong to an old fifth-generation Mathur Kayasth family of old Delhi and we celebrate Diwali in our own traditional ways. Preparations start early and invites are sent to family and friends for dinners. Diwali dinners in Mathur homes will always have a



SWEET NOTES
Deewlas, the Mathur home decorated for Diwali

non-vegetarian dish, which could be bhuni hui kaleji to go with the drinks and aloo gosht cooked with traditional recipes by the women in the kitchen. Our community has been hugely influenced by Mughal culture.

Our customs and mannerisms in food, language and dressing up, is quite syncretic.

Sweets like petha and halwa sohan ki tikiya are also procured. Halwa sohan ki tikiya is a tikiya made with almonds gar-



COURTESY: ASHOK MATHUR

nished on top, and is slowly getting extinct, losing its recipe to other sweets. It uses *sam-nak* — wheat soaked in water and taken out before sprouting so it can be dried and powdered. This powder is also put in *khoya* till it turns dark brown. In our home, deewlas, both sweet and salty, along with papris and rawa ke laddoos, are made. Deewlas are traditional sweets made like mathris dipped in sugar syrup and topped by sprinkling *boora* or crushed sugar. Petha ki mithai are a must during Lakshmi Puja. Papri, a salty preparation of *besan* or gram flour, is made during Holi. A particular ingredient that goes in it is green methi or fenugreek leaves.

Unfortunately, most old Delhi residents have moved out, leaving the city's tangible and intangible heritage to decay. Not many are left to hold the fort and keep up traditional values and ways. Time, which brings, sustains and terminates cultures, is constant.

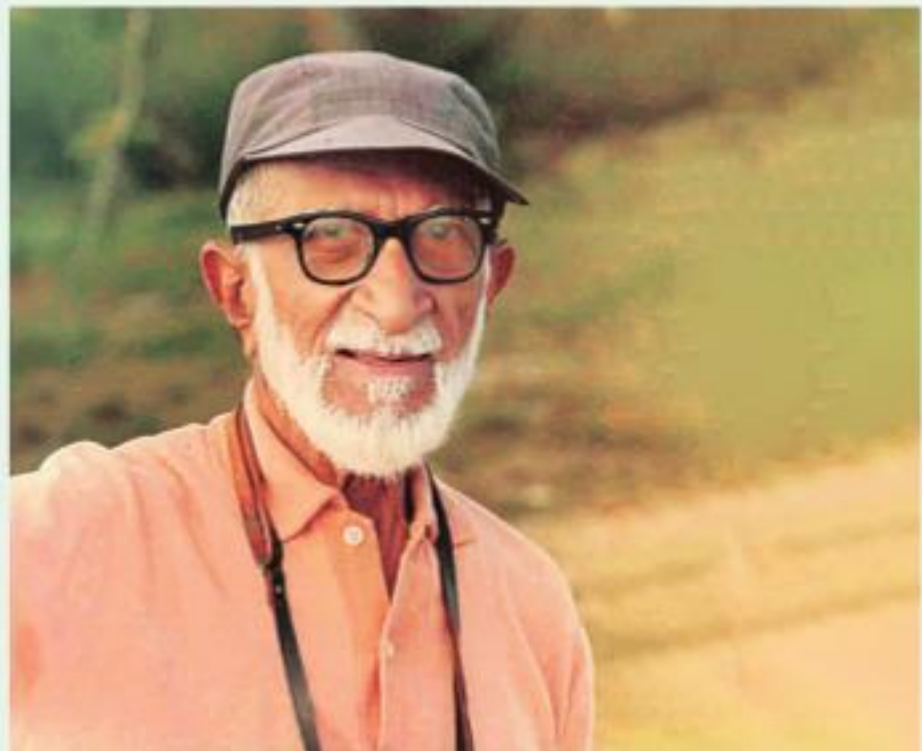
Ashok Mathur is a fifth-generation resident of Shahjahanabad, who also conducts tours around Old Delhi

A DATE WITH HUMANITY

It's a time when we pause to appreciate the world at large, when we see in the planet everything we wish to cherish and preserve

DOWN IN JUNGLELAND

RANJIT LAL Author, environmentalist and bird watcher



WATCHING EVERY MOVE

Salim Ali, who would have been 127 years old this November, shot a sparrow with a yellow splotch on its breast and the rest as they say, is history

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Bees in the Bonnet

Everything we know about nature has arisen from people who want to get to the bottom of things

RECENTLY CAME across an article in *The New York Times* on the experiments done to stop dengue (and malaria), which is spread by the *Aedes aegypti* species of mosquito. The idea is to introduce a virus into the infected mosquito that attacks the dengue virus. Once infected with this Wolbachia virus, the lady mosquito passes it on to her progeny rendering them incapable of spreading the dengue virus. If enough mosquitoes are thus infected with Wolbachia, a whole population of mosquitoes can be rendered harmless over a period of time. But Wolbachia doesn't occur naturally in these species of mosquitoes, so it has to be introduced into the eggs laid by female mosquitoes, via an injection. Millions of lady mosquitoes are fed a daily ration of blood so that they can lay their eggs which then can be injected.

Imagine, there are technicians out there, who spend their working days serving trays of blood to mosquito ladies, but before them there were scientists

Nearly everything that breathes or moves or wriggles has its guardian angel *en garde* for its welfare

who came up with the idea in the first place. Come to think of it, everything we know about nature (and pretty much everything else) has arisen from curious people who want to get to the bottom of things: once they get a bee (or bees) in their bonnets, or as we would put it, *dimag mein keeda*, they don't let go. Back in the day, some of these nosy parkers endured considerable hardship in pursuit of their goals. Think of Charles Darwin sailing all the way to the Galapagos to discover his different finches, or Alfred Russel Wallace, burning up with fever in steamy South-East Asian jungles as he contemplated what the deep waters of the Lombok Strait between Bali and Lombok might mean.

Mother Nature has piqued the curiosity of thousands of ordinary people who went on to become biologists, botanists, zoologists and ecologists down the ages, who then devoted their lives to studying, observing and living with what fascinated them. Salim Ali (who would have been 127 years old this November) shot a sparrow with a yellow splotch on its breast and the rest, as they

say, is history. Rachel Carson was appalled by the death of raptors and eventually tracked down the cause: DDT. Jane Goodall, fascinated by chimpanzees, went off to the Gombe Stream National Park in Tanzania to study the apes and discovered that they used tools and spent a lifetime studying the animals. Dian Fossey studied (and was killed for) the gorillas in Virunga, the Congo. Iain Douglas-Hamilton studied elephants in Africa, Jacques Cousteau explored the ocean depths, Ullas Karanth studied tigers in India, and Sir Richard Attenborough narrated all these wonderful stories.

What's so heartening is that nearly everything that breathes or moves or wriggles has its guardian angel or patron saint, studying it, observing 'every move it makes', and *en garde* for its welfare.

And this is not a modern phenomenon. The Bishnois of Rajasthan set off the Chipko movement back in 1700s when one stubborn and determined lady, Amrita Devi clamped herself to a tree

that the king, wanted to be cut down along with a whole lot more for a new palace he wished to build. She along with over 300 other women were beheaded by the king's soldiers before the king was appalled enough to order the banning of all felling. Ever since, the Bishnois have fiercely protected their desert habitat and all the creatures that live in it.

I'm often asked, 'But, how did you get interested in natural history in the first place?' By being curious and inquisitive, by asking questions, how, where, why, when... And that happened because I took time out and looked around and observed what was going on.

Sure, if you get obsessed by say, bats or bird-hunting spiders and want to devote your life to them, you are not going to have a very comfortable life. Dark, musty caves thick with bat fleg, and steamy tropical rainforests are not salubrious environments in which to spend the best years of your life. Or you might spend hundreds of hours hunched over a microscope at strange wriggly things. But the backaches (and mosquitoes) will be of no moment because you will be totally absorbed in what you are doing and so much the happier for it. You may never have a 'eureka' moment, but then the mosquitoes that bite you might just be one of the Wolbachia ones. The result of a bee in someone's bonnet.

SLICE OF LIFE



Suvir Saran

Suvir Saran is a chef, author, educator and world traveller

DIWALI BRINGS memories of delicious foods and visits with family and friends, festivities that give the air of Delhi a flavour unique to this moment in time, and faith that makes us see light at the end of the tunnel. I cherish this celebration for its inclusive spirit. It comes with allegorical contexts that tell the story of the victory of good over evil, hope over despair and love over hate. It brings relatives together, gives society a collective moment of sharing and caring, and is an annual ritual that cleanses homes, bodies, minds and souls.

As I survey my life over the last year, I see every bit of the Diwali story come alive in different ways. That I am now the culinary director of Bastian Hospitality Group in Mumbai is something I am most excited about. Bastian has been the greatest restaurant success story in India. That I can now be part of their journey of hospitable growth, delicious discovery and lucrative success is a gift that I see as a perfect legacy project at age 50.

When I arrived back home in Delhi more than a handful of years ago, for the first time in over 25 years, I was hovering over the world of the doomed. My brain was dysfunctional and my body barely any better. My homecoming



TO NEW BEGINNINGS

Diwali tells the story of the victory of good over evil, hope over despair and love over hate

wasn't that of fanfare; it was one of making peace with the difficult emotion of letting go, and perhaps, bidding goodbye. My life partner, mother, siblings and in-laws chose to have me in India for this difficult chapter of my life.

But then Diwali happened to my sick body, and I was given a new lease on life. Magic, good luck and healing and the unwavering love of

family and friends happened to me.

My mother, who is in her late 70s now, took my bout with physical malady as her call to action as a mother and a human. Her maternal instincts, her stoic calm garnered over decades of tutelage in the Bhagwad Gita, Vedas and Upanishads married to her wisdom and thoughtful alacrity, made her the fearless care-

MUSHROOM BIRYANI

SERVES 6 TO 8

THIS IS a vegetarian biryani purely of my own invention. It is perfect for festivals as there are no onions or tomatoes in it; its flavour is based solely on mushrooms and a south Indian palate of spices. For a more substantial meal, add one can or two cups of drained cooked chickpeas to the mushroom mixture. Serve this as a main course with pachadi/raita, or as a sidedish. This biryani has turned many meat eaters into happy vegetarians.

FOR THE RICE

- 10 cups water
- 6 black peppercorns
- 4 whole cloves
- 4 green cardamom pods
- 2 bay leaves
- 1-inch piece cinnamon stick
- 2 cups basmati rice

FOR THE MUSHROOM MIXTURE

- 1/4 cup canola oil
- 6 black peppercorns
- 6 green cardamom pods
- 3 whole cloves
- 1 tablespoon mustard seeds
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 36 curry leaves, roughly torn

- 1 to 6 dried red chillies
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 kg white button mushrooms, trimmed and thickly sliced
- 2 teaspoons or more of sea salt to taste
- 1 teaspoon sambhar or 1/2 teaspoon curry powder
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1/4 teaspoon cracked black peppercorns
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter at room temperature
- 3/4 cup chopped coriander leaves
- 1/2 cup water



Bring the water, peppercorns, cloves, cardamom pods, bay leaves and cinnamon to a boil in a large pot. Add the rice and stir so it doesn't stick to the bottom. Return to a boil and reduce heat to a vigorous simmer. Cook, partially covered for 6 minutes. Drain and set aside (you can pick out the whole spices if you like).

Heat your oven to 175°C or 350°F. Heat the oil, peppercorns, cardamom, cloves, mustard seeds and cumin in a large skillet or wok over medium-high heat cooking until the cumin is browned and the mustard seeds start to pop, about 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 minutes. Add the curry leaves, red chillies and the turmeric and cook, stirring often, for 1 minute. Reduce the heat to low, add the ground coriander and cook while stirring, until the red chillies are starting to darken, about 1 minute. Add the mushrooms and salt to the skillet and increase the heat to medium-high (the skillet will be full at this point). Cook, stirring often, until the mushrooms release their liquid and the total volume of the mushrooms is reduced by about 1/2, about 4 to 5 minutes. Mix in the sambhar (or curry powder) and then stir in the buttermilk. Bring to a vigorous simmer and cook until the liquid is reduced by 1/2 and slightly thick, about 8 to 12 minutes (there will still be quite a bit of sauce). Stir in the

cracked pepper and turn off the heat.

Grease a large 10-cup oven-safe casserole dish or Dutch oven (preferably one with a lid) with butter. Add 2 cups of the cooked rice, spreading it evenly over the bottom of the dish. Cover with 1/2 of the mushroom mixture and sprinkle with 1/3 of the coriander leaves. Evenly spread 1 1/2 cups of rice over the coriander and cover with the remaining mushrooms and 1/2 of the remaining coriander. Evenly spread the remaining rice on top and pour 1/2 cup of water around the edges of the dish. Cover tightly with aluminum foil, seal with a lid and bake for 35 minutes. Remove the casserole from the oven and let it stand 10 minutes. Uncover, sprinkle with the remaining coriander and serve.

PS: To make the recipe vegan, use coconut milk as a substitute for the dairy.

PS2: To make the biryani in a lagan or degchi, layer as you will for the casserole, seal the pan, tightly with dough or foil. Cook on medium-low flame for 30-40 minutes, depending on the thickness of your pan and the strength of the flame. Turn flame off, rest for 10-15 minutes. Uncover, sprinkle with the remaining coriander and serve.

What breakfast feasts are made of

Aromas of chaklis made from toasted grains and spices and a hearty crackle of curry leaves

Saeed Koranne-Khandekar



then carry a platter to the neighbours).

This may seem like an extreme rule, but there is some merit in the waiting — the faraal does seem to taste a tad nicer once it has had a chance to sit in the pantry cupboard a few days — with the exception of one item — the chakli. The chakli is best when fried fresh — still warm, if one can help it, but not more than a night old. When broken into, it must be light and hollow, not toothsome. It must be eaten with an accompaniment — freshly churned butter or perhaps a scoop of thick, freshly set yogurt. Everything else can be supporting cast (at least for this scene).

Chakli

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups rice
- 1 1/2 cup chana dal
- 3/4 cup urad dal
- 1/4 cup coriander seeds
- 2 tsp cumin seeds
- 2 tsp white sesame seeds
- 1 tsp ajwain
- 1 1/2 tsp red chilli powder
- Salt to taste
- 3/4 tsp turmeric powder
- 1/4 tsp asafoetida powder
- 3/4 cup hot water
- Oil

METHOD

For the chakli bhajani, roast the rice, black lentils, chana dal, coriander seeds and cumin seeds separately, cool and mill together to a semi-fine flour

To make the dough, add salt, turmeric powder, chilli powder, sesame seeds and ajwain to the flour mix. Add the 1/4 cup of hot oil and mix well. Add the 3/4 cup of hot water to make a soft dough

Divide the dough into logs to fit your chakli press. Pipe chaklis onto squares of parchment. Carefully lift the piped chaklis and deep fry over medium heat until golden brown. Drain on a paper towel and store in an airtight box

Koranne-Khandekar is a food writer and consultant

A Mother's Love on Diwali

Laddoos made with besan are a common sweet prepared across India during Diwali

Manish Mehrotra

THE DAY of Diwali would start with 600 kg of laddoos coming into our house. The children were responsible for putting them into boxes to be sent out to family — after a bath the morning. In the afternoon, we would have a big family lunch and adults would play cards in the evening. We would also light *diyas* and candles, but not before doing puja at every shop, neighbour's house, our petrol pump and all the offices. Dinner would not be such a huge affair as the *puja* kept everyone busy.

(AS TOLD TO UDBHAV SETH)

Besan laddoo tart-saffron cheesecake

Laddoos made with besan are a common sweet prepared across India. My mother, and my friends' mothers, would always pack a *dabba* (box) full of *besan* laddoos when we returned to college in Mumbai at the end of the holidays. The *dabbas* would be opened as



soon as we reached the hostel, all of us competing with each other to see how many laddoos we could eat. Each looked different but in all of them we could taste a mother's love.

INGREDIENTS

2 medium size besan laddoos

FOR CHEESECAKE FILLING

- Cream cheese 2 1/2 tsp
- Sugar 1 1/2 tsp
- Sour cream 2 tsp
- Eggs, beaten 2 tsp
- A pinch of cardamom powder, few

strands of saffron

FOR MITTHAI CREAM

- Milk cake 20 gm. Single cream 1 tsp
- TO SERVE
- Cut fresh fruits of your choice (optional)

METHOD

Crumble the besan laddoos and knead them to create a soft dough-like mixture. Use the mixture to line a tart mould of 3 1/2-inch diameter. Refrigerate the mould overnight. As the laddoos are prepared with ghee, the tart shell will harden.

Mix cream cheese and sugar with a spatula till smooth. Add sour cream and beaten eggs to the creamy mixture. Mix well to ensure there are no lumps. Add saffron strands and cardamom powder. Keep aside.

Fill the besan laddoo tart shell with the cream cheese filling. Bake in a preheated oven at 180°C for 12 minutes till the centre is slightly wobbly. Cool on a wire rack. When cooled, refrigerate for a further three hours.

Blend the milk cake with cream in a blender/mixer. Strain the mixture through a sieve to prepare a smooth cream sauce.

Remove the tart from the refrigerator and slice into equal parts. Place a slice on a plate and serve with a drizzle of mithai cream, with fresh cut fruits of your choice.

Manish Mehrotra is culinary director, Indian Accent

IN HIS OWN WORDS

He was a poet, painter, playwright, translator and doctor. But Gieve Patel was never a flashy collector of identities

Arundhati Subramaniam

I FIRST encountered Gieve Patel's poem, 'On Killing a Tree', in Class IX, and paused at the matter-of-fact brutality with which it described how to butcher a tree.

The much-anthologised poem comes to mind, as the tree of Anglophone Indian poetry witnesses its second great severance this year. After Jayanta Mahapatra in August, Indian poetry loses yet another stalwart with Gieve's passing last week.

When his closest poet friends, Nissim Ezekiel and AK Ramanujan, died, Gieve told me he lost the motivation to write poetry, because his primary readers no longer existed. We were at our Udipi haunt in Nariman Point, quaffing filter coffee. I wondered about that. Did poets write only for each other?

Today, I see what he meant. Gieve and I weren't united by the same poetics. But I knew he was that rare thing — an artist with an unfaltering nose for the authentic, a fiercely independent traveller, resistant to hopping on easy cultural bandwagons. In the literary world with its share of power-play and cliquism, Gieve was his own person. As long as there were people like him around, it felt all was not rotten in the state of Denmark. When he died last Friday, it felt like one was suddenly plunged into a world of opaque street signs, without anyone to approach for directions.

Poet, painter, playwright, translator, doctor, Gieve was never a flashy collector of identities. He preferred to find his versatile habitat in verbs, not nouns. My earliest memory of him is of hearing him read his poetry in my classroom. Little did I know then that I would write the preface to his *Collected Poems* decades later. As a young collegian, I watched his play, *Savaksa*, directed by Pearl Padamsee, and was fascinated by the festering complexity of its characters. Later, as a young poet myself, I met him. Our relationship deepened over time. Today, I have an audio file in my head of the distinct timbre of his poetic voice, its determinedly staccato non-lyrical rhythms, its muscularity. And then there is the Gieve guffaw, as inimitable as the broad smile and the clear-eyed gaze.

Born in 1940, Gieve's first book of poems was published in 1966. There were subsequent gaps, the longest between his third volume in 1991 and his *Collected* twenty-seven years later. The hiatuses were filled with much else: an active life as a painter; a bustling medical practice (until 2005); the writing of three plays; and his immersive translation project of the Gujarati mystic poets, Akho and Vasto.

Gieve was the quintessential Mumbai artist. He walked the city's seething streets, inhaled its contaminated odours, and relished, with an affectionate ethnographer's delight, the diverse patients who turned up at his Bombay Central clinic. His poetry also valued this sense of being 'interpenetrated / with the world'. Perhaps even death, he wrote, was welcome if it happened on Indian Railways 'in a third-class carriage / with open windows'. His daughter says that the cubicle in the Pune palliative-care centre in which he died felt like a railway compartment — self-contained, yet connected to the world. That sounded deeply appropriate.

He often described himself as 'bedeviled'. Certainly, his plays and poetry, from *Poems to How Do You Withstand, Body?*, were fevered, dark, haunted by questions around body, mortality, injustice, unredeemed pain, unhealed inner demons. And yet, there was nothing bedeviled about the man I grew to know. His third book, *Mirrored Mirroring*, suggested that some of 'that difficult baggage' might have been resolved. There was an embarrassed wondering here about how we got 'caught up / in God's effort / to understand Himself'. Gieve's imagined God was

something like himself — passionately curious about the besieged body, 'embroiled in detail', and 'puzzled, puzzled'. In later years, that curiosity deepened. Our recent meetings invariably revolved around subjects of karma, meditation, death.

This April, I asked him if he felt he had any unfinished creative business. Only the translations, he said. There was no point suggesting that he hurry. Gieve approached his work like Akho, the goldsmith-poet he loved. He polished, crafted, dusted unceasingly, and worked only when he was seized by 'inner necessity' (a Kandinsky phrase he liked). Churning out a book to retain the cultural badge of 'poet' was unthinkable.

In his last days, it was drawing that consumed him. A year ago, he sent me a sketch of a tree — a serrated explosion of lines and gnarly wrinkles. It resembled a wild tree from his recent poem, 'All Night'. Unlike Gieve's earlier tree, this new counterpart is not mutilated or massacred by external forces. Instead, the tree itself yearns for oblivion, an ecstatic uprooting.

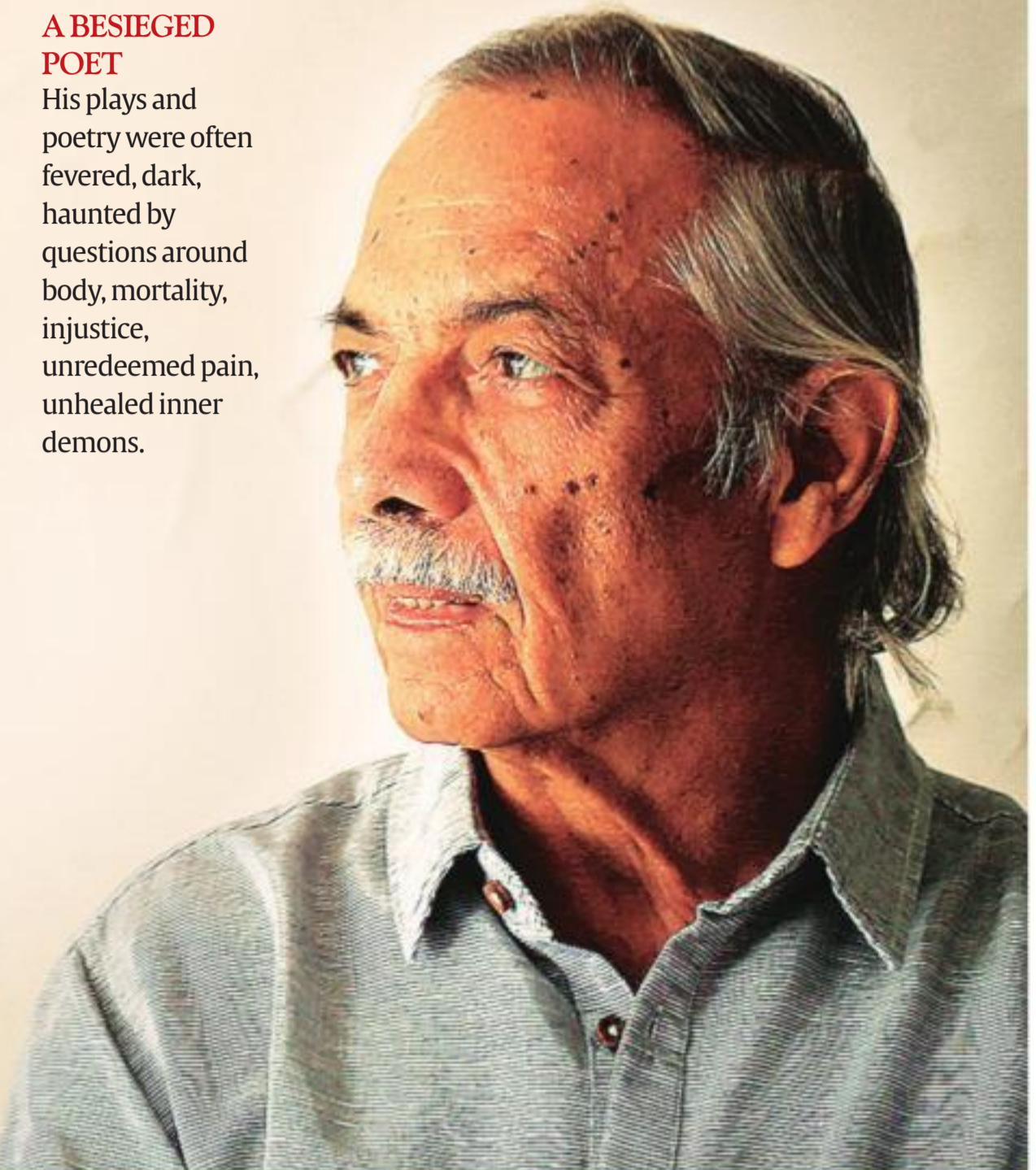
Was the poem prescient? Did it indicate something that Gieve unconsciously knew, or desired? We will never know.

No, the body does not withstand, friend. Nor does the tree. What we do know is that your many branches live on in your work, green-leaved and fiercely radiant.

The writer is a poet and author

A BESIEGED POET

His plays and poetry were often fevered, dark, haunted by questions around body, mortality, injustice, unredeemed pain, unhealed inner demons.



COURTESY: NIRMAL HARINDRAN

The Pets that Made Us

Ahead of Children's Day, writers and artists share memories of the first animals they bonded with

Hairy, not Scary

The community of boys in a boarding school that grew around an adopted rat

Quasar Padamsee

TECHNICALLY, MY first pets were dogs called Borad and Popsy, who lived in our farm near Mumbai, but the first one that I really tried to take care of was a baby rat called Quasi Mouse. It — I do not know whether it was a he or she — was a house pet in the dormitory of my boarding school at Rishi Valley, when I was in Class VI in the 1980s.

The teachers in our school were sympathetic to the cause, which was really nice, because it would have been a different kind of experience for them as well — the fact that this gang of boys wants to adopt a rat.

The name was given by one of the boys and I think it was because we were all fans of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and had been talking about Quasimodo. With names, when you are a kid, you don't really think too much.

Quasi Mouse lived in a shoe box, most likely a Bata one, in a corner of the upper floor dormitory. Everyone donated something to line the shoebox. I gave a hand towel to make Quasi Mouse a more comfortable bed. We cut holes in the cardboard so that it could breathe and we took turns at feeding time to put milk — sourced from the school — into its mouth with a dropper.

At that time, we didn't think of it but looking after a pet united us in many ways. We were of different ages, with the upstairs dorm being a year older to mine. But the hierarchy of junior-senior disappeared when we had a common purpose of care.

For the three-four days that Quasi Mouse lived, there was a strange energy in the dormitory. We looked forward to coming back as soon as classes finished. Of the few dorms of the same age group in school, we were, suddenly, the cool ones. Others came to visit the pet.

Quasi Mouse was small, quiet and ailing and we were unable to keep it going though we tried. Somebody or the other was observing Quasi Mouse constantly, so we



ILLUSTRATION: SUVAJIT DEY

knew when it stopped moving. We also understood that when somebody dies, they become completely still and rigid. We had a bit of a funeral in the garden of the school.

We were all disconsolate. I wept copiously for a couple of days. What was also interesting is how the other dorms came over

and commiserated. It tells you something about how important community is.

With a pet, it is about unconditional love. Pets teach a person empathy. Pets are what tell us that we can be someone better. I have always loved pets but never actually lived with one. When friends come over and

bring their dogs, I am overjoyed. So, it is a kind of borrowed experience. With Quasi Mouse, it was bizarre but quite a lovely journey to look back on.

Quasar Padamsee is a stage actor and theatre director

Creepy, cute, crawling

The unusual joys and sorrows of raising a caterpillar

Manjula Padmanabhan

CATTY WAS a caterpillar. I thought of Catty as "she" even though caterpillars are genderless eating machines. Their whole purpose is to gorge themselves into a stupor, seal themselves inside an airtight capsule called a pupa, then wake up as butterflies.

I was eight years old when I found Catty on a leaf in our garden in New Delhi. I knew what she was and ran inside, holding the leaf on which she was placidly grazing. My elder sister produced a small square box with a cellophane panel on top. "She'll be safe inside," she told me, with the wisdom of someone seven years older than me. "You should put a few more leaves inside and use a pin to poke a couple of breathing holes in the box. Then you can watch her through the viewing window on top. It'll be like your own tiny television."

In 1961, there were no actual televisions in Delhi, so the idea of having one all to myself was irresistible. Plus, this was my own real live pet! She was small enough that I didn't need my mother's permission to keep her. She wouldn't poop on the carpet or need to be taken to the vet. Best of all, I knew that she would, one day, transform herself into a beautiful graceful creature that would fly away without a backward glance.

We'd had furry, four-footed pets before this. However much I loved them, they presented three problems. One, they could never be exclusively mine because I didn't like cleaning up their messes or caring for them when they fell ill. Two, we moved to different homes and countries every three years. We had, in this way, left a beloved little friend behind a couple of times and each time it had been extremely painful. Three, of course, was the fact that typical pets had

the annoying habit of dying. It was even worse than leaving them behind in some other country because we couldn't even fantasise about being reunited with them in the future.

Dainty little Catty, by contrast, required no effort on my part at all. She was about an inch long, pale green with faint white dots along her sides. She had the very tiniest of little bumps on either side of a slender body not much thicker than a matchstick, that functioned as her feet. She never looked up or said hello or noticed me at all. At night, she would curl up on one of the leaves that she'd been using as her breakfast, lunch and dinner. The next morning she'd be at it again, gliding slowly about her leafy dining table, eating with a calm, thoughtful relentlessness.

It seemed like a fairy-tale existence. Eat all you like before sailing away on giant colourful wings! Needless to say, I never actually saw the transformation take place. I stared continuously into her box for a few days until one morning she was no longer there. No pupa, no butterfly. This would have been much more disturbing if my sister hadn't already found another very similar caterpillar to take Catty's place.

I called her Catty-2. But the same thing happened to her and to all subsequent Cattys. Maybe they all found a way of escaping from the box. Or maybe they all died out of sheer boredom, inside their leaf-bound prison. I never found out.

Soon enough it was time to leave once more. New home, new country, new school, new friends. No pets, however. Like a butterfly, I had left that phase of my life behind without a backward glance.

Manjula Padmanabhan is a writer and cartoonist



ILLUSTRATION: SUVAJIT DEY

Learning to Love

A wolfish dog that made his place in the family permanently

Sofia Kakar

IT'S TRUE that dogs are the most loyal animals. We used to have so many dogs in Afghanistan, where I lived till I was 16, before moving to New Delhi. Once, we even had ten of them for a year. With all of them in our house it was like a battlefield. Every morning we woke up, in between two big apple trees, in the middle of our garden, under a beautiful blue sky and with the view of a mountain in the distance, and found these little creatures wandering around, playing joyfully.

Despite the chaos, they were always there for us. Unfortunately, we could not keep all of them through the year, and my grandmother ultimately allowed only three to remain —

the three who had been with our family from the beginning. One of those dogs was a little crazy but it was our own fault, because when he was a little newborn, he fell from a height and hurt his head. He was also the most loyal of them all. We, who grew up and played together in that house, used to call him the black dog. I don't think even German Shepherds had his strength or speed. He was like a wolf. From the thieves he drove out to the great adventures we had in that beautiful house, he left us with many memories.

The reason we had so many dogs was because of my uncle's love for animals. He has since married and gone to Canada, more than 13 years ago, and never returned to Afghanistan. The only thing waiting for him all these years is that crazy and loyal dog. I never understood how someone could

maintain hope of seeing a loved one for so long. But seeing that dog waiting so patiently, and sometimes even cry, I began to understand. I remember asking someone, "Do animals cry too?" But they thought it was a foolish question and I never got the answer. I never told anyone about that dog crying, because I didn't want them to laugh at me.

A few months ago, my little sister brought home a little newborn cat from our locality in Delhi without my mom and dad's permission. She held him and cried and hid him. I think that's when she understood how to love him even though she might lose him. But luckily, she got to keep him. I hope that her childhood will be joyful.

Sofia Kakar and Shivani are members of The Community Library Project



When I was 19, my family and I visited our home village, Jaunpur. On the last day of that trip, my sister was playing with our baby goat, Mimi. I photographed her because I saw a beautiful relation there. This illustration reflects that bond

SHIVANI

How air pollution is affecting the mental health of children

CAPSULES

[0-13 YEARS] Antibiotics resistance in kids in Asia-Pacific

ANTIBIOTICS USED to treat blood infection and brain inflammation in children are no longer effective in many parts of Asia-Pacific because of high rates of antibiotic resistance, found a study by researchers from Laos, Australia, and the UK. The research, published in the *Lancet Southeast Asia*, found that the most common antibiotic was only 26 to 45 per cent effective, while the efficacy of a much stronger antibiotic also stood at only 29 per cent for neonates and only 51 to 65 per cent for older children.

[13-18 YEARS] Use of dental products in schools are effective

A STUDY on the oral health of children and adolescents by a US Taskforce found that administering fluoride supplements and gels, varnish and sealants either at school or primary care settings improved the outcome of dental caries. Use of the products resulted in a decreased number of missing, decayed, or filled permanent teeth. The study also found that in school-aged children and adolescents screening could be done by a trained nurse or even a parent armed with a questionnaire.

[18-50 YEARS] Work time flexibility can reduce heart diseases

INCREASING THE flexibility of work timings can reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases among employees, found a study by Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and Penn State University. Workplaces that implemented interventions to reduce conflicts between the employees' work and their personal and family lives could drastically reduce the risk for cardiovascular disease—equivalent to five and 10 years of age-related changes, particularly in the older employees and those at higher risk at baseline. The findings were important for low and middle-wage workers.

[50+ YEARS] A healthy heart can reduce biological age

THE BIOLOGICAL age of a person reduces when their heart is healthy, found a preliminary study to be presented at the American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions 2023. The study found that the average actual age of those with high cardiovascular health was 41, yet their average biological age was 36. Whereas, the average actual age of those who had low cardiovascular health was 53 and their average biological age was 57. Those with healthier heart health were the ones who followed practices like healthy sleep, not smoking, physical activity and healthy diet, body weight, and blood glucose.

Forced to stay indoors, with schools shut down, kids miss the peer culture that develops connectedness and creates a healthy social environment

Ankita Upadhyay

WHILE ALL discussion around pollution is pivoted around lung health, there are far reaching consequences beyond the physical, especially among the generation that's growing up with masks and is forced to stay indoors for long periods of time. Apart from battling infections each season, continued exposure to pollutants means the asthmatic condition of the likes of six-year-old Arjun Shrivastava turns chronic and their immunity dips sharply. Besides, forced to stay indoors, what with schools shut down, they miss the peer culture that develops connectedness and creates a healthy social environment.

Worried that their children will become sicker by the day and be denied a season's worth of school work, many parents are thinking of taking up new jobs to relocate to a city with cleaner air.

Arjun's mother Ananya Shrivastava, a 36-year-old PR professional who lives in Dwarka, Delhi, is looking for a job opportunity in Canada that will give her permanent residency and the clean air that Arjun needs desperately. "Both my husband Gaurav and I are determined about getting the job that will justify our relocation outside Delhi. We have to save Arjun," she says. Gaurav, a sales professional, is already looking for a backup option in relatively cleaner cities like Pune and Bengaluru.

They have reasons to be worried. An asthmatic, Arjun's condition has deteriorated every year since he was born in 2017 during the severely polluted months of October and November. He needs a combined power of nasal spray, steaming and nebulisation to get rid of his rather stubborn nose block. Come October and Ananya shuts the door and windows in his room, keeps him in front of an air purifier, creates an air-conditioned environment, makes sure he gargles up to four times a day and drinks warm water. For years, she has been administering a course of anti-allergic medicine like Maxtra or Cetirizine to him. Her harshest preventive measure has been to not send her son to school for weeks during Diwali. Last year, Arjun could attend only 150 of the 200 school days. "If he goes out for just one day, he will lose a week in treatment and recovery," says Ananya who has signed him up for online classes with the support of his teachers. "Kids of his class have started reading thoroughly and speak fluently in English but he is still behind because of his ill health," she adds. Arjun wonders why he can't play outdoors like his classmates and though Ananya tries to divert his attention, saying he is better off with his Lego blocks, she knows he is missing out on a host



ABHINAV SINHA



of extracurricular activities like horse riding and swimming at school. "That lack of competence has had an impact on his mind. He is now rebellious and asks us why should he go back to school when he is mostly out of it," she says.

The family keeps the humidifier on, uses

An asthmatic, Arjun Shrivastava's condition has deteriorated every year since he was born in 2017 during the severely polluted months of October and November

holding back his full recovery and making him dependent on nebulisation. "As part of a recovery protocol, we removed the inhalers/nebulisation he was on and started with standard home remedies like steaming. He had major nasal allergy issues and we started taking adequate precautions like eliminating junk food. Gradually his condition improved and in a few months, we were able to reduce his medications to almost zero drugs. He was basically on steam from June onwards. But since Navratri his condition has deteriorated yet again," says Dr Kawatra. She had put him through many tests to diagnose the nature of his problem, ascertaining whether he had Cow Milk Protein Allergy (CMPA). She later found out that Arjun, though born an asthmatic, had also developed bronchitis. The last was the reason for his many coughing bouts.

According to Dr Rajesh Sagar, Professor of Psychiatry, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, a child in a confined environment becomes frustrated and irritable. And negative emotions fuel asthma. "We have published a paper linking behaviour patterns and symptoms of asthma in a child. It is important that they go out, meet new people and learn to interact because at that stage our social skills and cognitive abilities are developing. Socialisation is a kind of stimulation which we all need while growing up. One of our studies at AIIMS Delhi has also concluded that children and adolescents with bronchial asthma have comorbid psychiatric morbidities and behavioural problems," he says.

Dr Kawatra says that long-term effects of pollution can be deadly for anyone who is

Effects of air pollution on mental wellbeing

A 2023 research from the UK and China shows that long-term exposure to high levels of air pollution was associated with increased risk of depression, anxiety

ANOTHER STUDY from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health shows long-term exposure increases risk of developing depression later in life

ASTHMA MAY lead to depression as people with it may need to avoid social events to stay away from environmental triggers

Source: Published studies, Mayo Clinic

suffering from any respiratory ailment and living in a polluted city like Delhi.

"The particulate matter 2.5 can irritate the airways, making them swell and tighten up, and cause breathing problems because of which asthmatic children can generate COPD changes. They may have obstructive airway disease later in life if they continue to breathe this kind of air. Pollution is a major cause of hypertension as these particles get deposited in your arteries. Overall all the organs of your body get impacted because of this," he adds.

This is no city for walks

Despite enjoying the city's conveniences, a yearly spike in pollution is now making a couple seriously consider a return to Kerala

Anonna Dutt

FOR THE past few months, in a small town in Kerala's Idukki, Gopal Krishna Pillai and Sri Devi, a couple, enjoyed the peacefulness of their ancestral home. Despite Pillai's diabetes, past heart surgery and asthma, the fresh air in Idukki allowed him to go for his daily walks in the park without worries, all the while, looking after his mother.

In October last week, the lively 68-year-old retired engineer, made his way back to Delhi, eager for leisurely walks in the park. Little did he know, Delhi's air pollution had other plans. Instead of strolls, he found himself at Apollo Hospital, grappling with worsened asthma, accompanied by a troublesome duo of cough and chest congestion.

On Thursday morning, amidst a group of patients, Pillai waits outside the consultation room of Dr Rajesh Chawla's OPD, which deals with respiratory illness. Surrounded mainly by the elderly and those with underlying health issues, they all share a common urgency for medical help exacerbated by the worsening air quality. Senior consultant of chest medicine Dr Chawla, with a mix of con-

cern and frustration, notes, "Every year, as pollution in Delhi and nearby areas spikes, the elderly and those with comorbidities bear the brunt. The grim reality is that the long-term health repercussions of such pollution make it a silent yet potent threat."

Pillai is anxious, hoping that pollution levels decrease in the coming days. His concern stems from the fact that his asthma worsened last year during this season, leading to a hospital admission. "I have had asthma for as long as I can remember, but it has become impossible to live with the high pollution levels over the last five or six years. Every year during the winter months, I have to take precautions like staying indoors, wearing a mask if I have to step out, and increasing my medication to manage my symptoms," Pillai says.

Pillai's concerns extend beyond pollution. Battling diabetes and having undergone a bypass surgery in 2012, he rigorously adheres to a walking routine to manage his blood sugar levels. However, the escalating pollution levels in the last few days pose a formidable obstacle to this fitness regimen. "I do some yoga at home. But clearly, that is not enough," says Ghaziabad-based Pillai. Dr Chawla, suggests



TESTING TIMES Boost your immunity by eating plenty of green vegetables and citrus fruits

another option to Pillai: taking walks between 3 and 4 pm in the afternoon. He explains, "The higher temperatures allow pollutants to rise above breathing height, resulting in lower concentrations. That's why any outdoor physical activity should occur during this time."

At 61, Sri Devi is ready for a change after over four decades in Delhi, driven by worries about pollution and its toll on her husband's health. Despite enjoying the city's conveniences, the couple is now seriously considering a return to Kerala. With Sri Devi bidding farewell to her IT career last year and their kids settled in Bangalore, Delhi's charm is losing its grip on them. "We cannot live with the threat

of air pollution every year," says Sri Devi.

Leaving the city might not be on the table for everyone, but many choose to escape the post-Diwali pollution for a few days. Indra Kaul, a 69-year-old former school teacher, is planning a getaway due to her husband's asthma and her own recent struggle with heightened pollution levels.

"Last Wednesday, after returning from Mumbai, I felt a choking sensation that evening. Breathing became a struggle and my chest weighed me down," says Kaul, who lives in Noida. She is now consulting Dr Nikhil Modi, also a senior consultant in respiratory and critical care medicine at the Apollo

Hospital. "Kaul got seasonal flu when she was away, but that inflammation worsened as soon as she reached Delhi, leading to the choking sensation. Children and elderly people are the most vulnerable when it comes to pollution. So, it is important that those below the age of 10 years and above the age of 60 years—along with those living with lung diseases—get their yearly flu shot to prevent complications," says Dr Modi.

Despite experiencing some relief from medication, she still finds herself catching her breath. The looming Diwali celebrations bring concern as pollution levels are expected to soar. "Why add crackers to the already polluted air?" says Kaul. Fearing the upcoming pollution spike, Kaul is contemplating escaping the city for five days.

Kaul fondly remembers October and November days of the past and reminisces about picnics in city parks, leisurely strolls in Connaught Place and attending cultural events. "Delhi's cultural vibrancy is unmatched but the pollution confines me indoors," says Kaul. Last week, however, the couple ventured outdoors once, despite surging pollution levels. The reason: to purchase an air purifier from the mall to ensure they could breathe the clean air indoors.

Meanwhile, at his OPD, Dr Chawla has a consistent message for patients grappling with health issues aggravated by pollution: "Boost your immunity by eating plenty of green vegetables and citrus fruits. Don't forget to stay hydrated, even in chilly weather, to keep your respiratory tract moist and minimise irritation from pollutants," says Dr Chawla.

LIFE POSITIVE



TINY HANDS An AIIMS Delhi study concluded that children and adolescents with bronchial asthma have comorbid psychiatric morbidities and behavioural problems



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