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***TheIndian EXPRESS**

JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

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FLIGHTS

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HOLIDAYS



GROWING FOR ALL YOUR TRAVEL NEEDS



2nd RANKED TRAVEL AGENCY

Ranked 2nd among the Key Online Travel Agencies in India in terms of booking volume*

FASTEST GROWTH RATE

Grew fastest at 43% in terms of year-on-year growth in gross booking revenues[#]

ONLY PROFITABLE PLAYER

Only profitable player among Key Online Travel Agencies in India in Fiscals 2018, 2019 and 2020[^]

Source: "Assessment of the OTA industry in India" dated February 2021 (the "CRISIL Report") prepared and issued by CRISIL Research, a division of CRISIL Limited. 'Key Online Travel Agencies' refers to key players in the OTA industry based on gross booking revenue and operating revenue as defined in the CRISIL Report. Refer to "Industry Overview — Competitive Assessment of OTA in India — Key Observations" on page 126 of the RHP (as defined below) for further information. In the nine months ended December 31, 2020 as per CRISIL Report. In Fiscal 2020 among Key Online Travel Agencies in India as per CRISIL Report. In terms of net profit margin as per CRISIL Report.

Easy Trip Planners Limited is proposing, subject to receipt of requisite approvals, market conditions and other considerations, to make an initial public offering of its equity shares and has filed a Red Herring Prospectus ("RHP") with the Registrar of Companies, National Capital Territory of Delhi and Haryana at New Delhi ("RoC"). The RHP is available on the website of the Securities and Exchange Board of India ("SEBI") at www.sebi.gov.in and the respective websites of the book running lead managers, Axis Capital Limited and JM Financial Limited at www.axiscapital.co.in and www.jmfl.com, respectively.

Investors should note that investment in equity shares involves a high degree of risk. For details, potential investors should refer to the RHP which has been filed with the RoC, including the section titled "Risk Factors". Potential investors should not rely on the draft red herring prospectus filed with the SEBI in making

The Equity Shares have not been and will not be registered under the U.S. Securities Act of 1933, as amended ("Securities Act") or any state securities laws in the United States, and unless so registered, may not be offered or sold within the United States, except pursuant to an exemption from, or in a transaction not subject to, the registration requirements of the Securities Act and in accordance with any applicable U.S. state securities laws. Accordingly, the Equity Shares are being offered and sold outside the United States in 'offshore transactions' in reliance on Regulation S under the Securities Act and the applicable laws of the

jurisdictions where such offers and sales are made. There will be no public offering in the United States.

KIRKEE BRANCH

2 & 3, KIRKEE BUSINESS CENTER S.No.134/B, Dr. AMBEDKAR ROAD KIRKEE PUNE-411003 फ़ोन- **Ph: 020-25810938/6520**

PENDIX- IV-A"[See proviso to rule 8 (6)] Sale Notice for sale of immovable properties

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/ Symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Indian Bank, Kirkee branch, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 26.03.2021, for recovery of Rs. 4,46,149,90.14 (Rupees Four Crore Forty Six Lakhs Forteen Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety and Paise Fourteen Only) (as on 04/02/2021) due to the Indian Bank, Kirkee branch, Secured Creditor, from M/s Renuka Engineering Works Prop Mr. TatipartiVenkatSubramanya Sarma, The reserve price will be Rs 1,72,25,000/- and the earnest money deposit will be Rs. 17,22,500/-.

The specific details of the property intended to be brought to sale through	1
e-auction mode are enumerated below:	

Detailed description of the Mortgaged Asset	S Reserve Price	EMD	Date of Auction
EM of Residential Flat No-601, 6th floor in Buildir PANORAMA, Mohan Nagar Co-Op Housing So Ltd, Sub Plot No-A-48 & A-49 of approved Lay out bearing SY No 53/7, 54/3, 54/5/1,94/1, 95,96/1/1 96/1/2, 96/2, 96/3, 96/4 & 97, of saleable are 2904.33 sq. ft, Near Rohan Laher Project, Commonaire Bangalore Road, Baner, Pune valued Rs.2.14 crores. belongs to Sri. Tatipar Venkatasubramanya Sarma and surrounded by- East: By Open West: Estaircase & Lift South: internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Staircase & Lift South: Internal Road North: Education of the Stairc	& aa	17.23 lakhs	26.03.2021
PROPERTY ID: IDIB858352082	AO ID : IDIB0	426699	
BID OPENING DATE & TIME : 26.03.2021, 11:00 AM	BID CLOSING 26.03.2021, 17		
Inspection Date : Date : 22.03.2021 to 23.03.2021 10.00 AM to 04.00 PM	Incremental B Rs. 10,000/-	id Amo	ount :

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in "https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp?property_id=IDI B6514355163" Secured Creditor's website.

EMD A/c No. 6161885804, CA- INDIAN BANK

BHOSARI BRANCH, PUNE

Bidders are advised to visit the website (www.mstcecommerce.com) of our e auction service provider MSTC Ltd to participate in online bid. For Technical Assistance Please call MSTC HELPDESK No. 033-22901004 and other help line numbers available in service providers help desk. For Registration status with MSTC Ltd, please contact ibapiop@mstcecommerce.com and for EMD status please contact ibapifin@mstcecommerce.com.

For property details and photograph of the property please visit: https://ibapi.in and for clarifications related to this portal please contact help line number '18001025026' and '011-41106131'. Bidders are advised to use Property ID Number mentioned above while searching for the property in the website with https://ibapi.in and www.mstcecommerce.com.

Date: 05.03.2021 Place : Kirkee, Pune

Authorised Officer



KIRKEE BRANCH

१ & 3, KIRKEE BUSINESS CENTER S.No.134/B, Dr. AMBEDKAR ROAD KIRKEE PUNE-411003 फ़ोन- **Ph: 020-25810938/6520**

PENDIX- IV-A"[See proviso to rule 8 (6)] Sale Notice for sale of immovable properties

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Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/ Symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **Indian Bank, Kirkee branch,** Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As s where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 26.03.2021, for recovery of Rs. 93,54,885.00 (Rupees Ninety Three Lakhs Fifty Four Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty Five Only) (as on 08/02/2021 with further interest, costs, other charges and expenses thereon from 09/02/2021) due to the Indian Bank, Kirkee branch Secured Creditor, from from M/s Red Carpet Hospitality Services. The reserve price will be Rs 35,04,000/- and the earnest money deposit will be Rs. 3,50,000/-.

The specific details of the property intended to be brought to sale through e-auction mode are enumerated below:

Detailed description of the Mortgaged Assets

EMD A/c No. 6161885804, CA- INDIAN BANK

All the part and parcel of the property of the R No. G-1, Ground Floor, C-Type Building I Vihar Complex, Near Kharegaon railw Kalwa (East), Thane 400605. Boundaries: East : Open West : Open South: Staircase & Lift North: Open	No 18, Anand		3.50 lakhs
PROPERTY ID : IDIB6502870867	AO ID : IDIB0	426699	
BID OPENING DATE & TIME : BID CLOS		DATE & TIM	E:
26.03.2021, 11:00 AM 26.03.2021, 1		:00:00 PM	
Inspection Date : Date : 22.03.2021 to 23.03.2021	Incremental B	id Amount :	

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in "https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp? property_id=IDIB6514355163" Secured Creditor's website.

Rs. 10,000/-

IFSC CODE: IDIB000B174

Bidders are advised to visit the website (www.mstcecommerce.com) of our e auction service provider MSTC Ltd to participate in online bid. For Technical Assistance Please call MSTC HELPDESK No. 033-22901004 and other help line numbers available in service providers help desk. For Registration status with MSTC Ltd, please contact ibapiop@mstcecommerce.com and for EMD status olease contact ibapifin@mstcecommerce.com.

For property details and photograph of the property please visit: https://ibapi.in and for clarifications related to this portal please contact help line number 18001025026' and '011-41106131'. Bidders are advised to use Property ID Number mentioned above while searching for the property in the website with https://ibapi.in and www.mstcecommerce.com.

Date: 05.03.2021 Place: Kirkee, Pune

10.00 AM to 04.00 PM

BHOSARI BRANCH, PUNE

Authorised Officer

Reserve Price EMD



United India Insurance Co. Ltd., a Public Sector Undertaking, invites bidders for Selection of Service Provider for Microsoft products under Enterprise Agreement (EA).

Please visit our website https:// uiic.co.in/tender for details on Eligibility conditions and Bidding procedure. Deputy General Manager Information Technology Dept

RDAI Regn. No.545 CIN: U93090TN1938GOI000108 Toll Free No.1-800-425-33333 E-mail: customercare@uiic.co.in

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice is hereby given that ISHWAR HASHMATRAI THADHANI residing at 2001 Sterling Tower, H. Goregaonkar Marg, Gamdevi, Mumbai – 400 007., is negotiating with my client in respect of the property owned by him, which is more particularly, mentioned in the schedule hereunder.

The owner has further represented and given assurance to my client that the said property is free from all the encumbrances and/or defects in the title. Any persons having any claim by way of sale, mortgage, lease, lien, gift, easement, exchange, possession, inheritance, succession or otherwise whatsoever in respect of the same are required to intimate to same in writing to the undersigned together with proof thereof within 15 (Fifteen) days of publication of this notice failing which my client shall complete the sale/transaction and all such claims, it any, shall be deemed to have been waived and/or abandoned

Schedule Being Description of the property

All that piece or parcel of vacant land or ground bearing Plot 36 of Hill Top Colony Khandala area admeasuring 1220 square yards equivalent to 1019.92 square meters, in the scheme known as Hill Top Colony, under City survey No.577 lying being and situated at village Khandala, Taluka - Mawal, District - Pune within the limits of Lonavala Municipal Council-

On or towards East: By 30' Feet Wide road

On or towards South: By Plot No. 34 On or towards West: By Plot No. 37 On or towards North: By Plot No.38

55 Nakoda Complex. Lonavala Bazar, Pin No. 410401 Tel No. 9822276344 Date - 9th March, 2021

> Adv. B. L. Gholap **Advocate & Notary**

The Indian EXPRESS | assifieds

BUSINESS **POULTRY**



Vencobb today's exshop delivery rate at Pune Rs.95/- per kg. Contact (9522) 22872417, Pune (9520) 24269414. 0090272255-1

Pune Broilers Traders' Association Rate On 09.03.2021 For Live Big Birds Rs.117/- Live Tandoori Birds Rs.133/-Momin Poultry (Asif Momin) 26336349. 0090279855-1

Pimpri Chinchwad Broilers Traders Association Rate On 09.03.2021 For Live Big Birds Rs.117/- Live small Birds Rs.135/- Al_ Tagdeer Broiler(Sirai Shaikh 9822931357, 7720080489.

0090279428-1

NECC suggested farm-gate price for 100eggs on 09.03.2021 in Pune without tray is Rs.425/-(Rupees four hundred and twenty-five only) Phone: NECC 24270724, 26336377, Dealer: 24332689, 24455130, 24265787. 090272256-70

A Pune Broiler Traders Association Rate on 09.03.2021 For Live big birds Rs.119/- Live small Birds Rs.136/-Contact:-

0090281765-1

CHANGE OF NAME My old Name Pallavi

Ashok Palvi To New Name As Pallavi Abhijeet Shinde Vide Aadhar Card No.7804 5876 3083 Dated 08/03/2021 0090283103-2

My old name Sunita Dilip Bagade has changed to my new name Sunila Dilip Bagade (Aadhaar no. 269988319588) (Aff.no.755 Dated 4/3/2021).

0090283081-1 Mv Old name Auti Gorksha Balu Changed to New name as Goraksh Balu Auti as Per Aadhar Card No. 433242534735 0090283103-1

I have changed my old name Baronia Tanima to

IFSC CODE: IDIB000B174

Rajeshwar Aadharcard No.765760623200 0090283104-1 I, JCI have changed my name from Namdeo Vitthal Sodal to Namdev Vitthal Sodal with respect to below documents. 0070734555-1

I, JC-733920K Nb Sub Chaudhari Sunil Dattatraya Have change my Daughter's Name from Anagha to Anagha Sunil Chaudhari vide Affidavit No A120/2021 Dt 05Mar2021 Before Pune District Court. 0090283103-3

new name Tanima

I have changed my name Yuzud Burjor Karanjia (new name) My old name Yuzdezurd Burjor Karanjia as Aadhaar 358935648396

0090283105-2 I have changed my name Jehan Yuzud Karanjia (new name) My old name Jehan Yuzdezurd Karanjia as Aadhaar no 665379100529. 0090283105-1

I Kavita Ganpat Shelke wife of service no-15570937X Hav Batwal Pravin Genu TB-II Dighicamp Pune-411015 hereby declare that in my Husbands service record my name wrongly mentioned as Kavita Ganpat Shelke but correct name is Kavita Pravin Batwal vide affidavit no-

SERVICES

665/2021 0090283096-1

INTERIOR DECORATION We provide steam cleaning services for

cleaning of mattresses and beds which kills all germs. Other services available Sofa and Carpet cleaning.Contact City Interiors 0090283013-1

WATER PROOFING Without Breaking Toilet, Bathroom, 5Years

Guarantee, Terrace 10Yrs Guarantee, All Leakage Work, Free Visit **Authorized Applicator** Dr. Fixit9225534110/ 7666729911 0090278819-4

"IMPORTANT"

Apex Advtg, Mapadan Firlosh, Office No 26-6-7-8, Ashoka Mall,

PROPERTY FOR SALE

Flat Resale 3BHK Deluxe Flat at Lunkad Gold Coast Viman Nagar, Pune for sale 1300 sq-ft, 1st Floor Flat with an open Reserved Parking. Sunset view overseeing Defence greenery, 24x7 security. close to excellent Schools/Colleges, Railway station, Pune Airport, Ready o occupy. Contact: Santosh 00447377127979 WhatsAppl of santosh.3.kawade@gmail. com for photos, price, lewing vi https://www.youtube.co m/watch?v=w05e62fBN8k

ADVERTISEMENT **DEPOTS**

Suyog Enterprises, C/o Sandeep Book Stall, Swajas Complex, Parihar Chowk, Aundhgaon, Pune-7. Mob. 9422011181. Chordia Communications,

Arshad Aiit Chordia. 17/18, Aundh Gaon, opp. lane of Cosmos Bank, Aundh, Pune-7. Tel: 25886118, 9960111123. Shraddha Ads. Mrs.Ujwala Kotbagi, 'A'

wing, Vastu-sunder, Near Kumar Classic, Pune-7. Tel. 9371055799. San Ads, Anurag, Plot No. 10, near

Kobe Silzler Cave, Aundh 411007. Tel: 25881302/3/4. APPA BALWANT CHOWK-M/s V. V. Medhi, Varun Medhi, 153.

Budhwar Peth, Near Jogeshwari Temple, Opp. Ganraj Books, Above DTDC Courier, 2nd floor, Pune-2. Ph. No. 9028967505, 8793647505 (020) 24492149.

BIBVEWADI-Ad Services, Amol Nalawade, Sr. No.659/28, Rajiv Gandhi Nagar, Upper Last Bus Stop, Bibvewadi, Pune-17. Mobile

9420729914, 9021851460 **Akash Advtg,** C. S. Sawar, 645/1, Shop No.4, Rasakar Campus, Bibawewadi Main Road, Bibawewadi, Pune-37. Tel: 9922221261 Ganesh Advertising.

Mr. Vijay Deshmukh, S.no. 672/2a/2b, Ganesh Complex, Shop No.3, Bibvewadi, Pune-37. Ph.no. 24219660, 9822841930. **BAJIRAO ROAD** -

Sri Ganesh Advertising, R. Nirmala, R. Ravi, Remedy', 1929, Bajirao Road, Opp. Telephone Bhavan, Pune-30. Ph. No. 25232762, 9922220985. **BANDGARDEN RD** -

Bandgarden Rd, Pune. Ph. No. 8975758860. **BHAWANI PETH-**

nternationa

Impex Advertising, Mr. Ashfaque A. Shaikh, C-25, MIDC Comml. Building No.1, Nr I.B.M.R.

College, hinchwad, Pune-411019. Ph. no. 27470282/ Mayureshwar Enterprise, Latish Balkawade,

Ph no 9422082164 Raka Advertising, Road, Chinchwad 27475055/27472250.

Ad India, Sterling Centre, Opp. Hotel Aurora Towers 9422083670. **Hindustan Advertising**

Agency, Mr. Hiroo Surtani, 7, Gitanjali Kunj, Opp. Nehru Memorial Hall, Ambedkar Road, Meenat Advertising, Mukund Saigaonkar, 827/7, Dastur Meher Road, Camp, Pune-1. Tel. 26130542. DAPODI-

Vantage Advertising & Mktg., A-17, 'C' Building,

27143243/9822847256/ 9822132500. Praiakta Advertising. Mr. Sudhanva Jadhav, Greetwel, 1250 Deccan Gymkhana, F. C. Road,

Mundakal Enterprises, Mr. Roji Samuel Raju, 6 Unique Housing Society, Near Telephone Exchange Dehu Road, Pune-1. M. 9422519264. Dhandhania Agencies.

Dnyaneshwar Paduka Chowk, F. C. Road, Pune-5. Ph.no. 25521699/ 25537933. Konark Media Solution Flat No.6, First Floor,

Opp. Sun & Sand Hotel, Mobile: 9823142410. **Meera Publicity,** 1st floor, 10, Oswal Park, Opp. Rachana Lodge, behind Safari Hotel, Globe Enterprises, Tanveer Rehman Shaikh, 718, Bhawani Peth, Poona nr S.T.Stand, Shivajinagar.

Pune-05. Ph. 9421017457. **FATIMANAGAR** -College Road, Pune-1. M. 9890073883. Arora Enterprises, Samvad Ads. Rajesh Arora, Office No. Near Gawli uilding, 63, Building I, Phase-III, Pune Nashik Highway, Bhosari, Pune 411039. Parmarnagar, Wanowrie, Pune 411013. Tel/fax: 020-26860834. GURUWAR PETH

T.V.S. Enterprises, 460, Guruwar Peth, Sant Ganganath Maharaj Road, Kachi Lane, Pune-411042. Ph. 020-24456297, 9421815428. Kanva International.

A-18 Suchandra Corner,

Ghorpadi, Pune 411001.

Xebec Communications

S. No. 20. Pune-411037. Tel: 26446856, 9766509029.

B.T. Kawade Road.

Ph. 9422086762,

Santosh Heights.

Flat No. 22, Tulasi

Near Kalyan Bank, Gadital, Hadapsar,

Pooja Enterprises.

Hadapsar, Pune

1170/05, Kartik

9890635425.

-96, Mantri Market,

Mobile: 9011036125,

Fair & Fast Advertising,

Chambers, Model High

Bhosale Bhuyari Marg,

25511054, 25512719. M:

9881987777/9422502650

Jaya Advertising Pvt Ltd,

612/3 Anupam Darshan,

Karve Rd, Kothrud, Pune.

Hagawant, 34/3, Swaroon

Chhaya Apt, Lane No 2,

Happy Colony, Karve Rd, Pune. Ph. No. 64004637,

Nr Bhairavnath Temple,

164/12 Shinde Building,

Shastri Nagar, Kothrud

9822110193/66020354.

Swapan Apartments.

Right Bhusari Colony,

Paud Road, Kothrud. Ph.

Pradnya Communications,

Rohini Dnyaneshwar Mohol, 83/165, Shastri

Plot 39, Flat No.7,

No. 25282791/

9422031002.

Sneha Communications,

Pune. Ph. No. 9960111193/

Virgo Advertising &

Media Publication,

Vivek W. Lawand.

Shop-5, Plot-24,

Karve Nagar,

Pune-52.

KOTHRUD -

Kakade Complex

Minat Advertising,

Manas Enterprises,

Sanjay Jaganath

9767428509

School Corner, Near

Pune-411005, Ph. No.

Pune-28. M. 9762547254

Complex, Opp.

Ravidarshan,

J. N. Marg, Gultekadi

9921177816

Pvt Ltd.,

HADAPSAR-

Plus Media,

Chaphekar Chowk. Chinchwadgaon, Pune. Mrs. Vimal Bafna, Raka Chambers, Bombay-Pune Station. Pune-19. Ph. no.

Office No. 102, 1st Floor, M.G. Road, Pune-1. Ph. No. 26131993, 26135659, Mo:

Pune-1. Ph. No. 26138113. 26133510, Fax: 26131487.

3rd Floor, Kate Residency, Near Dapodi Railway Station, Dapodi, Pune-411 012. Ph.no.

Pune-4. Ph.no. 25531409, 66014132.

Mr. Ravi Dhandhania, 1st Floor, Srinath Plaza.

Prabha Tara Appt., Behind Hotel Vaishali, F.C. Road, Shivajinagar, Pune-4. Ph. No.32606012, Telefax: 2553 7013,

गोलीबार मैदान, पुणे - ४९१ ००१, दूरभाष - 26453696 / 26452159 Golibar Maidan, Pune - 411 001. Tel - 26453696 / 26452159 . गुरुया:1/2/Tax/E-tender/PAY & PARK /2021 Date: 05 March 2021

पुणे छावनी परिषद **PUNE CANTONMENT BOARD**

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDERS

Online tenders are invited by Pune Cantonment Board, Pune Golibar Maidan, Pune -1 from the experienced individuals/firms/ Companies with sound financial base for collection of pay 8 parking fee and provision of specified services in Pune Cantonment Board for a period of one year from the date of Handing over the sites. Experienced firms are defined to have experience in the field of collection of any type of fees outsourced by PMC/PCMC/Cantonments Boards/Civic bodies/Central Government or State Government for consecutive two years in the last ten years starting from 2009-10 onwards. The sound financial base is defined to have not less than 1 crores Net worth in the last three consecutive years out of last five financial years starting from 2015 onwards and should have turnover not less than 1 croresduring three years during last five financial years.

Interested firms may download online e-tenders from webesite https://www.eprocure.gov.in. NO MANUAL BID <u>WILL BE ACCEPTED.</u>

Dates and time for Bid download, Bid submission, Technical

Sr. No.	Particulars	Date	Time	
1	Publication	05.03.2021	1600 hrs	
2	Bid submission starts on	05.03.2021	1600 hrs	
3	Bid submission ends on	25.03.2021	1200 hrs	
4	Opening of Technical bid	26.03.2021	1200 hrs	
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER				

PUNE CANTONMENT BOARD (AMIT KUMAR) Date: 05 March 2021.

MAHARASHTRA POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD Sub Regional Office Pune-I NOTICE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEARING

M/s Nira Bhima Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd. has submitted the proposal of their proposed Molasses based Distillery from 30 KLPD to 105 KLPD in existing project complex of 3,500 TCD sugar Factory, 18 MW Co-Gen Plant and 30 KLPD Distillery, at Sahahajinagar, Po.Redni, Tal- Indapur, Dist- Pune to M.P.C. Board. In this regard a Public Hearing is proposed to be conducted from environmental angle, about this project. All persons including bonafied residents environmental groups and others located at the project site can participate in the Public Hearing.

Suggestions, views, comments and objections of the public can be filed at the follow ing addresses in writing within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice Regional Office / Sub-Regional Office Pune-1, M. P. C. Board, Jog Centre, 2nd & 3rd Floor, Wakdewadi, Pune-Mumbai Road, Pune- 411 003.

Oral and written suggestions can also be presented during the Public Hearing to be conducted at

Date: 15/04/02021 (Thursday)

Time: 12.00 Noon Venue: Project site at M/s. Nira Bhima Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana

Ltd., at Sahahajinagar, Po. Redni, Tal- Indapur, Dist-Pune. Copies of the Executive Summary containing the salient features of the project both

in English and Marathi and draft EIA Report, are available at the following offices. 1. District Collector, Pune. Zilla Parishad, Pune.

District Industries Center. Pune.

which please be note.

. Regional Office Pune & Sub Regional Office Pune-I, MPC Board, Jog Centre 2nd & 3rd Floor, Wakdewadi, Pune-Mumbai Road, Pune- 411 003. . Member Sectary, MPC Board, Kalpataru Point, 3rd Floor, Sion-Matunga Scheme Road No.8, Opp. Cine Planet, Near Sion Circle, Sion (E), Mumbai 22. 6. Zonal Office, West Central Zone, New Secretariat Building, Ground

Floor, East Wing, Civil Line, Nagpur- 440 001 . Environment Department, Government of Maharashtra, New Administrative Building, 15th Floor, Mantralaya, Mumbai 400 032. . Sub-Divisional office, Baramati, Tal-Baramati. Dist-Pune. Tahasil Office, Indapur, Dist. Pune.

Panchayat Samiti Office, Indapur, Tal-Indapur, Dist-Pune.
 Grampanchayat Office, Redni, Bhodani, Reda, Tal-Indapur, Dist-Pune

Concerned persons will be provided access to the Executive Summary o

the project & draft EIA Report during office hours at the above mentioned Note: As per Govt.of India Guildlines for "Unlock 4" dt.29/08/2020 & Wrt. Ou break of COVID-19 pandemic, Public Hearing need to be carried out by keeping Social distancing & in presence of only 100 peoples at a time. If attendance of more than 100 peoples found during public hearing then public hearing procedure will be carried out in phase wise manure by allowing 100 people at a time

> (S.J.Shinde) Sub Regional Officer, Pune-1 Maharashtra Pollution Control Board

NOTICE

Clover Watergarden Co-Operative Housing Society Limited Plot No 69, Road No 7, Kalyani Nagar, Pune – 411006. (Registration No PNA/PNA(2)HSG/(TC)/5370/2001) Shall conduct its Annual General Body Meeting, for FY 2019-20

(Only through Video Conferencing on ZOOM), on Sunday, 28th March, 2021, commencing 1000 hrs. Contact - 020 26608661 E-mail: cloverwatergarden@gmail.com

(Ref Govt of Maharashtra letter No. Misc. – 2020/Case No 24/13-S Dt 25 Feb, 2021)

KONKAN RAILWAY CORPORATION LTD. (A Government of India Undertaking)

KRCL has published Employment Notifications as given below; 1) Employment Notification No. CO/P-R/01/2021 dated 25/02/2021. Post: Dy. Chief Engineer/Project in PML-13 on regular basis. No. of Posts: 02. Place of Posting: USBRL Project, Jammu & Kashmir

2) Employment Notification No. CO/P-R/01C/2021 dated 01/03/2021. Post: Dy. Chief Engineer/Project on contract basis. No. of Post: 01. Place of Posting: Trivandrum, Kerala.

Candidates may see the details of notification, eligibility criteria etc., on the KRCL website www.konkanrailway.com at the link > Recruitment > Current Notification and apply accordingly.

Chief Personnel Officer

IMPORTANT DOCUMENT LOST

Form H No. 28464, Price Rs. 1,30,00,000 / - and other export related documents regarding sale of 2,000 tonnes of sludge for export under the VAT Act 2,002, received from a trader M/s K. N. Resources Pvt. Ltd. K.N. Building, Subhash Road, Raipur (State of Chhattisgarh) in the name of Venkatesh Kripa Sugar Mills Limited are missing on 15.02.2021. If anyone has found them, please bring it to Venkatesh Kripa Sugar Mills Ltd., Gut no. 203, 204, 205, 206, 219, and 236 A/p. Jategaon (Bu.) Ta. Shirur, Dist. Pune, Pin code : 412 208, Appropriate reward will be given to the person who brings the Form H and other documents.

Venkateshkrupa Sugar Mills Ltd. Jategaon (Bu.)

SHIV KI JAI CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING SOCIETY LTD., Reg. No. PNA/PNA(2) HSG/(TC)/6920/04-05

"Le- Mirage". 16, Boat Club Rd. Pune – 411001 Tel.: 020 26163456

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the members that the 16th Annual General Body Meeting of Shiv Ki Jai Co-operating Housing Society (Le Mirage Residential Complex) will be held on Sunday i.e. 21st March 2021 at 10:00 am. In accordance with Government directives issued dated 25th February 2021 and in view of the present pandemic condition, the 16th Annual General Body Meeting of Shiv Ki Jai CHS Ltd., (Le-Mirage Residential Complex) is being held via electronic media (Zoom Meeting). If there is no quorum, the meeting will be postponed by 30 minutes and it will be conducted with the Members present.

AGENDA FOR THE MEETING

Roll call of the Members.

Confirmation of receipt of the notice of 16th Annual General Body To approve the minutes of the 15th Annual General Body Meeting held on 31st August 2019.

Introduction and approval of new Members. Tabling, reading, submission, acceptance and approval of audit report for financial year 2019-20.

To appoint/authorize the Committee to appoint auditors for the financial year 2020-21. To authorize the Committee and the office bearers to carry out all acts as may be legally advisable for the extension/termination of the

settlement with the Land Owner in view of the delay in the project. To discuss and sanction the increase in maintenance charges to meet

the day to day expenses of the society. To sanction the phase wise upgradation of the lifts of A, B & Z buildings in view of the age of each lift and the irregular performance of such lifts.

10. To approve and sanction the installation of the cooking gas pipeline in the society. 11. Any other matter with the permission of Chair except those requiring

proper notice Find below the Zoom Invite link:

Topic: AGM 2020 Date & Time: Mar 21, 2021 10:00 AM India Join Zoom Meeting

https://us05web.zoom.us/j/3983309891?pwd=VVdmYnVnSm9H0EJuN1J saTN6eXg2QT09

Meeting ID: 398 330 9891 Passcode: lemagm2103

Date: 5th March, 2021

TATA CAPITAL FINANCIAL SERVICES LIMITED Regd. Office: 1 1 Floor Tower A, Peninsula Business Park, Ganpatrao Kadam Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai 400013 CIN No. U67190MH2008PLC187552 **Branch Address**: 9th Floor IRIZ Building Baner Pashan Link Road, Baner, Pune- 411021

(Under Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002) E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6)

of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules. 2002 LOANACCOUNT 7410953 Mr. Shrinivas Nandkishor Laddha Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the below Borrower/ Co-Borrowe that the below described immovable property mortgaged to Tata Capital Financial Services Ltd Secured Creditor/TCFSL), the Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Tata Capital Financial Services Ltd. (Secured Creditor), will be sold on **26"day of March 2021**"As i where is basis" & "As is what is and whatever there is & without recourse basis".

Whereas the sale of secured asset is to be made to recover the secured debt and whereas then vas a due of a sum of Rs. 1,13,71,023/- (Rupees One Crore Thirteen Lacs Seventy One Thousand and Twenty Three Only) due as on 14th November 2019from Borrowers/Co Borrowers, i.e. 1. Mr. Shrinivas NandkumarLaddha, 2 Mrs. Vandana Shrinivas Laddha, 3 M/S Ujjwal Motors, 4. M/s. Deepali Transport Services and Tours and TravelsAll havin Iddress at Flat no. 306, 3rd floor, H-1, Gangadham "Market Yard, Pune-411037, Also At: C/C Deepali Transport Services and Tours and Travels, Shop no. 20, S.No. 30/311, Sumeet Plaza Market Yard, Pune 411037.

lotice is hereby given that, in the absence of any postponement/ discontinuance of the sale, the aid property shall be sold by E- Auction at 2 P.M. on the said on 26th day of March 2021by CFSL., having its branch office at 9th Floor IRIZ Building Baner Pashan Link Road, Baner Pune-411021. The sealed E-Auction for the purchase of the property along with EMD Deman Draft shall be received, by the Authorized Officer of the TATA CAPITAL FINANCIAL SERVICE TD till 5 P.M. on the said 25th day of March 2021.

Description of Secured Asset	Type of Possession	Reserve	Earnest
Description of Secured Asset	Constructive/ Physical	Price (Rs)	Money (R
All that piece and parcel Flat no. 306, admeasuring about 71.37 Sq. Mtrs, on the 3"floor, in the building no. H-1, in the building known as Gangadham Phase II, in Gangadham (Phase II) Grihakul Sahakari Griharachna Sanstha Maryadit, which is constructed on the land admeasuring about 25543Sq. Mtrs out of property bearing S.No. 612, Hissa no. 8+9, S.No. 615, Hissa No. 1/1, S.No. 615, Hissa No. 10, S.No. 615, Hissa No. 10	Constructive	Rs. 54,40,000/- (Rupees Fifty Four Lakhs Fourty Thousand Only)	Rs. 5,44,000/- (Rupees Five Lakhs Forty four Thousand Only)

he description of the property that will be put up for sale is in the Schedule. The sale will also be stopped if, amount due as aforesaid, interest and costs (including the cost of the sale) at ndered to the 'Authorized Officer' or proof is given to his satisfaction that the amount of sur ecured debt, interest and costs has been paid. At the sale, the public generally is invited to subm neir tender personally. No officer or other person, having any duty to perform in connection wi his sale shall, however, directly or indirectly bid for, acquire or attempt to acquire any interest ne property sold. The sale shall be subject to the rules/conditions prescribed under the SARFAESI Act, 2002. The E-auction will take place through portal https://disposalhub.com.org/ 26th day of March 2021between 2.00 PM to 3.00 PM with unlimited extension of 10 minute ach.All the Bids submitted for the purchase of the property shall be accompanied by Earnes Money as mentioned above by way of a Demand Draft favoring the "TATA CAPITAL FINANCIA SERVICES LTD.* payable at Pune. Inspection of the property may be done on 16"day of Marcl 2021 between 11 AM to 5.00 PM.

Note: The intending bidders may contact the Authorized Officer Mr. Vikas Akolkar, Email in

vikas.akolkar@TataCapital.Com and Mobile No. 7066048167. or detailed terms and conditions of the Sale, please refer to the link provided in secured creditor vebsite, i.e., https://www.tatacapital.com/content/dam/tata-capital/pdf/tcfsl/ AUCTION TERMS%26CONDITIONS.pdf, or contact Authorised Officer or Service Provider- Nexxe

olutions Private Limited. Place:Pune, Maharashtra Date- 9th March 2021

Authorised Officer Tata Capital Financial Services Limited



*The Indian EXPRESS

JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 2021, PUNE, LATE CITY, 18 PAGES

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Should judgment on 50% quota cap be referred to larger Bench? SC to decide

5-judge Bench refers to changes in social dynamics since Mandal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

NEARLY THREE decades after it capped reservations at 50 per cent in the Mandal Commission case, the Supreme Court on Monday decided to examine whether that historic verdict by a nine-judge Constitution Bench needed to be referred to a larger Bench in view of the changes that have since taken place in law and society.

A five-judge Constitution Bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan, which was hearing petitions on a Maharashtra law providing quotas for Marathas in jobs and admissions in the state, issued notice to all states seek-

'Whether judgment in case of Indra Sawhney v. Union of India (the 1992 judgment popularly

known as the Mandal judgment) needs to be referred to larger Bench or requires re-look by the larger Bench in the light of subsequent Constitutional Amendments, judgments and changed social dynamics of the society etc", the Bench — also comprising Justices L Nageswara Rao, S Abdul Nazeer, Hemant

Gupta, and S Ravindra Bhat —

said, delineating the "broad issues" it proposed to answer in hearings over the coming weeks. The Maratha quota law has taken the total reservation in Maharashtra beyond the 50 per cent ceiling imposed by the Supreme Court. Applying the Indra Sawhney judgment, which allows deviation from the 50 per

situations, a three-judge Bench of the top court had on September 10 disapproved of CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

cent rule only in extraordinary



Women At The Front

Women farmers turned up in strength at Delhi's Tikri border on Monday to mark International Women's Day. Abhinav Saha

State Budget: Farmers prompt with repayment to get interest-free crop loan

PARTHASARATHIBISWAS & ZEESHAN SHAIKH PUNE, MUMBAI, MARCH 8

OVER 90 per cent farmers in Maharashtra will now be eligible for interest-free crop loans, as announced by state Finance Minister Ajit Pawar during his budget speech in the Assembly on Monday. This provision has been made for farmers who are prompt with their repayment.

During his speech, Pawar talked of issues farmers faced in repaying interest on crop loan. "Paying interest on crop loan was also often a problem for farmers. To free them from the burden and preventing them from turning defaulters, the government

MAJOR PUSH FOR **PUNE METRO. RING**

ROAD PROJECTS PG 8

has decided to provide zero per cent interest crop loans to farmers who take loans up to Rs 3 lakh and repay it on time. The amount of interest on crop loan will be paid by the government on behalf of the farmers. Required funds will be provided by the government," he said.

Crop loan refers to small-term finances availed by farmers at the beginning of the cropping season to finance their needs for inputs such as seeds, fertilisers and labour. To help farmers and to prevent them from getting into a debt **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WOMEN'S EVERY DAY Her struggle is no longer just for a foothold in public spaces, but to demand change, drive it PAGE 10

Its Director hemmed in. **IIM-C** puts out ad for her successor

RITIKA CHOPRA NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

ITS CURRENT director Anju Seth at the centre of a controversy, her powers clipped by the Board of Governors and her functioning criticised by a significant section of the faculty in a letter to the Government, the Indian Institute of Management (IIM)-Calcutta has initiated its search for her successor. The Board advertised the Director's post last week with almost a year left in Seth's term. Board chairman Shrikrishna

Kulkarni is learned to have CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Sabse Pehle Life Insurance

SIX-MONTH DIPLOMATIC SPADEWORK

Russia kept India out, US brings Delhi to talks table for Afghan peace plan

Under UN auspices, US, India, Russia, Pak, China, Iran must meet: Blinken to Ghani

SHUBHAJIT ROY NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

INDIA IS finally at the table with five other countries to decide on the roadmap for peace in Afghanistan after six months of hectic behind-the-scenes diplomacy, sources told The Indian

This mechanism has been suggested by Washington even as Moscow is learnt to have suggested a plan that kept New Delhi out. Sources said that Russian in-

terlocutors - amid growing proximity between Moscow and Beijing – suggested that Russia, China, US, Pakistan and Iran should be at the table.

This, officials said, was appar-

ently done at the behest of Pakistan which has never wanted India to be part of any roadmap for the region.

But New Delhi, for long on the sidelines, reached out to all key players in Afghanistan and other countries to make its way to the negotiating table. "Our interests need to be safeguarded...the next couple of months hold the key to progress," a top official

said. By being part of the team, New Delhi hopes to have a role in setting the terms – especially concerning terrorism, violence, women's rights and democratic values. India's refrain has been

wants Afghan-led, Afghan-controlled **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

Biden rolls Kabul dice, what it means in New Delhi

CRAJA MOHAN SINGAPORE, MARCH 8

ITMAY not end either the 42-yearold war or the two-decade-old US military intervention in

Afghanistan. But the Biden Administration's new peace initiative, unveiled over the last few days, could mark the beginning of a new chapter in Afghanistan's violent contemporary history that has played

a major role in South Asia's reand international **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

SOLDIER RECRUITMENT PAPER LEAK CASE

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Cops to court: Army Major sent question paper on WhatsApp to other arrested accused

SUSHANT KULKARNI PUNE, MARCH 8

THE ARMY officer of Major rank, who was arrested last week in the soldier recruitment process paper

leak case, had sent the question

paper from his phone to the other arrested accused on WhatsApp, Pune City Police told a court on Monday. The Army officer later deleted the chat, said police.

The officer, Major Thiru Murugan Thangavelu (47), was serving at an Army establishment

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Switch freely

year onwards*

Life Cover Options

times of premium paid

Policy Benefits:

Guaranteed Additions:

in Tamil Nadu before his arrest. He was remanded to police custody of eight days by the court.

Assistant Commissioner of Police Laxman Borate earlier produced the arrested officer before the court and sought his custodial CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

NIA takes over Ambani terror scare case; move seems fishy, says Uddhav where a vehicle was found Maharashtra Anti-Terrori

MOHAMED THAVER MUMBAI, MARCH 8

THE NATIONAL Investigation Agency (NIA) on Monday took over the investigation into the February 25 incident outside the South Mumbai residence of industrialist Mukesh Ambani.

parked with gelatin sticks and a threat letter inside.

the theft of the vehicle, a Mahindra Scorpio SUV, from Vikhroli on February 17; and the mysterious death of its owner, 46-year-old Thane resident Mansukh Hiren, remain with the

Two related cases — that of

Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS).

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray described the Centre's decision to ask the NIA to take over the case as "fishy". He also questioned the Centre's silence on the suicide of Mohan Delkar, the seven-term MP from CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

ASSAM: A PARTY

DECISION 2021



FOR MR BISWA PAGE 12

Journalism to research: curbs on OCI were on paper, now they are legal

DEEPTIMANTIWARY NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

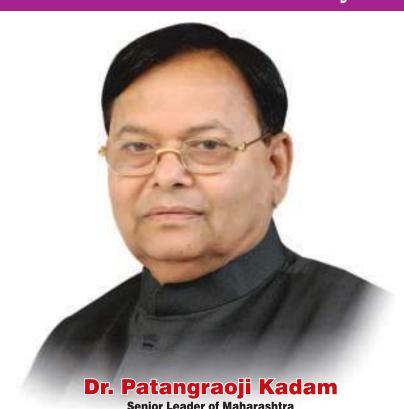
THE GOVERNMENT'S gazette notification last week imposing restrictions on Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) from practising journalism or research, and engaging in Tabligh or missionary activities, has effectively granted legal sanction to what was earlier only a set of guidelines in an

official brochure. During an informal briefing Friday, the Ministry of Home Affairs had claimed that the rights and restrictions mentioned in the notification were merely a "consolidated list" of its notifications issued in 2005, 2007 and 2009 "with more clarifications".

However, a review of these notifications available on the website of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) shows they did not impose any of these restrictions. In fact, these restrictions make their first appearance only in an $OCI \, brochure \, is sued \, in \, November \,$ 2019 -- Tabligh activities were mentioned earlier, too, in a guideline issued for Indian visas in 2018.

As per Thursday's notification, OCI card holders would have to take prior permission from the "competent authority" Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) "to undertake research; to undertake any Missionary or Tabligh Mountaineering or Journalistic activities; to undertake internship in any foreign Diplomatic Missions CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

3rd Death Anniversary



Senior Leader of Maharashtra

Former Minister (Education, Revenue, Co-operation, Industry, Forests, Water Conservation, Parliamentary Affairs, Relief and Rehabilitation), Maharashtra State Founder-Chancellor, Bharati Vidyapeeth & Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University), Pune (8 January 1944 - 9 March 2018)

Saluting Dr. Patangrao Kadam Saheb, who belonged to a simple farmer's family in a rural area Sonsal in Sangli District. He built his life from scratches and made an indelible mark in the field of education, cooperation, politics and social service...

> We pay Humble Tribute to Dr. Patangrao Kadam Saheb on his **3rd Death Anniversary**



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Principal, Officers, Teaching and Non-teaching Staff BHARATI VIDYAPEETH, (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), PUNE Accredited with 'A+' Grade (2017) by NAAC (180 Branches, 10000 Teachers & 3 Lakh Students)







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Age at entry:

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Policy Term: 10 - 25 years



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DAY NOT FAR WHEN INDIA WILL BE NAMED AFTER MODI, SAYS MAMATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Monday hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for "spreading lies and canards" against the TMC government, and said voters, this time, would witness 'Didi versus BJP' fight in all 294 constituencies of the poll-bound state.

EXPRESS TECH



HELPFOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Google's 'Internet Saathi' to now help rural women

EXPRESS EXPLAINED



HOW TO READ THE **PUNJAB BUDGET**

The slew of populist announcements point towards the elections

EXPRESS AUDIO

Why Haryana quota law will end up doing the opposite

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

Today on the 3 Things podcast, we talk about the concerns that the new Haryana quota law raises, and why it might be legally suspect.

FROM PAGE ONE

Afghanistan

Given India's growing stakes in Afghanistan, New Delhi will take a strong interest in the ambitious new US framework and the multiple challenges that are likely to come up in its im-

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar was informed of the latest initiative in a call from Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, the US special envoy for Afghanistan over the weekend. The issue is also likely to figure in the talks with visiting US Defence Secretary Gen Lloyd Austin later this month.

In confronting head-on the issues that have stalled the peace process in Afghanistan, initiated two years ago by the Trump Administration and the Taliban, Biden has underlined the American impatience with a war that has dragged on for far too long as well as his eagerness for an early settlement. Five important elements stand out.

First, Biden's peace plan has kept open the possibility that the 2500-odd US troops, currently deployed in Afghanistan, might stay on for a while. Under the agreement with the Taliban, the US had promised to withdraw all troops by May 1 this year.

Many in Washington believe the Trump Administration ceded US leverage by proclaiming a definitive date for withdrawal. In generating ambiguity about its withdrawal, Biden hopes to generate some leverage with the Taliban that has refused to abide by its commitment to reduce the levels of violence. The US is also turning up the heat on Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, who is increasingly seen in Washington as part of the problem.

 $Second, Washington \, is \, pressing \, the \, Taliban \,$ to accept an immediate agreement to reduce violence for 90 days that will provide the space for the peace initiative. This would help prevent a decisive spring offensive by the Taliban with the support of Pakistan.

Third, Khalilzad has handed over a set of written peace proposals to both Kabul and the Taliban. In a letter to Ghani, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the US is not "dictating terms" to the Afghan parties, but facilitating the movement towards an inclusive interim government, an agreement on the "foundational principles" for a new political order, and a "permanent and comprehensive ceasefire".

Fourth, the US is asking Turkey to convene a meeting of the government in Kabul and the Taliban to finalise a peace settlement. This new role for Turkey in the Afghan peace process comes as a surprise for many but Pakistan might welcome it, given the current close ties between Islamabad and Ankara.

And fifth, the Biden Administration is asking the United Nations to convene a meeting of the foreign ministers from China, Russia, Pakistan, Iran, India and the United States to develop a "unified approach" to peace in Afghanistan. The absence of NATO allies from this process is bound to raise European eye-

There are elements in the Biden package unacceptable either to Kabul or the Taliban or both. Kabul, which spent so much time and energy persuading the Taliban to accept peace over the last few years, is now convinced that it is a waste of time engaging it. Ghani is not willing to accept power-sharing with the Taliban in an interim arrangement.

The Taliban is even less willing to share power, given its confidence in taking over Kabul the moment the US forces leave. It is certainly not willing to give up its sanctuaries in Pakistan. Nor will it accept any dilution of the strict Islamic system that it wants to enforce.

Ending prolonged civil wars is never easy and certainly not this one, which has seen massive intervention by outside powers. Given the scale of the current divergence between Kabul and the Taliban, the conflicting interests of the regional powers, the declining domestic support in the US for further military involvement in Afghanistan, the Biden Administration has a brief window to force the pace of the peace

This raises the stakes in the peace initiative and also makes it rather risky. But the Biden Administration has rolled the dice.

(The writer is Director, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore and Contributing Editor on International affairs for The Indian Express)

NIA takes over

Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

In a statement, the NIA said it had "received orders from MHA, GOI for investigation of case FIR 35/2020 registered at PS Gamdevi on 25.02.2021". The case "relates to recovery of explosives from a Mahindra Scorpio parked at Carmichael Road, Mumbai", the statement said, adding that "NIA is in the process of re-registering the case."

The terror scare case, along with the cases related to the death of Hiren and theft of his vehicle, were transferred to the Maharashtra ATS on Friday. State Home Minister Anil Deshmukh had expressed confidence that the state police would successfully investigate the cases.

Speaking to reporters after the Assembly session on Monday, Chief Minister Thackeray, with Deputy CM Ajit Pawar standing next to him, said, "The Maharashtra Home Minister had given the probe to ATS. Any government that comes has the same machinery as the earlier Maharashtra government did. We have full confidence and faith in this machinery and hence the probe was given to ATS. The central government's move to transfer the case to NIA appears fishy. We will not stop until we find out

On the unrelated case of Delkar, who was found dead in a hotel room in Mumbai on February 23, Thackeray said: "Like this probe, the suicide of MP Mohan Delkar is serious too, but on that issue the opposition (BJP) does not appear to have anything to say. Everyone knows under whose control Union Territories come. A seven-term MP got so frustrated that he came to Mumbai to commit suicide. It is embarrassing for the administration there (Dadra and Nagar Haveli). We found a suicide note that had some allegations. We will conduct a detailed inquiry and whoever is responsible, no matter how big the person is, will be punished."

The Chief Minister recalled that former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee would say ʻsarkarein aati jaati hain, desh rehna chahiye (governments come and go, the country should remain); "similarly, governments come and go but the reputation of the state machinery should not be tarnished. The opposition is doing that. It appears to say that Maharashtra has no facility, and only the central government is

Hiren had told police that while driving from Thane to Crawford Market on February 17, his vehicle had broken down at Vikhroli, and he had taken a cab to his destination, leaving it behind. When he went back the next day, the vehicle was missing – and was found outside Antilia on February 25.

Meanwhile, investigations have revealed that on the night that Hiren went missing, his two mobile phones were switched on and off at a gap of around 30 minutes, at locations 8-10 km apart. One phone was switched on and off in

Vasai, and about half an hour later, the other was switched on and off at Tungareshwar. The two phones are yet to be tracked.

Police suspect the switching on and off of the phones is a red herring, to try to show that Hiren was at those locations when he might have been already dead.

IIM-C puts out ad

written to chairpersons of other IIMs, too, seeking nominations of suitable candidates for the

The IIM Act 2017 states that an institute's Board should initiate a new director's appointment nine months ahead of the post falling vacant. Seth turns 65 in February 2022 and completes her term at the end of the same month. The search for her successor, as per the Act, was expected to begin only in June.

This ratchets up the pressure on her given that Seth has accused Kulkarni of infringing on her executive powers, and the Board, in turn, has accused her of improper conduct.

The confrontation snowballed into a fullblown crisis last month after the Board passed a resolution against Seth and divested her of the powers to make appointments and take disciplinary action.

The Board is learned to have sought legal opinion on Seth's allegation — to ascertain whether the BoG is overstepping its mandate and to interpret the IIM Act rules in connection with the institute's autonomy.

In December, over 75% of the IIM-Calcutta faculty had, in a letter to the Ministry of Education, alleged that Seth had centralised powers and usurped their administration and decision-making role.

Seth, in an email to The Indian Express in January, had dismissed the allegations as the work of "a small group of individuals", upset with her efforts to foster a culture of transparency and accountability.

Last week's job advertisement calls for applications from distinguished academicians with a PhD or "equivalent having at least 15 years teaching or research experience" and they should have worked as a full Professor at a reputed institution for at least seven years. Candidates with "industry experience at a higher level for at least 15 years" are also eligible to apply. Applications have been invited until April 10, 2021. The individual is expected to provide

strong academic leadership so that the institute is recognised for its excellence in management research and education; as a significant contributor to the 'nation building effort' and the making of policy at the National level," the advertisement states. Seth was appointed as the first woman

head of IIM-Calcutta in November 2018. She is an alumnus of IIM-Calcutta (1978) and has a doctorate from University of Michigan (1988). She joined Virginia Tech in 2008 and headed its department of management from 2008 to 2013. Previously, she was with University of Illinois and University of Houston.

Curbs on OCI

 $or for eign Government organisations in India\, or$ to take up employment in any foreign Diplomatic Missions in India; to visit any place which falls within the Protected or Restricted or prohibited areas as notified by the Central Government or competent authority".

The rights notified Thursday include grant of multiple entry lifelong visa to visit for any purpose; exemption from registration with FRRO for any length of stay; and parity with nationals in domestic air fares and entry fees to monuments and public places.

It has also said that OCI card holders will enjoy parity with Non Resident Indians (NRIs) in adoption, appearance in competitive exams, purchase or sale of immovable property barring agricultural and farm houses, and pursuing professions like medicine, law, architecture and chartered accountancy. These rights were also mentioned in the 2005, 2007 and 2009

Apart from restrictions on journalism, research and missionary work, the new notification provides for exemption from registration with the FRRO if cardholders intimate the office by email if there is a change in permanent residential address or occupation.

The notification allows OCIs to appear for all-India entrance tests such as National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET), Joint Entrance Examination (Mains), Joint Entrance Examination(Advanced) or such other tests to make them eligible for admission against any NRI or supernumerary seat. The "OCI cardholder shall not be eligible for admission against any seat reserved exclusively for Indian citizens", it states.

The 2009 notification only stated that OCIs would be entitled to "appear for the All India Pre-Medical Test or such tests to make them eligible for admission in pursuance of the provisions contained in the relevant Acts".

According to sources, this led to litigation in various courts where OCIs claimed similar rights as Indian citizens in appearing for competitive exams and gaining admission to premier institutes.

In December 2020, the Karnataka High Court order had cited the 2009 notification while quashing a state government regulation that treated OCIs as NRIs for admission to col-

US brings Delhi to Afghan talks table Zalmay Khalilzad Sunday.

and Afghan-owned process but ground realities have been such that other players have dictated terms. According to a report first published by Tolo News, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken sent a letter last week to Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation, Abdullah Abdullah. In it, he proposed a

regional conference under the UN auspices with foreign ministers of US, India, Russia, China, Pakistan and Iran to discuss a "unified approach" on Afghanistan. From the Indian side, External Affairs minister S Jaishankar could join in, sources said. This was part of the phone conversation between Jaishankar and US Special Envoy on Afghanistan

New Delhi's diplomatic

spadework, sources said, included talks during the visits to India by former Afghan vice president Abdul Rashid Dostum in September last year; and by former Afghanistan Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah (now chair of High Peace Council) and Afghan leader Ata to Afghanistan.

Mohammad Noor in October This was followed by a quiet trip to Afghanistan by NSA Ajit Doval in January this year, when he met Kabul's po-

litical leadership. What also helped, sources said, is New Delĥi's engagement with Iran and its strategic investment in developing the Chabahar port as an access

SC judgment on 50% reservation cap Amendment, the States have to appearing for Maharashtra, ar-

the law, saying "the State of Maharashtra has not shown any extraordinary situation for providing reservations to Marathas in excess of 50 per cent". The $court\, said\, on\, Monday\, that\, it\, will$ also consider another important question — whether the 102nd Amendment of the Constitution deprives a state legislature of the power to enact a law determining socially and educationally backward classes and to confer reservation benefits on them, 'and thereby affects the federal policy/structure of Constitution of India".

"We are of the view that in view of the issues of seminal importance which have arisen before this Constitution Bench i.e., pertaining to interpretation of Constitutional be given opportunity to have their say", the Bench said. The 102nd Amendment

(2018) inserted Article 342A in the Constitution, empowering the President to specify socially and educationally backward classes in various states and Union Territories in consultation with the Governor of the state. The September 10 judgment

had decided to refer the contentions regarding the 102nd Amendment to a five-judge Bench. It did not, however, agree to the demand to refer the Indra Sawhney judgment as well to a larger Bench.

On Monday, when the fivejudge Bench headed by Justice Bhushan took up the reference, Senior Advocate Mukul Rohatgi. gued that the principal question which has arisen for consideration is regarding the interpretation of the 102nd Amendment.

He said that the interpretation of Article 342A was going to affect the legislative competence of the States, as after the amendment, the State legislature had no competence to make any law with regard to reservations for backward com-

Rohatgi contended that constitutional powers of reservation cannot be taken away from the legislative competence of the state, and urged the court to issue notice to all states and give them the opportunity to defend their legislative competence and to have their say on the 102nd Amendment.

Attorney General K K Venugopal said that "in view of the issues which have arisen, the State might be affected with the interpretation", and hence the Constitution Bench may take this up too. He also endorsed issuing notice to all

Senior Advocate Arvind Datar was of the view that given the fact that the matter had already been fixed for hearing from Tuesday, the court should go ahead with the same and, if needed, issue notice in the course of the pro-The court will hear the

matter from March 15 on-

Court had similarly quashed government orders to revoke a US citizen's OCI card on the ground that he was involved in missionary ac-"Because of these litigations, a brochure de-

leges, A January 2019 order of the Delhi High

tailing the rights and restrictions on OCIs had been brought out by the Ministry in November 2019. A consolidated list of rights and restrictions with more clarifications were notified in the gazette on Thursday," a Home Ministry of-

Paper leak

remand for further interrogation. The police told the court, through prosecution lawyer Premkumar Agarwal, that the arrested officer "sent the question paper to other arrested accused Bharat Adakmol. Adakmol and Thangavelu later deleted the chats".

Custodial remand of the officer was sought for reasons quoted in the remand application by the police."We want to investigate how the officer got hold of the question paper. It has to be investigated whether the said paper was sent to any more persons and what were money transactions between Adakmol and Thangavelu," said police.

On Saturday, a Pune Police team had brought Major Thangavelu to the city from the Army establishment in Tamil Nadu where he was posted. He was later formally placed under arrest, and produced before the court of Additional Sessions Judge SR Navandar, which has jurisdiction over anti-corruption cases.

Police have invoked the Prevention of Corruption Act, leading to transfer of the case to the court for anti-corruption cases. Thangavelu's defence counsel, RA Lonandkar, opposed the plea for custodial remand, saving it was not necessary because the phones of the said accused had already been seized. Judge S R Navandar, however, remanded Major Thangavelu to police custody of eight days till March 15 after hearing both sides of the argument. Meanwhile, a senior officer who is part of the investigation said the role of two more 'serving individuals" from the Army was being probed in the case. "Our teams are currently at various locations conducting their probe. We are expecting more breakthroughs in the case," he said. In a joint operation by the Military

Intelligence and the Crime Branch of Pune City Police, multiple raids were conducted in the last week of February, leading to recovery of the question paper of the Common Entrance Exam(CEE)for recruitment of Soldier(General Duty), prior to the exam, indicating a leak. The exam, which was scheduled to take place on February 28, was cancelled after the leak was

The Indian Army had earlier said that the existing system of recruitment process will be made more foolproof and robust by incorporating the findings of the joint investigation by Army authorities and Maharashtra Police.

Interest-free

trap with private moneylenders, financial institutions are encouraged to lend to them under the priority sector at a reasonable interest rate of 7 per cent Timely repayment of loans attracts 2 per cent rebate from the central government and a further 3 per cent rebate from the state government for regular repayment. Thus, the effective rate of interest is brought down to 2 per cent.

In Maharashtra, bankers pointed out that 80 per cent farmers, who avail institutional finances, would come under this bracket. To avail interest-free loans, farmers would have to be regular in their repayment schedule. "The scheme comes close to the recent loan waiver scheme and the government is hopeful it will help bring in financial regularity for farmers," a

Soon after it came to power, the Maha Vikas Aghadi government, led by Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, had announced Mahatma Iyotirao Phule farmer loan waiver scheme, under which Rs 19,929 crore has been credited to the accounts of 31,23,000. The interest-free loan is aimed to keep the financial discipline in the

The interest waiver scheme was one component of the Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi's Rs 4.84 lakh crore spending plan for the state which also includes a Rs 7,500 crore plan to upgrade health institutions across the state.

"A project costing about Rs 7,500 crore has been prepared to provide quality health care and treatment to the people by constructing and upgrading health institutions under the Public Health Department and it will be completed in the next four years. The proposal includes construction of district hospital, psychiatric, trauma care center, primary health center and sub-center, upgrading and construction of taluka level hospital," Pawar said. The widening deficit in the state's income

and expenditure projections, is also putting a squeeze on its capital expenditure. For 2021-22, the government has set aside Rs 58,748 crore for capital works, which is only 12.14 per cent of the total spend estimates. By March end this year, the revenue deficit

is projected to reach Rs 46,178 crore, making it the highest ever deficit in the state's history. In 2018-19, Maharashtra had recorded a revenue surplus of Rs 11,975 crore. While the Centre's 14th Finance

Commission norms require states to maintain a revenue surplus position, the new coalition government has projected a deficit of Rs 10.226 crore even in 2020-21. The impact of the lockdown has shrunk its

income too, with revenue target for the current year being scaled down sharply from Rs 3.47 lakh crore to Rs 2.89 lakh crore. Its revenue expenditure target was also brought down from Rs 3.57 lakh crore to Rs 3.36 crore. For the coming year, Pawar has forecast the revenue expenditure to grow to Rs 3.79 lakh crore. To shore up the state's finances, Pawar has

decided to increase VAT on liquor from the existing 60 per cent to 65 per cent. It has also decided to classify country liquor into two separate categories as branded and non-branded country liquor, while increasing State Excise Duty to 220 per cent of manufacturing cost or Rs 187 per proof litre whichever is high on branded country liquor. This estimated to get additional revenue of Rs 1,800 crore.

It has also proposed a one percent concession in Stamp Duty over the prevailing rate exclusively to women, provided the transfer of house property or registration of sale deed is in their name.

FULL REPORTS ON www.indianexpress.com

102nd amendment to give special powers to NCBC, says BJP

LIZ MATHEW

NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

WITH SUPREME Court seeking response from state governments on the question of interpretation of the 102nd amendment to the Constitution, the BJP on Monday said the amendment that gave powers to the President to notify so-

cially and educationally backward classes (SEBC) and Parliament the power to change the SEBC list was not to take away the powers of the state, but was just fulfilling a long-held demand for constitutional status to the National Commission on Backward Classes (NCBC).

"The 102nd amendment was just to give special powers ment did in August 2018 was

to the commission (NCBC). It allows the commission to appropriately examine implementation of reservation given to OBCs in services and education," BJP general secretary and Rajya Sabha MP Bhupender Yadav told The Indian Express. "Several Parliamentary com-

mittees had also made that de-

mand. What the BJP govern-

just fulfill a long-term demand." Yadav refused to make any

comment on the Supreme Court's notice to the states on whether the landmark 1992 judgment – also known as the Mandal verdict, which caps quota at 50 per cent — should be re-looked and referred to a larger bench. The JD(U), BJP's ally in Bihar, said it wants states to have the power to decide the

backward castes that should be added to the SEBC. "States should be deciding which community or caste should be added to the list of backward classes," JD(U) leader K C Tyagi told The Indian Express. "We are the party of Karpoori Thakur, who had implemented quota within quota. Our chief minister Nitish Kumar followed the

Pointing out that JD(U) has been demanding a caste census, Tyagi said only such a census can decide the ceiling for caste reservation. "Now it is said backward classes form 52 per cent of the total population, but we are of the view that it not less than 65 per cent," Tyagi said. "Our question is how can we decide who would get what unless there is a caste-bases

census. How can we decide quota within quota without such a data?" He said the JD(U) believes that states should be able to decide which caste is backward. "And for the ceiling, the Supreme Court itself had agreed that in some states it can exceed the 50-per cent

Why SC decision is

limit," he said.

significant

The Supreme Court's decision to examine if the 50 percent quota rule set by Indra Sawhney case needs a re-look assumes significance given that many state governments - such as Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu - have nevertheless proceeded to grant reservation in excess of the limit.



A policeman makes an announcement regarding Covid-19 safety guidelines – urging people to follow social distancing and wear masks — at the district court on Monday. Arul Horizon

Bottlenecks in raw material supply unlikely to have immediate hit on vaccine production

ANURADHA **MASCARENHAS** PUNE, MARCH 8

WHILE SERUM Institute of India has acknowledged that "bottlenecks" exist in supplies of some raw materials that go into the manufacture of the Covid19 vaccine, people familiar with the situation at the company said it was unlikely to have any impact on the production of the vaccine in the immediate future.

Serum Institute, a key global player in production of Covid19 vaccines, has enough supplies to continue manufacturing at current capacities for the next few months, they said.

"We are hoping that these bottlenecks would be sorted out by that time," one of them told The

THE CASE fatality rate (CFR) in

Maharashtra has remained low

despite rising Covid-19 cases and,

last week, it was 0.52 per cent.

From March 1 to 7, a total of 72,900

new positive cases were reported

in the state along with 378 deaths,

as per date from the state health

Organization, CFR is a measure of

severity of a disease and is defined

as the proportion of reported

cases of a specified disease or con-

dition, which are fatal within a

specified time. With proper and

timely treatment, CFR should re-

the Covid-19 infection is less viru-

lent. To date, National Institute of

Virology and National Centre for

Cell Science conducted genetic

tests and have not found SARS-

CoV-2 variants of concern," Dr

Pradeep Awate, state surveillance

officer, told The Indian Express.

While the CFR in some districts

like Jalna, Osmanabad, Ratnagiri

and Kolhapur was slightly higher

than 1 per cent last week, Dr

Awate said number of cases were

few and, against that, the death

count led to a slightly higher CFR.

Jalna had a CFR of 1.38 per cent,

Osmanabad at 1.81 per cent.

Kolhapur at 1.59 per cent and 3.16

states like Kerala, Punjab,

Maharashtra, along with other

per cent in Ratnagiri.

"This perhaps indicates that

main below 1 per cent.

According to World Health

ANURADHA MASCARENHAS

PUNE, MARCH 8

Company Poonawalla had recently admitted that restrictions on exports of certain items in the United States was a "serious limiting factor" in scaling up production of Covid 19 vaccines. "I have been focussing on supplies of vaccine doses via the Covax facility...Ido not want to get into technical issues... but for free global access to vaccines, if we can't get the raw materials out of the United States... that's going to be a serious limiting factor. We have stockpiled many doses but there are several constraints like (availability of) bags, filters and other critical items that manufacturers need," Poonawalla had said at an online discussion.

The Covax facility he mentioned was a reference to a global platform, backed by World Health

Cases rising, fatality rate still low

ternational agencies, to make Covid 19 vaccines available to all the countries in adequate quantities and affordable price. Serum Institute is currently producing the vaccine developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University under its own brand name 'Covishield'. This vaccine is among those that are being distributed through the Covax facility as well. Serum also has agreements with some other vaccine developers to produce their Covid 19 vaccines.

"Serum is a philanthropic organisation and, at the start of the pandemic, had decided to take huge risks and buy equipment at rapid speed. We knew we had to produce hundreds of billions of doses. In January this year, after the Covishield vaccine received emergency use authorisation, we were countries, including India, in a matter of less than two months," he said.

But the company is not producing the vaccine doses at its full capacity. Those in the know told The Indian Express that the company could produce many more than the 50 million doses a month that it is doing right now. The company has, in the past, said it was planning to scale its production to 100 million doses to enable faster distribution of the vaccines around the world. "The production capacities cannot be scaled up in the absence of smooth access to all the raw materials," the person quoted

above said. Most of these raw materials are procured from the United States, Australia or New Zealand. While there have not been any problems in the supplies from Australia and New Zealand, the United States has used some emergency legal provisions to curb the export of these items.

Vaccine scientist, and vicechair of Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gagandeep Kang, said such restrictions would amplify the inequali-

ties in access to Covid 19 vaccines. "Whether it is vials, or filters, restrictions on global supplies of these items, prompted by vaccine nationalism can have knock-on effects on the accessibility of vaccines to vulnerable populations, and would lead to greater inequal-

The WHO and Covax are presently engaged in a meeting with partners from the industry to identify bottlenecks in production and discuss how to solve them.

YEAR AFTER FIRST CASE IN CITY

PMC records mortality rate of 2.34 pc, fears second Covid wave

New restrictions likely to be announced after review led by Dy CM Ajit Pawar

AJAY JADHAV PUNE, MARCH 8

A YEAR after the city registered its first Covid-19 case, the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) continues to battle the pandemic and minimise its impact, even as the current mortality rate has been recorded at 2.34 per cent and the civic body fears a second wave due to the ongoing surge in cases.

According to the civic administration, new restrictions are likely to be announced in view of the rising positivity rate, following a review meeting led by Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar at the end of this week.

The PMC had relaxed most restrictions that went hand-in-hand with the Covid-induced lockdown, but has again ordered the closure of classroom teaching in schools, colleges and private coaching institutes. The civic body has also reintroduced its containment zone strategy after the city was without one in January and February this year.

It was on March 8 last year that the PMC had isolated a suspected Covid patient, who had returned from a foreign country and was later registered as the first Covid patient in the city as well as Maharashtra. Pune was among the worst affected cities due to the pandemic across the country.

With its experience of handling a swine flu outbreak in the recent past, the civic administra-

Advt. No. 24/2021



Swab testing in progress at Katraj on Monday. Ashish Kale

tion was on its toes to handle the pandemic situation. The positivity rate steadily increased in the beginning and escalated in July despite a complete lockdown restricting free movement of the public. As of March 8 this year, the city has identified 2,09,083 Covid-19 patients in total after testing 11,98,536 suspects. Unfortunately, a total of 4,897 residents have succumbed to the viral infection so far, putting the case fatality rate at 2.34 per cent.

The PMC limits have seen a total of 1.97.451 patients recover from Covid-19 in a year, but its recovery rate, which had recently reached around 97 per cent, is on the decline and stands at 94.43 percent a year after the outbreak.

A month ago, the PMC had heaved a sigh of relief after it did not register any deaths due to Covid-19 on February 6, the first time since April 15 last year. However, the situation has changed since with an upward swing in the infection rate. The daily positivity rate, which had dropped below five per cent, is now once again around 15 per

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cent. The slowdown in the first few weeks of 2021 has brought down the overall positivity rate from around 22 per cent last year to 17.45 per cent presently.

When the active case count dropped below one per cent, the PMC closed its Covid care centres and dedicated jumbo hospital due to lack of patients. It also withdrew 20 per cent reservation of beds in private hospitals. However, the ongoing surge has increased the share of active cases to 3.22 per cent of the total infection so far, and propelled the PMC to restart CCCs and urge private hospitals to ready themselves for reserving beds for the treatment of Covid patients.

PANDEMIC IN NUMBERS

Number of Covid-19 deaths reported in Pune on Monday.

9,316 The death toll so far in

Karnataka, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, have reported a surge in daily Covid cases. Maharashtra reported the highest daily count at 11,141. On Monday, the count was

The Centre has sent high-level public health teams to Maharashtra and Puniab to assist with Covid-19 control and containment measures in view of the recent spike.

A team from National Centre for Disease Control along with state health officials is presently touring some pockets of 1,412

coronavirus cases reported on Monday.

4,20,877 The total positive

Maharashtra, including Kalyan and Mumbai, and according to officials, there is a definite lethargy among people when it comes to following Covid safety guidelines.

Dr Awate also said while Covid testing has increased, there was a need to step up surveillance and contact tracing. At present, 22.28 lakh people have tested positive for Covid-19 in Maharashtra and cumulative CFR from March 2020 to date is 2.36 per cent. Across the state too, 4.41 lakh are in home quarantine while 4,098 are at institutional centres

PMC to seal 3 pvt testing labs over incomplete patient info

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE PUNE, MARCH 8

THE PMC on Monday decided to seal three laboratories and diagnostic centres in the city for failing to provide proper addresses of those who tested Covid positive in tests done in these labs.

In a communication to the three laboratories - Suburban Diagnostic Centre, Metropolis laboratory and Krsna laboratory in Chinchwad -- Additional Municipal Commissioner Rubal Agarwal directed sealing of these laboratories and said no Covid-19 testing should be done there till further orders.

"The daily patient report has to be submitted by the laboratories to PMC in a specified format decided by the state government. The information received from the laboratory is compiled by the civic administration, so it is important for the laboratories to provide correct information on time," she

Agarwal said the laboratories concerned were providing incomplete information despite reminders, and a clarification was sought from them on February 25. "It has been noticed that the information from the laboratory does not come in time and also the addresses of a few patients is incomplete. This was posing problems for the civic administration in tracing those patients. Contact tracing couldn't be done on time and could lead to an increase in the number of patients," she said.





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9th March 2021, Mumbai

Managing Director

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NIT No.	Brief Works Description	Estimated Cost (INR, Lakhs)	Cost of EMD (INR, Lakhs)	Prebid Meeting Date	Due Date & Time of Submission	Date & Time of Bid Opening
AEML/MDB 2021-22/14	Supply of Assorted Sizes of MCBs with Enclosures	393	2.5	16.03.2021 11.30 hrs	25.03.2021 16.00 hrs	26.03.2021 16.00 hrs
AEML/MDB/ 2021-22/15	Supply of Assorted Sizes of LT Fuses	339	2.5	17.03.2021 11.30 hrs	25.03.2021 16.00 hrs	26.03.2021 16.00 hrs
NEML/MDB/ 2021-22/16	SITC of 33/11.3 kV 16/20 MVA Dry Type Power Transformer	345	3.5	18.03.2021 11.30 hrs	30.03.2021 16.00 hrs	31.03.2021 16.00 hrs
NEML/MDB/ 2021-22/17	Supply of Assorted Sizes of RCC Tiles	717	3.0	15.03.2021 11.30 hrs	22.03.2021 16.00 hrs	23.03.2021 16.00 hrs
NEML/MDB/ 2021-22/18	Replastering and Painting of Substations of AEML Mumbai Distribution	197	2.0	16.03.2021 11.30 hrs	25.03.2021 16.00 hrs	26.03.2021 16.00 hrs
AEML/MDB/ 2021-22/19	Draftsman Services for AEML Mumbai Distribution	33	0.3	15.03.2021 14:30 hrs	22.03.2021 16.00 hrs	23.03.2021 16.00 hrs

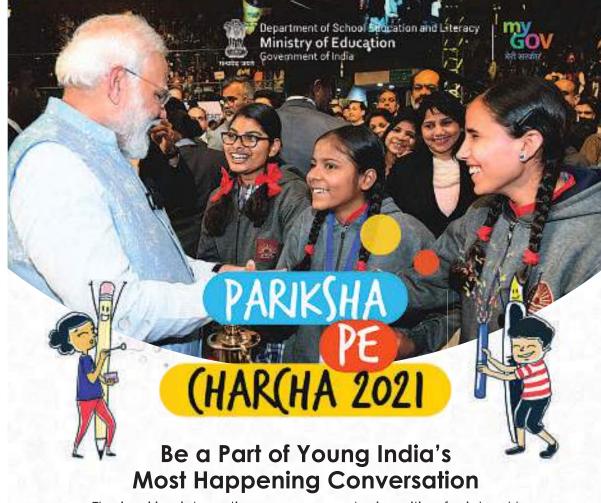
Cost of each tender :- Rs. 1180 /- All Materials & Services will be as per Adani Electricity Mumbai Limited Specifications / BOQ All Prebid Meetings will be done electronically / telephonically due to the COVID-19 restricti

For details with respect to Service / Material, Qualifying Requirement, Terms & Conditions, Services / Submission of Tender Documents, etc., please visit our website :- www.adanielectricity.com --> Open Tenders. The tender document will be available on the above link by 09th March 2021

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'Art for Freedom' invites people's participation in nationwide challenge

Pune: Encouraged by the active participation of youth and civil society, the #DNAFightsRape - Save the Evidence awareness campaign has launched a nationwide creative challenge called 'Art for Freedom'. The initiative seeks to transform the way our society deals with survivors of rape and sexual violence, shifting the accountability from the survivor to

Supported by UN Women

India and Girl Up (UN Foundation), along with NIFT, Delhi, and Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Pune, this drive aims to stir power of creativity and influence of art on society to bring a positive change.

"Art for Freedom calls on all citizens - especially students, artists, designers - to step forward and channelise anger, frustration, despair, and the range of emotions they experience whenever they

hear about a rape. The goal is to harness the power of art to compel a rethink of the status quo and create a society where women, children, and diverse genders are free from fear. Only when regressive mindsets change, and focus turns from survivor to sexual offender, can we build public confidence in the justice system to bring the guilty to justice with modern forensic technologies..."

stated the campaign. "STOP CORONA; Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene" **DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT OF NCT OF DELHI** OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER(E&M)-II WAZIRABAD WATER WORKS TIMARPUR, DELHI-110054

	PRESS NIT No- 19 (2020-21)/EE(E&M)-II						
NIT No.		Estimated Cost	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Date of release of Tender in e-procurement solution	Last date/ Time of receipt of Tender through e- Procurement solution		
	S.I.T.C. of Submersible P/Set along with allied (E&M) Equipment at Haiderpur Water Works for Augmentation of Water Supply		80500/-	Tender Id: 2021_DJB_200758_1 Publish Date 02-Mar-2021 03:00 PM onward	17-Mar-2021 upto 12:15 PM		

NIT along with all terms & conditions is available on DJB website https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER) Executive Engineer(E&M)-II Advt. No. J.S.V. 478/2020-21

PUBLIC WORKS DIVISION, AHMEDNAGAR, Phone No. 0214/2325334 & 0241/2325086 -TENDER NOTICE No. 24 for 2020-21 (Online)

Online e-Tender in B-1 Form for the following works invited by Executive Engineer, Public Works Division, Ahmednagar, Phone No. 0241-2325334/ 2325086. From the competant and interested

S. No.	Name of Work	Estimate Amount
1.	Improvements to Walwad Rehakuri Nandgaon Durgaon Pimpalwadi Baradgaon	Rs. 367.4
2.	Dagdi to Baradgaon Sudrik MDR 67 Km 11/80 to 21/500, Tal. Karjat Construction of Major Bridge with approach road on MSH-8 Vadgaon Gupta approach road to SH-58 to Pimpalgaon Malvi MDR-35 to Gawarewasti to MSH-5	Lakhs Rs. 335.1 Lakhs
3.	Jeur to Pimpalgaon Ujjani road MDR-190 at Km 1/780, Tal. Dist. Ahmednagar Improvements to Rahata Lohare Mandve Parner Shrigonda road SH-67 Km 100/00 to 113/500, Tal. Parner, Dist. Ahmednagar	Rs. 321.3 Lakhs
4.	Improvements to Rahata Lohare Mandve Parner Shrigonda road SH-67 Km 55/00 to 61/00, Tal. Parner, Dist. Ahmednagar	Rs. 280.7 Lakhs
5. 6.	STBT and Construction of minor bridge on Karmala Nannaj Jamkhed Sakat SH-56 Km 40/000 to 43/000 and 50/000 to 52/200, Tal. Jamkhed, Dist. Ahmednagar. STBT SH-55 to Anandwadi Naygaon Daodaithan Sakat Kolhewadi to Dist. Border	Rs. 374.9 Lakhs
7.	MDR-76 Km 0/00 to 1/800 to 11/00 to 14/00 & 15/200 to 18/200, Tal.Dist. Ahmednagar STBT to Jawala Chobhewadi Barhanpur Jawalke Wagha Road MDR-124 Km	Lakhs Rs. 412.0 Lakhs
3.	6/400 to 13/400, Tal. Jamkhed, Dist. Ahmednagar STBT to SH-66 to Ghodegaon More Chinchore Katrad to "SH-52 to Dhangarwadi to MSH-5, MDR-35 Km 24/800 to 30/800, Tal. Dist. Ahmednagar.	Rs. 218.0 Lakhs
Э.	Improvements to MDR-53 Dhalwadi to Talwadi Hingangaon Bhambora SH-68 Road MDR-120 Km.7/00 to 10/500 Tal. Karjat Dist. Ahmednagar	Rs. 161.0 Lakhs
0.	Improvements to MDR-53 Dhalwadi to Talwadi Hingangaon Bhambora SH-68 Road MDR-120 Km.11/300 to 13/900 Tal. Karjat Dist. Ahmednagar	Rs. 162.0 Lakhs
1.	Improvements to Raxaswadi Bk. Talwadi Baradgaon Dagadi to MDR-53 Road MDR-113 Km.0/00 to 3/00 Tal. Karjat Dist. Ahmednagar	Rs. 163. Lakhs
2.	Improvements to SH-54 Rashin Paritwadi Karpadi Mohitewasti to Dist. Border Road MDR-110 Km. 6/200 to 10/500 Tal. Karjat Dist. Ahmednagar	Rs. 198.8 Lakhs
3.	STBT to Arangaon Walki Ralegan Mandavgan road MDR,53 Km.23/500 to 44/200 Tal. , Dist. Ahmednagar.	Rs. 221.7 Lakhs
	Improvements to SH-52 to Gunjale to Dongargan MDR.35 to Manjarsumbha Gorakshnath Road(MDR.179) Km.11/300 to 14/600 Tal. Dist. Ahmednagar	Rs. 167. Lakhs
	Improvements to SH.58 to Khare Karjune Hingangaon NImgaon Wagh Road (MDR.170) Km. 0/0 to 5/500 Tal. Nagar, Dist. Ahmednagar.	Rs. 234.9 Lakhs
	Improvements to Koregaon Deoulgaon Siddhi Gundegaon Mandavgan Road MDR-82 Km 17/800 to 19/500, Tal. Nagar, Dist. Ahmednagar	Rs. 164. Lakhs
	Widening and BT to Shrigonda Deulgaon Mandavgaon Road (MDR 53) Km 32/00 to 37/00, Tal. Shrigonda, Dist. Ahmednagar Improvement to Manjarsumba Pimpalgaon Malavi Vilad Isalak Road (MDR-172)	Rs. 199. Lakhs Rs. 153.
9.	Km 18/00 to 21/800 Tal. Nagar, Dist. Ahmednagar STBT NH 222 to Morewadi to Gitewasti (MDR-176) Km 0/00 to 1/500 and 2/800	Lakhs Rs. 197.
0.	to 4/850, Tal. Dist. Ahmednagar Construction of Bridge and approach road on Ahmednagar Agadgaon Miri road	Lakhs Rs. 242.
1.	(MDR-49) Km 0/120, 0/880 & 9/700, Tal. Dist. Ahmednagar Construction of Minor Bridge and Approaches on SH-58 to Kharekarjune Hingangaon Nimgaon Wagha Kedgaon Burudgaon Wakodi Walunj to SH-58	Rs. 163.7 Lakhs
2.	Road (MDR-170) at Ch. 15/200, Tal. Nagar, Dist. Ahmednagar STBT to Nimbodi Darewadi Narayandoh Ukkadgaon Mandave to District Border	Rs. 237.
3.	Road (MDR-167) Km 12/500 to 18/00, Tal. Nagar, Dist. Ahmednagar Improvement to Manjarsumbha Pimpalgaon Malvi Vilad Islak to SH 58 Nimblak	
4.	HIngangaon to Jakhangaon to NH 222 Road (MDR. 172) Km 5100 to 11/600 Tal. Nagar. Improvements to Bhalwani Goregaon Kinhi Kanhur Wadgaon Darya Darodl Randhe Alkuti Chombhut road MDR 50 Km.12/00 to 13/500 and 17/300 to 20/300 Tal. Parner oist. Ahmemdnagar.	Rs. 200. Lakhs
5.	Improvements to Devibhoire phata Supa Sarola Road SH.69/km.31/00 to 32/200 and 33/800 to 40/100 Tal.Parner dist.Ahmomdnagar	Rs. 161. Lakhs
	Improvements to Mandva Deswade Pokhari Pimpalgaon Rotha Akkalwadi road MDR.29 Km.25/00 to 29/00 Tal.Parner oist.Ahmemdnagar	Rs. 177.4 Lakhs
	Improvements to parner Baburdi Visapur road MDR55 km17/500 to 24/400 Tal.Parner osit.Ahmemdnagar Improvements to Wadegavhan Kalamkarwadi padali Kadus road MDR.56	Rs. 163. Lakhs Rs. 175.
	Km.0/00 to 1/400 and 3/600 to 8/00 Tal.Parner Dist.Ahmemdnagar (A) Improvements to oaithane Gunjal to Pimpalgaon Kawda road Oor.286	Lakhs
9.	(A) Improvements to califlaire Gunjai to Plinpalgaon Kawda road Oct.286 Km.0/600 to 1/580 Tal.Parner (B)Improvements to Hangan Shahnjapur Supa road MoR.194 Km.17/00 to 18/680 (Part Hanga Shahjapur) (C) Improvements to SH.67 Parner Kanhur road toHattalkhind road ODr.288 Km. 0/00 to 1/00 Tal.Parner (D) Improvements to Punewadi to SH.67 Kanhur Parner road MDR.327 Km.0/00 to 2/00 Tal.Parner under DPDC.	Lakhs
0.	STBT Vadgaon Chakan Shikrapur Nhavra Imamgaon Shrigonda Jamkhed Beed Road SH - 55 Km 114/000 to 122/000 Tal. Shrigonda Oist. Ahmednagar	Rs. 205.: Lakhs
1.	STBT Takali Kazi Kada Jamkhed Kharda Bhoom SH 57 Km 83/000 to 87/065 Tal. Jamkhed, Dist. Ahmednagar	Rs. 246.0 Lakhs
2.	STBT Kharda Jategaon Chousala Road SH 64 Km. 10/000 to 13/800 Tal. Jamkhed Dist.Ahmednagar	Rs. 173.0 Lakhs
	STBT Satefal Loni Anandwadi Bandhakhadak Telangshi MDR 107 Km 0/000 to 2/500 and 9/000 to 10/000 Tal. Jamkhed Dist.Ahmednagar	Rs. 162.4 Lakhs
	STBT. to Jamkhed Jamadarwadi Sarola Khurdaithan Dhondpargaon road MDR 106 Km. 9/200 to 12/00 Tal. Jamkhed , Dist. Ahmednagar. STBT to Karmala Nannaj Sakat road SH.56 Km.29/00 to 32/00 Tal.Jamkhed	Rs. 165.3 Lakhs Rs. 150.0
	Dist. Ahmednagar S.R. to Jawala Chobhewadi Jawalke Wagha Road (MDR124) Km.1/00 to 4/00	Lakhs Rs. 150.
7.	Tal. Jamkhed I Dist. Ahmednagar. STBT Satefal Waki Loni Anandwadi Bandhkhadak Telangshi Rd. MDR.107 Km.No.	
8.	10/000 to 14/000 Tal. Jamkhed Dist. Ahmednagar. S.R. to Construction of Minor Bridge on MSH-8 Mingaon Daku Patewadi Handawadi Kaparewadi Karjat SH-54 Bargowadi Nandgaon to ODR 349 Road MDR-115 Ch.	Lakhs Rs. 154.4 Lakhs
9.	17/500, Tal. Karjat, Dist. Ahmednagar Construction of Bridge on M"DR-66 to Walwad Chande Khurd ODR-349 Gurav Pimpari Vetalwasti to ODR-334 Ravalgaon Road MDR-114 Km 8/100 on Dukari River, Tal. Karjat, Dist. Ahmednagar	Rs. 152.8 Lakhs
0.	S.R. to Kaparewadi Rajputwadi Koregaon Bajrangwadi Loni masadpur to Dist. Boarder MDR 119 Part Koregaon to Loni masadpur Km 7/00 to 13/00, Karjat,	Rs. 154.2 Lakhs
1.	Dist. Ahmednagar S.R. to to Banpimprl Taluka Border Nlmagaon Gangarda Ghumari Belgaon Kokangaon Ravalgaon Kombhali Kaudhane Bitakewadi SH.55 Rd MDR-100 Km 16/900 to 21/900 Tal. Karjat	Rs. 194.: Lakhs
2.	S.R. to Bridge on SH-54 Rashin Karpadi Mohite Wasti to District Border Road MDR 110 @ Km 4/500 Tal.Karjat Dist. Ahmednagar	Rs. 174.3 Lakhs
13.	, ,	Rs. 191.2 Lakhs
4.	S.R. to Bridge on MDR-53 Dhalwadi Talwadi Hingangaon Bhambora SH-68 to Korewasti Road MDR-120 @ Km. 12/900 Tal. Karjat Dist. Ahmednagar	Rs. 170. Lakhs
=	Improvements to Manieroumbha Dimpolacen Mahri road (VD 172) Km 0/00 to	

Tender Document sale start & End Date: Sale Date - 08/03/2021 to Dt. 22/03/2021 Bid opening Works Sr No.1 to 7 = Prebid Meeting Dt.I5/03/2021, at 12.30 pm.in the Place of meeting Chief Engineer, P.W.Rigion, Office, Nashik, and Sr.No. 8 to 45 = Prebid Meeting Dt.16/03/2021,at

12.30 Pm. in the Place of meeting Superintending Engineer, P. W.Circle ,Office, Ahmenagar NOTE : Please Submit Hard Copy of All Tender Documents on or before Dt. 22/03/2021.

18.00 Pm. The details of works are provided on the websites as below. **1. www.mahapwd.com. 2. https://mahatenders.gov.in**

45. Improvements to Manjarsumbha Pimpalgoan Malvi road (VR.172) Km.0/00 to

5/00 Tal. Dist. Ahmednagar.

- EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, Public Work Division Ahmednagar (dgipr/2020-2021/2792)

'AVNI'S CUB'

Days after release in the wild, tigress gets hurt; brought back to enclosure

PTRF_84, the three-year-old tigress, was engaged in a territorial fight with another tigress

VIVEK DESHPANDE

NAGPUR, MARCH 8

THE TIGRESS that was released into the wild from an enclosure in Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR). after two years of rewilding, had to be retrieved and restored to the enclosure after she was injured in a clash with another tigress on Monday.

PTRF_84, the three-year-old tigress, better known as the 'cub of Avni', was engaged in a territorial fight with another tigress, believed to be the resident tigress of the area, in the early morning of Monday.

Avni was shot dead in 2017 November Pandharkawada forest of Yavatmal district after being declared a man-eater.

"The tigress, which was released in the wild on March 5 from the enclosure in PTR, has been retrieved from the wild on Monday afternoon after she was found injured during the internecine fight. PTRF_84 was being monitored using VHF tracking and satellite telemetry on 24x7 basis. After confirmation of her fight with another female early morning... and af-

ter seeking the veterinary opinion that the injury may affect her movements in the wild, it was decided to tranquilize her," PTR Field Director Ravikiran

Govekar said in a press note. "This kind of interaction with another tiger after the release was anticipated and the emergency retrieval plan was already provided in the original release plan submitted to the National Tiger Conservation Authority. The female sustained injuries on the right foreleg but she is otherwise healthy. She will be continued to be monitored in the same old rewilding facility under the same set of conditions, till further decision is taken," Govekar added.

Asked how far the spot of the skirmish was, Govekar said, "It is about 2-2.5 km from the enclosure." On whether the tigress had become immobile after receiving the injury, he said, "Yes, she was found sitting at a Govekar added, "PTRF_84 appears to have fought back well, else she would have received injuries on her back, face or neck. The other tigress is at least 2-3 year older and hence sturdier

Sub-adult male tiger found dead on railway track passing through Navegaon-Nagzira Reserve

VIVEK DESHPANDE NAGPUR, MARCH 8

A MALE tiger, approximately 12-15 months old, was found dead on a railway track passing through the Navegaon-Nagzira Tiger Reserve (NNTR)

on Monday morning. A press note issued by **Deputy Conservator of Forest** (Gondia) Kulrai Singh stated. "The sub-adult tiger was killed by... a train heading towards Gondia. His front right leg was found severed but wasn't found on the spot. It is being searched for with the help of a dog squad. The spinal cord of the tiger was found broken."

The photograph of the spot, however, shows the tiger lying between the two lines of the track. Asked how the tiger didn't get crushed under the train, Kulraj Singh told The Indian Express, "It's a small animal. So, the train could pass over it.'

Principal Conservator of Forest Nitin Kakodkar said, "The train driver saw three cubs. Apart from the one that died, the second one stopped on the spot while the third one went back into the forest. He didn't see the mother near them."

The tiger was one of the three cubs of a Nagzira tigress called T14. Officials did not find the tigress and the other two cubs loitering around the place.

The railway line, from Chandrapur to Gondia, passes through many areas with a tiger population, and has earned the ire of wildlife activists for several animal deaths on the track over sev-

eral years. Earlier too, three tiger cubs were crushed under this train in Junona forest of Chandrapur in 2018. Two leopards, one in 2016 and the other in 2019, were also killed by the train. About 12 years ago, a tiger was killed and another was injured when the train had rammed them while

After the Junona incident, a committee headed by then Chandrapur Conservator of Forest Rama Rao had suggested urgent mitigation measures like construction of wildlife passes at several accidentprone places along the track. No headway had been made so far in this regard.

they were crossing the track.



The cubs are eight weeks old, and were found in Junnar. Express

Found in sugarcane field, 3 leopard cubs reunited with their mother

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE PUNE MARCH 8

THREE LEOPARD cubs were rescued recently by Wildlife SOS and the state Forest department from a sugarcane field in Vadgaon Kandali village, located in Otur forest range of Junnar in Pune district.

The 8-week-old cubs were kept under observation for a few hours and later successfully reunited with their mother.

The sugarcane harvest season happens to coincide with the breeding season of these big cats and female leopards rely heavily on the tall crop to shield their offspring from predators and hu-

Yogesh Ghodake, Range Forest Officer of Otur, said, "Such encounters are reported more frequently during pre-harvest and harvest seasons.

On Sunday, sugarcane farmers in Vadgaon Kandali village stumbled upon three tiny leopard cubs while harvesting their crops. Most farmers are familiar with the leopard presence in this region, so they immediately alerted members of the village rescue team, trained by the Maharashtra Forest department and Wildlife SOS.

In the meantime, two rescue units from Wildlife SOS and the Forest department rushed to the location with the necessary

equipment and medical kits to conduct on-site examination of the cubs. Veterinary officer at Wildlife SOS, Dr Nikhil Bangar, identified them as one female and two males, estimated to be about 8-weeks-old.

After their health examination, the team arranged for the cubs to be reunited with their mother and went back to the field where they were found. As the team stood close-by and hidden, within 30 minutes, a female leopard emerged from the sugarcane field. After gently knocking off the cover from the safe box, she picked up her cubs one after the other by the scruff of the neck and relocated to a safer

Police, admn, NGO join hands to help secure jobs for local youth in Gadchiroli

VIVEK DESHPANDE NAGPUR, MARCH 8

BEING A district with no job op-

portunities for local youth, Gadchiroli district administration and police are working with an NGO and some recruiting agencies to help them secure jobs outside the district.

From 2012-13, 3,962 youths from Gadchiroli have secured jobs across India through the joint effort of district and police administration and NGO Pratham.

Gadchiroli police alone has helped youths secure 1,477 jobs through their own Rojgar Melawa app and vocational training programme. Apart from Pratham helping with training and recruitment, police have also independently tied up with other recruiting agencies for placements.

The employment trades range from automotive and healthcare to hospitality and construction. While majority of these jobs, about 2.400, have been provided within the state, youths have come forward to take up jobs in states like Bihar, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi, as per information provided by Pratham.

When it comes to age, jobs have been secured by those aged between 18 and 30. Maximum number of jobs, around 3,000,

have been secured by those in the age group of 18 to 24. This is the age group that Naxals target for recruitment into the movement.

Pratham figures show that the average of monthly salary has ranged from Rs 5,825 in the automotive sector to Rs 12,768 for a welding job. Maximum number of youths prefer jobs in hospitality, where approximately 1,300 have been employed followed by about 1,200 in healthcare, 400 in automotive, 355 in construction and 335 in electrical works. The police drive has recorded 319 locals being placed as security guards. According to Gadchiroli police, only 29 boys and 44 girls could be recruited by Naxals from 2013 to date. During 2001-10, Naxal recruit-

ment was several times more than in 2011-20. Highest numbers were recorded during 2001-04, which were the formative years of People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA). During these years, anywhere between 50 and 70 youngsters were being recruited annually in anticipation of the merger of Peoples War Group (PWG), Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) and Maoist Communist Centre of India (MCCI) in 2004. Over the next six years, the recruitment was around 20 to 25 every year, as per police records. "We worked first with the district administration under an MoU till 2017, where we conducted training and placement for which the administration provided us with funding. Subsequently, we have been working with police and helping them with placements for youths they have mobilised through Rojgar Melawa app and other programmes," said Annette Francis, programme director of Pratham, headquartered in Mumbai. "The response in Gadchiroli

has been really good as compared to other parts of the country. Here, we could mobilise three times more the number of aspirants than in many other parts," she added. Deputy Inspector General of Police (Gadchiroli range) Sandip Patil said, "The idea behind mobilising local youths is to wean them away from Naxal influence. With a large number opting for jobs through our initiative shows that, given a choice, they would like to lead normal lives...'

Patil added, "Whenever there is police recruitment in Gadchiroli, we have seen hundreds from the interior areas appearing for test and fitness examination, which is more proof that most Gadchiroli youths are not enamoured by Naxal ideology."

Superintendent of Police Ankit Goyal said, "Mobilisation is mainly done through a mobile app called Roigar Melawa, where aspirants have to register. Where there is no connectivity, the registration is done at employment camps."

राहकारमहर्षी भाऊसाहेब थोरात अमृतवाहिनी सहकारी बँक लि., घुलेवाडी SAHAKARMAHARSHI BHAUSAHEB THORAT AMRUTVAHINI SAH. BANK LTD., GHULEWADI

Post Sangamner SK (422608) Tq. Sangamner, Dist. Ahmednagar PUBLIC AUCTION SALE NOTICE

The Authorised officer of the Sahakarmaharshi Bhausaheb Thorat Amrutvahini Sahakari Bank Ltd., Ghulewadi has forfeited following borrower's immovable properties under The Securitisation Act 2002. It is decided to sell the immovable properties "AS IS WHEREIS, AS IS WHAT AND WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS, as per the brief particular given here-under. Last date to send application to participate in the auction is 15/03/2021 before 4 pm and auction date is 16/03/2021.

	Sr. No.	Name & Address of the Borrower	Description of the immovable properties & approximate area	Outstanding Loan to Borrower as on 31/01/2021	Reserved Price & EMD	Date & Time of Auction
1.		Raghunath, Ghulewadi, Tq.	At Ghulewadi, Non agriculture Gut No. 54 (4) 53 under jurisdiction Tq. Sangamner, Plot No. 30, admn 200.00 Sq.Mtr, Area 20.00 Rs. Paise		Reserve Price Rs.2625000/- EMD Rs.262500/-	16.03.2021 at 4.00 pm.
2.	2. Shri Rasane Amit Bharat, Consenting Person - Shri Rasane Bharat Murlidhar, At Post Bazapeth, Akole, Tq. Akole, Dist. Ahemednagar.			Reserve Price Rs.6520000/- EMD Rs.652000/-	16.03.2021 at 4.00 pm.	
3.		M/s. Jamir Plastic Industries, Prop. Shri. Shaikh Iftekhar Abdul Raheman, Bharat nagar, Pune road, Behind Mahadev Sow Mill, Sangamner, Tq. Sangamner, Dist. Ahmednagar. Non Agriculture S.No. 34/4, Admin 0.11 R, Area 33.00, 20/34 within GPH No. 786 Mouje Samanapur, Tq. Sangamner Bricks 20x25 concrete Construction and Tin 20x35 Brick Cement godown.		Cash Credit Rs. 28,35,555/- (Twenty Eight Lakh Thirty Five Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Five Rupees Only)	Reserve Price Rs.2880000/- EMD Rs.288000/-	16.03.2021 at 4.00 pm.

Place: Public Auction at Bank Headquarter

The auction will be held on Tuesday 16/03/2021 as per the order of the Authorized Officer, bidder should place a bid more than reserved price. Above mentioned immovable properties will be sold "AS IS WHEREIS, AS IS WHAT AND WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS, and its terms and conditions are as follows: 1. The successful bidder will have to bear stamp duty, registration transfer charges along with light-bill, property taxes, and other cost. 2.1 n t e r e s t e d

bidders should investigate the property during working days of bank from 11.00 am to 5.00 pm, they should contact authorized officer at the main branch (Mob.9623479197). 3. The bidder should pay deposit at the mentioned branch on the day of auction. The person can place a bid if he paid the required deposit. 4.A successful bidder will have to pay 25% amount on the spot after completed of the auction and it is mandatory pay remaining amount within 15 days from the auction date. 5. If purchaser fails to follow above mentioned terms and conditions, his deposited amount will be forfeited and he will have to purchase the properties "as is where, as is what and whatever there is basis. 6. The authorized officer reserves rights to cancel or repair or accept or reject any terms and conditions and bids without giving any prior intimation. 7. The banks also reserves right to cancel any sale/auction without giving any prior intimation.

Place: Ghulewadi, Sangamner Date: 06/03/2021

Authorized Officer, Sahakarmaharshi Bhausaheb Thorat Amrutvahini Sahakari Bank Ltd.

Disquiet in Uttarakhand BJP, CM Rawat reaches Delhi, meets party chief

LALMANIVERMA&LIZ **MATHEW**

DEHRADUN, NEW DELHI. MARCH8

SIMMERING DISQUIET within the ruling BJP in Uttarakhand has surfaced once again with Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat cancelling his scheduled programmes for Monday and leaving for Delhi to meet top party leaders, triggering speculation of a change in state leadership.

BJP sources told *The Indian* Express that Rawat was called to meet JP Nadda at his residence in the evening after the BJP president held two rounds of meetings with Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the party's national general secretary(organisation)BLSantosh and general secretary in charge of Uttarakhand Dushyant Gautam.

"Currently, the names in the race to replace Rawat are Ajay Bhatt, Dhan Singh Rawat and Anil Baluni. But a final decision on replacing Rawat will be taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi," said sources. A decision will be announced after a legislature party meeting, which is likely to be held Tuesday, they said.

The party sources said that Rawat tried to call some of the party's MLAs to the national capital to meet the central leadership. But he was asked not to organise "any show of strength" and that a meeting of MLAs could be convened in the state capital. Rawat also met Baluni Monday evening.

State BJP sources said some MLAs and factions in the party have conveyed their dissatisfaction with the functioning of Rawat's government to the central leadership and the RSS. Senior MLAs have also been demanding the expansion of the State Cabinet where three berths have been lying vacant for two years.

"There is unrest among a major section of party functionaries and MLAs. They are complaining that officers in districts are not paying heed to their recommendations. They are feeling ignored. In this situation, winning the next Assembly election could be a challenge," an RSS functionary said.

"It is being explored if damage control can be done by holding meetings of the MLAs with the CM. A change of leadership is the last option," the functionary said.

Rawat's visit to Delhi comes with just 10 days to go for his government to complete four years, and two days after BJP national vice-president Raman Singh held a meeting of the party's state core committee in Dehradun as an "observer" and spoke to members separately. Raman Singh had also visited the RSS office to get feedback on the situation. "Our feedback has been given. Now it is up to the BIP leadership to take a call," the RSS functionary said.

Following the core committee meeting, BJP state president Bansi Dhar Bhagat had rejected speculation of a change in leadership. "These rumours are only in the media, not in the party. The core committee meeting was called to discuss how to celebrate the completion of four years of the Rawat government on March 18, and how to take the government's achievements to the people," Bhagat had said.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

On her birthday, 13-year-old girl found dead; suicide suspected

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE PUNE. MARCH 8

A 13-YEAR-OLD girl was found dead on March 6 at her residence in Shivari village in Purandar taluka of Pune district.

According to police, the girl died by suicide, but no note was recovered. Police said an accidental death report was lodged at Jejuri police station and a probe was on to ascertain the cause behind her death.

The girl was a student of Class VII at a local school, and it was her hirthday as well on March 6, police said. When her father returned home from the farm in the evening, he found her hanging, they added. Police further said her family rushed her to a hospital, but she was pronounced dead. Police were informed about the incident and a team from Jejuri police station started a probe into the case.

Ahead of Modi visit, Mujib's Dhaka comes alive inside Mumbai studio

ALAKA SAHANI MUMBAI, MARCH 8

ONE NIGHT in the early 1970s, dinner took an unexpected turn at Dhanmondi 32, the residence in Dhaka of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founding father and first Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Distressed over a famine in the newly formed nation, Rahman refused to eat the meal served by his wife Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib. He was disturbed, the food reminded him of the Bengal famine of 1943.

Watching this scene unfold on a monitor inside a studio in Mumbai's Film City is Shyam

The legendary director, now 86, is helming Bangabandhu, an ambitious biopic on Mujibur Rahman. Featuring well-known Bangladeshi actors Arifin Shuvoo (Rehman) and Nusrat Imrose Tisha (Fazilatunnesa), the film is a joint production by Bangladesh Film Development Corporation (BFDC) and National Film Development Corporation of India (NFDC).

celebrate the birth centenary of Mujibur Rahman (who was born on March 17, 1920) as well as the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh (Rahman declared Independence from Pakistan on March 26, 1971). Unfortunately, the film could not be ready in time to celebrate these landmarks as we were stopped in our tracks by the pandemic," says Benegal, who came on board in early 2019.

Shooting has been on in Mumbai since January 21, 2021, with the current schedule slated to continue till mid-April. The film's release date has not been decided, but production has picked up at a time when Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit Bangladesh on March 26 to take part in the 50th anniversary celebrations -- his first trip abroad since the pandemic broke out.

"The remaining crowd and war sequences for the movie will be filmed in Bangladesh once the monsoon is over," says Benegal.

The movie's set is modelled on the original Dhanmondi 32, which was converted into



Filmmaker Shyam Benegal on the sets of Bangabandhu at Film City in Mumbai. Amit Chakravarty

Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in 1994. Reflecting the couple's simple lifestyle, Shuvoo is dressed in a checkered lungi and white banian while Tisha is wearing an off-white handloom sari.

"(Rahman) is almost like a protagonist of a Shakespearean tragedy. He was a man who loved his country too much. He also trusted his countrymen too much. In spite of multiple warnings, he never believed in increasing his personal security,"

says Benegal, while referring to Rahman's assassination on August 15, 1975 in a military

Rahman's wife, three sons, and several other members of his family were also killed in the attack. His daughters, Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana, sur-

vived as they were in West Germany at that time. Sheikh Hasina is now the Prime Minister of Bangladesh.

"Bangabandhu won't be following his life chronologically. It will touch upon certain turning points and aspects of his life that made Mujibur Rahman who he was... While making a biopic of a popular figure, one has to be careful about not falling into the area of hagiography. At the same time, you should not become too critical of the subject," says Benegal, adding that the movie will go beyond the "public image of a leader" and offer glimpses of

his private life. Following his acclaimed debut with "Ankur" in 1973, Benegal has made several award-winning movies such as "Nishant" (1975), "Bhumika" "Junoon" (1979), 'Mandi" (1983), "Sardari Begum" (1996) and "Zubeidaa" (2001). He has also directed

MOTHER DAIRY

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(A Unit of: Karnataka Co-operative Milk Producers' Federation Ltd)

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TECHNICAL CUM COMMERCIAL TENDER FOR SUPPLY

OF VARIOUS EQUIPMENTS THROUGH e-PROCUREMENT

https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in

TENDER NOTIFICATION

SECTION 1. INVITATION FOR TENDERS (IFT)

) Mother Dairy, Bangalore invites tenders from manufacturers / dealers

Details of Equipments

Tender No: MD/ENGG/PROJ/T-84/2020-21/CALL-2

Supply, Installation & commissioning of triple circuit

Automated CIP system for milk tanker at milk reception dock

Tender No: MD/ENGG/PROJ/T-85/2020-21/CALL-2

Supply, Installation & commissioning of 5 KLPH Cream

2) Tenderers are advised to note the qualification criteria specified in

3) Tender documents may be downloaded from e-procurement website

Interested tenderers may obtain further information at the same address.

Mother Dairy will not be held responsible for the website problems if any,

4) Tenderer should pay the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD), and tender

Pre bid meeting at Mother dairy, date & time: 23-03-2021 at 11.00 AM.

Date of opening of Technical Tender: on 12-04-2021 at 11.00 AM.

Last date for submission of Tender on or before 09-04-2021 upto 17.00 Hrs.

Director, Mother Dairy

processing fee, which shall be Paid online through e-Procurement

pasteurizer for processing section.

Section VII to qualify for award of the contract.

last date submission or non-receipt of the same

Other details can be seen in the tender documents.

Date of commencement of Tender Download: 10-03-2021.

eligible tenderers for supply / Service of the following Equipments

biopics such as "The Making of the Mahatma" (1996) and 'Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose:

The Forgotten Hero" (2005). For "Bangabandhu", Benegal was clear about making the movie in Bengali. "That's why I chose to cast Bangladeshi actors in main roles. Though the original script written by Shama Zaidi and Atul Tiwari was in English, we have writers who adapted it in Bengali and brought in the local idiom," he says.

The legendary director and his team visited Bangladesh, where most of the movie was to be shot originally before the pandemic arrived. Zaidi and Tiwari also met Rahman's family members and associates, and visited leader. Nearly two years later, the set in Film City by Nitish Roy recreates the feel of 1970s Dhaka in great detail. The living room in Dhanmondi 32 has beautiful cane furniture while the coffee table sports a crochet cover. Kept in a corner is a TV enclosed in a wooden box with a vase of red roses on top.

After a lunch break, the unit rearranges the lights for the next scene. The camera moves to the bedroom where the Bangladeshi leader is relaxing with his wife and Hasina. In one corner is a study table with neatly arranged inkpots, letters, and a bunch of books by Rabindranath Tagore.

Public Notice

NOTICE is hereby given to the Public at large that, Mr. Vilaskumar also known as Vilaschandra Chandanmal Gandhi has informed and assured my Client that, he is holding FSI Credit of 42,623 sq. mtrs. out of the Total FSI Credit of 58,388 sq. mtrs. under the Development Right Certificate (DRC) bearing No. 5301 ssued by the Pune Municipal Corporation in his favour or 26/02/2018. The Pune Municipal Corporation has also issued DRC No.5712, to and in favour of Mr. Vilaskumar Chandanmal Gandhi on 30.09.2020, being the Supplementary to the said DRC No. 5301, wherefrom some portion of TDR has been sold/ transerred by the said Mr. Vilaskumar Gandhi to various purchasers

It has been further informed that the said FSI credit has been granted in lieu of transfer and handing over of the Land admeasuring 26540 sq. mtrs. bearing Survey No. 12, Hissa No. 1C, having corresponding Old Survey No. 12/1/1+1/2 B situate ying and being at Village Kharadi, Tal : Haveli, District Pune "Said Land"), being the land falling under 30 mtrs. wide D.P Road and reservation of Play Ground (PG-58) as per Development Plan for the City of Pune currently in force.

Mr. Vilaskumar Chandanmal Gandhi is negotiating with my client for sale of TDR admeasuring 5475 sq. mtrs. equivalent to 58932.9 sq. ft. ("said TDR") out of such balance TDR as stated aforesaid from the said Development Right Certificate bearing No. 5712 and has further assured my client that the said TDR and he said Land are free, clear and marketable and that there are no outstanding encumbrances on or in respect thereof.

In the above circumstances, all persons having any claim, right, title or interest in respect of the said TDR admeasur ng 5475 sq. mtrs. as referred hereinabove and/ or pertaining to he said Land described hereinabove and/or any of them or any part thereof by way of sale, gift, lease, tenancy, license, exchange, partition, mortgage, charge, lien, inheritance, trust, maintenance, possession, easement, agreement or otherwise howsoever are nereby required to make the same known in writing to the undersigned at the address given below within Seven days from the publication hereof, failing which it shall be presumed that there is no such claim and the same, if any, shall be considered to be waived and my client will accordingly proceed with the intended

Dated this __day of March, 2021.

Adv. Manisha Sameer Chitnis "Nyati Unitree", East Wing, 7th Floor, Survey No. 103/129, Plot B+C, CTS No. 1995 +CTS No. 1996B, Yerwada, Pune Nagar Road. Pune - 411 006 Mobile:- 9881908241 Email:- manishachit@gmail.com



PRESS NOTICE

GODAVARI MARATHAWADA IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, AURANGABAD

CHIEF ENGINEER (WR) WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT, AURANGABAD SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER BEED IRRIGATION PROJECT CIRCLE, PARALI (V)

Office of The Executive Engineer,

Address: Executive Engineer, Latur Minor Irrigation Division, Latur, SinchanBhavan, Old Ausa Road, Latur - 413512.

E-Mail Id :eemid.laturwrd@maharashtra.gov.in Ph. No. (02382) 200927

E-TENDER NOTICE No.B-1/010F 2020-21.

Sealed Online Tenders (E-Tender) in 'B-1' Format for the following work is invited by the Executive Engineer, Latur Minor Irrigation Division, Latur from the Competent Contractors. The blank tender forms shall be downloaded from the Government of Maharashtra website https://mahatenders.gov.in. The Executive Engineer, Latur Minor Irrigation Division, Latur reserves right to accept or reject the tender. Conditional tender will not be accepted

Name of Work: Construction of Labyrinth Waste weir of Borsuri Storage Tank Ta. Nilanga Dist. Latur Amount Put to Tender: 299.52 Lakh

E-Tender available Period: 9/03/2021To 15/03/2021.

E-Tender Opening Date: 17/03/2021. All Information about E-Tender is available at:

1) Website https://mahatenders.gov.in

(Change if any in this tender notice will be notified on the website.) 2) Notice board in the Office of Executive Engineer, Latur Minor Irrigation Division, Latur.

Lr.No.LMID/AB-2/672 Date: 04/03/2021 Office of the Executive Engineer, Latur Minor Irrigation Division, Latur

dgipr/2020-21/2807

Sd/-**Executive Engineer Latur Minor Irrigation Division**





Omkar Jyoti Niwas, 2nd Floor, Adarsh Nagar, Market Yard Road, Gultekdi, Pune- 411037

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES [See proviso to Rule 6(2) & 8(6)]

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 6(2) & 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower, Mortgagor(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis for recovery of dues in below mentioned account/s. The details of Borrower(s)/Mortgagor(s)/Guarantor(s)/Secured Asset/s/Dues/Reserve Price/e-Auction date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below:

SI./ Lot No	Name & address of Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Mortgagor(s)	Detailed description of the immovable / movable property with known encumbrances, if any	Total Dues	Reserve Price, EMD, Bid Increase Amount	Status of Possession (Constructive / Physical)
	1. M/s. AB Hitech Agro, Gat No. 406/421/1 and 421/2 at Post Walaki ,Tal. & Dist. Ahmednagar, Maharastra-414006. 2. Atul Indra Kumar Bora, Flat No. E-404,10, Kasturkunj, Bhosale Nagar, Ganesh Khind Road, Shivaji Nagar, Pune, Maharastara-411007. 3. Sudhir Mahsudeo Bothe, Gat No. 406/421/1 and 421/2 at Post Walaki ,Tal & Dist Ahmednagar, Maharastara-414006. 4. Pravin Balkrishna Pande, Kamgar Sadan, Ward No.6, Shrirampur, Dist. Ahmednagar, Maharastra-414603. 5. M/s. Arihant Chemical Resins (India) Pvt. Ltd., F-3, KrishnaNagar, Bldg No.1, Chandavarkar Road, Borivali (West), Mumbai, Maharastra-400092.	Mandir and Shil Phata, Village Nilje, Tal. Kalyan, Dist. Thane 421201 owned by M/s. Arihant Chemicals Pvt Ltd. Bounded By: East: Building No. C, South: Side Marginal Space, West: Lobby & Lift, North: Flat No. 1801	Rs. 3,67,43,609.37	RP: 50,50,000/- EMD: 5,05,000/- BI: 50,000/-	Physical

* Note: Future interest at the contractual rate on the above mentioned amount & incidental expenses, costs, charges etc. to be added.

EMD Collection Account	EMD Collection Account Name	IFSC Code : (Fifth character is Zero)	Contact Details of Authorised Officer
56120015181219	New Intermediary OBD BP	BARB0ARMPUN	Mr. P. Nageshwar Rao Mob : 9618083801, 020-24260181

Date and Time of Commencement of e-Auction: 25/03/2021 between 2.00 PM to 4.00 PM

The sale shall be subject to the terms & conditions as described below: 1) The Auction-cum-Sale shall be conducted through e-Auction mode, through the official portal of https://bob.auctiontiger.net 2) Care has been taken to include adequate particulars of Secured Assets in the Schedule hereinabove. The

Authorized Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation. 3) The intending bidders are advised to go through the portal https://bob.auctiontiger.net for detailed terms and conditions for e-Auction sale before submitting their bids and taking part in the e-Auction sale **IMPORTANT DATES & TIME**

proceedings and contact the Authorized Officer for the properties as mentioned hereinabove. 4) The Secured Asset shall not be sold below the Reserve Price. Auction shall commence at one increment above the Reserve Price and bidders shall be free to bid among themselves by improving their offer with minimum incremental amount stated hereinabove. 5) The interested bidders shall submit the bid on or before 5.00 PM on 24/03/2021. The interested bidders to submit EMD through NEFT / RTGS and Fund Transfer only, in which case it should reach the respective EMD Collection Account latest by 2.00 pm 24/03/2021. The intended bidders who have deposited the EMD should send the following documents on or before 24/03/2021 by 5.00 pm to Authorised officer. a) Proof of deposit of EMD. b) Self-attested true copy of Identity Card containing Photograph and Residential Address and PAN card of the intending bidder, issued by Govt. of India. Original of the document should be made available for verification by the concerned Authorized Officer. c) Intending Bidder's Mobile Number and E-Mail address. d) Intending Bidder's Bank Account details for the purpose of refund of EMD. Refer Annexure II and III on the portal https://bob.auctiontiger.net. 6) The interested bidders who require assistance in creating Login ID & Password and /or uploading data, submitting bid, training on e-bidding process etc., may contact M/s. E-Procurement Technologies Ltd., Auction Tiger., A-201/208, Wall street-II, Opp. Orient Club, Nr Gujarat College, Ellis Bridge, Ahmedabad-380006 Gujarat (India). Mob. : 9619002431, 7968136880 and 9619120214, Help Line e-mail ID : Tilak@auctiontiger.net, Maharashtra@auctiontiger.net,

INSPECTION OF PROPERTIES 22/03/2021 from 10.00 a.m. to 04.00 p.m. On or before 24/03/2021 LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF PAYMENT OF EMD upto 02.00 p.m. 24/03/2021 **SUBMISSION OF BID** upto 05.00 p.m. E-AUCTION DATE 25/03/2021 from 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.

vijay.shetty@auctiontiger.net 9594597555, 7291981129 and for any property related query may contact Mr. P. Nageshwar Rao (Authorised Officer), Mobile No. 9618083801 and 020-24260181, 24261481. Email ID: armpun@bankofbaroda.co.in during office hours (10.00 AM to 5.00 PM) on the working days. 7) Only those bidders holding valid user ID and Password and confirmed payment of EMD through NEFT / RTGS and Fund Transfer only shall be permitted to participate in the on line e-auction. The Authorized Officer reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids. Further, the Authorized Officer reserves the right to postpone or cancel or adjourn or discontinue the Auction or vary the terms of the Auction at any time before conclusion of the Auction process, without assigning any reason whatsoever and his decision in this regard shall be final. 8) In case any bid is placed in the last 5 minutes of the closing time of the Auction, the closing time shall automatically get extended for another 5 minutes. 9) If no other bid is received upon closure of the bidding process, the Bidder who has quoted highest amount will be declared as successful bidder. The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) of the successful bidder shall be retained towards part sale consideration and the EMD of unsuccessful bidders shall be refunded. The Earnest Money Deposit shall not bear any interest. The successful bidder shall have to deposit 25% of the sale price, adjusting the EMD already paid, within 48 hours of the acceptance of bid price by the Authorised Officer and the balance 75% of the sale price on or before 15th day of auction date or within such extended period as agreed upon in writing by and solely at the discretion of the Authorised Officer. If he fails to deposit the amount so, the amount already deposited by him shall be forfeited and the Authorized Officer shall be free to exercise any one or more rights available to him in terms of Section 13 (4) of the Act, in respect of the property. 10) Mere deposit of 25% of the Sale Price shall not entitle the successful bidder to get the sale confirmed in his favour. Sale shall be subject to confirmation by the secured creditor. 11) After deposit of amount in terms of Serial No. 9 hereinabove the successful bidder should deposit, with the Authorized Officer, the balance Sale Price within 15 (Fifteen) days of sale confirmation by the Authorized Officer. If the successful bidder fails to deposit the balance amount of sale price, the amount already deposited shall be forfeited. 12) If the dues of the Bank together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred by them or part thereof as may be acceptable to the bank are tendered by/on behalf of the borrowers or guarantors, at any time before time & date scheduled for payment of bid, the sale of asset may be cancelled. 13) All statutory dues/attendant charges/other dues including registration charges, stamp duty, taxes, TDS etc. shall have to be borne by the purchaser. 14) The Sale Certificate shall be issued in the same name in which the Bid is submitted. 15) The Authorized Officer or the Bank shall not be responsible for any charge, lien, encumbrances, or any other dues to the government or anyone else in respect of properties E-Auctioned, the intending Bidder is advised to make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrances on the property including statutory liabilities arrears of property tax, electricity dues etc. 16) The bidders should ensure proper internet connectivity, power back-up etc. The Bank shall not be liable for any disruption due to internet failure, power failure or technical reasons or reasons/contingencies affecting the e-auctions. 17) Properties as mentioned above can be inspected by the prospective bidders at the site with the prior appointment of concerned Branch Manager or Authorized Officer or any other officer identified for the purpose, from 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. on 22/03/2021. 18) Bank reserves its right to accept/reject any or all of the offer(s) or bid(s) so received or cancel the sale without assigning any reason thereof. Bidding in the final minutes and seconds should be avoided in the bidders own interest. Neither the Bank nor Service Provider will be responsible for any failure/lapse (Power failure, Internet failure etc.) on the part of the vendor. In order to prevent such situation bidders are requested to make all the necessary arrangements/alternatives such as backup power supply etc. required so that they are able to prevent such situation and continue to participate in the auction successfully. 19) Where ever GST is applicable it should be paid by the Purchaser over and above the accepted BID amount. 20) This sale /auction is proposed on the basis of "Physical / Symbolic Possession", on "As is where is, As is What is & without recourse Basis" and the buyer should ascertain the status of the statutory dues and other encumbrances, if any. 21) For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Bank of Baroda Secured Creditor's website (www.bankofbaroda.com).

Date: 09/03/2021 Place: Pune

Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda

THE CITY

MAHARASHTRA BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Budget gives major push to Ring Road, **Pune Metro** projects

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE PUNE, MARCH 8

IN A major boost to road infrastructure and public transport in Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad, the Maharashtra government, in its state budget tabled in the Assembly on Monday, announced its plan to implement the Rs 26,000-crore Ring Road project for the district and allocated Rs 302.19 crore for the Pune Metro project.

The state government had been planning to construct a Ring Road in the district that would enable vehicles from different parts of the state to pass through the city without entering its arterial roads, thus helping reduce traffic congestion. Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Ajit Pawar, in his budget speech on Monday, said land acquisition for the mega road project "will begin

In January, the state government had approved land acquisition for the 170-km ring road project, to be implemented by the Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation (MSRDC). The project would require acquisition of 2,300 hectares of land.

The Maharashtra government also gave a push to the ongoing Pune Metro project, being implemented Maharashtra Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (Maha-Metro). It allocated Rs 302.19 crore for the Pune Metro project, along with Rs 188.95 crore for Nagpur Phase-I Metro project.

The Pune Metro rail service is likely to start its operation in a few stretches of the two routes Swargate Pimpri Chinchwad and Vanaz to Ramwadi — soon. The detailed project report for the proposed extension of the route is also likely to be finalised in the com-



Rs 302 Crore For Pune Metro

Construction work underway for a Metro route on the Mutha riverside, near Deccan in Pune, Arul Horizon

■Implementation of Ring Road project. The total cost of the project is Rs 26,000 crore. Pune ■ ₹40 crore for a sugar museum to be set up at Sakhar Mumba Sankul in Shivajinagar area. The museum will provide information on development of the sugar and ancillary industries in the state ■ ₹28.22 crore for construction of living quarters for Class IV employees of

Sassoon General Hospital The associated BJ Medical College to be given deemed university status. A state-of-the-art bio-safety

laboratory to be set up to conduct research on diseases

Technical and financial reports for the development Purandar are in progress.



Deputy Chief Minister and Maharashtra Finance Minister

Ajit Pawar presented the state's Rs 3,79,213-crore Budget

Pawar mentioned the city 23 times during his speech

for the upcoming year. Also the Guardian Minister for Pune,

BUDGET ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR PUNE

like bird flu. A training centre for staff of the Food and Drug Administration, as well as pharmacists, to be set up at Moshi, Pune. The centre would provide advanced training on the legal provisions related to food and drug safety.

■ ₹6.695 crore for construction of two-and-a-half kilometres of underpasses, and two bridges of two-km length. These projects

Raigad and one in Ahmednagar. ■ Mega electric vehicle charging points to be constructed on Pune-Mumbai Expressway, like those on

are to be completed by

■ An Ashtavinayak Temple

Development Fund is to be

created. The fund will provide

development of eight important

Ganapati shrines spread in the

districts of Pune, Raigad and

Ahmednagar. Five of these

temples are in Pune, two in

December next year.

financial grants for

Nagpur-Mumbai and Mumbai Nashik highways, to facilitate the use of environment-friendly electric vehicles

Pune-Nashik semi-high speed train, which will run at speed of 200 kmph, is also being pursued. The expected cost of the project is Rs 16,039 crore.



Maharashtra announces fund for fighting pseudoscience

PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS

PUNE, MARCH 7

IN A first-of-its-kind initiative, the Maharashtra government has announced a fund to fight, what it called, the spread of pseudoscience. During his budget speech on Monday, Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar earmarked Rs 300 crore for creating this fund aimed at "inculcating a scientific temper in the future generation of the state".

"At a time when pseudoscience is being deliberately spread, it is our responsibility to inculcate a scientific temper in the future generation of progressive Maharashtra, Accordingly, a state-of-the-art Rajiv Gandhi Science and Technology Park will be set up in each revenue headquarters district. It is expected to cost Rs 50 crore each and a total of Rs 300 crore." Pawar said in his budget speech.

The details of the science and technology parks are still to be announced. But the fact that the government committed some funds to spread scientific temper was welcomed by rationalist groups. Hamid Dabholkar, son of murdered rationalist Narendra Dabholkar, who now runs his father's Andhashraddha Nirmulan Samitee (ANIS), said even educated people, who otherwise do not believe in superstitions, are sometimes found propagating

Dabholkar said prior to the budget announcement, his organisation had held several meetings with senior officials in the departments of social justice, education, and tribal development to urge them to take steps to ensure that institutions under them work towards inculcating scientific temper amongst the public.

Milind Deshmukh, who also works for ANIS, said his organisation had worked with Punebased Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Research and Training Institute (BARTI) to formalise ways in which this objective could be achieved.

"ANIS and BARTI would soon come up with a curriculum in this regard," Deshmukh told The

Welcoming the announcement, Deshmukh said the science and technology parks must work towards making "sciencebased evaluations" of all the claims that are often made. "In short, these parks should become laboratories where people would be encouraged to take up scientific studies of the dubious claims that are spread under the name of science," he said.

ANIS has recently published a book detailing the spread and extent of pseudoscience in Maharashtra. This, Hamid Dabholkar said, was be the first ever book published in the this field. He also appealed to the state government to similar steps to popularise the anti-superstition bill in the state

Rs 40 cr for sugar museum that will chronicle history, impact of sector

PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS PUNE, MARCH 8

AS 16 of the 43 ministers in the

Maharashtra cabinet have direct links with the sugar sector, it does not come as a surprise that the state government has earmarked Rs 40 crore for the development of a sugar museum in Pune. The museum is expected to be constructed at the Sakhar Sankul The idea of a sugar museum

was first mooted by Sugar Commissioner Shekhar Gaikwad during the annual general body meeting of the Pune-based Vasantdada Sugar Institute. The museum would highlight the history and social impact of the sector in the history of the state. Other than sugar, the industry also has links to power (through

cogeneration) and fuel (through production of ethanol), and the museum would highlight the same. The need to set up such a museum was felt as several members of younger generations are unaware of the realities of the sector which had played a pivotal role in the formation of Maharashtra.

Sugar and politics in Maharashtra have always been intertwined, with ruling politicians always having strong links with the sector. Cooperative sugar mills has been the breeding ground for political leaderships, with many sugar barons becoming successful politicians as well. Traditionally, the sugar barons have supported the Congress and NCP. The five years of the BJP-led government in the state, from 2014 to 2019, had seen support for the sector waning, but that had not stopped many of the barons joining BJP ahead of the general elections.

While sugar museums have already been set up in some countries, like Mauritius and Germany, the proposed museum in Pune would be the largest in terms of the concept and topics it will cover.

Other than the sugar museum, Pune district would also see infusion of funds in preservation of the temple of Ekvira Devi in Karle in Maval taluka. The state budget has also announced funds for development of pilgrimage sites of Lord Bhimashankar temple in Ambegaon taluka as well as for the temple of Shri Khandoba in Jejuri in Purandhar taluka.

The eight shrines dedicated to Lord Ganesh, popularly called as Ashtavinayak shrines, have also found a mention in the budget. Five of these temples are in Pune district.

in-charge of Swargate Division

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE PUNE, MARCH 8

COINCIDING WITH celebrations to mark International Women's Day on Monday, Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Sushma Chavan was appointed in-charge of the Swargate Division of Pune City on Monday.

Chavan, who was also the first woman officer to have completed full term as in-charge of a police station in Pune city from 2010 to 2012, is a President's Police Medal awardee.

Recruited in police service as a sub-inspector in 1987, ACP Chavan has served in various roles in her career, including those at sensitive police stations, State Intelligence Department, Criminal Investigation

Department and Anti-Corruption Bureau, among others. She has served in Pune. Mumbai and Navi Mumbai at various positions.

Chavan's appointment as incharge of the Swargate Division of Pune City Police was announced by Police Commissioner Amitabh Gupta on Monday. Speaking to The Indian

Express, Chavan said, "It is certainly a special feeling. The leadership and Police Commissioner Amitabh Gupta sir have shown faith in me. It is now my turn to prove them right."

Chavan was awarded the Maharashtra Director General of Police's Insignia in 2007 and the President's Police Medal for Exemplary Service in 2010. She has received as many as 475 awards during her career spanning close to 34 years.

ACP Sushma Chavan appointed From criminal gangs to crushes, Pune top cop answers queries on Twitter Live

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE PUNE, MARCH 8

IN HIS first-ever Twitter Live with local residents, Pune Police Commissioner Amitabh Gupta faced a range of questions, from children being lured towards criminal gangs to pleas of help about unrequited love.

In a move meant to develop trust among residents about the police department, Gupta interacted with people through Twitter Live between 1 pm and 2.15 pm on Monday from the Twitter handle of the Pune police commissioner.

As per a press release issued by the police, as many as 14,78,377 persons responded to the event. About 150 citizens asked various questions and 200 people tweeted **Pune Police Commissioner Amitabh** Gupta said "it was a fruitful interaction"

during the interaction.

There were questions about participation of children in crimes, cyber crimes, traffic problems and other issues. Gupta replied to about 30 questions through Twitter. A local resident raised concern about growing attraction among children about bhais or dons (gangsters) and sought solutions for preventing it. Gupta said social media as well as their surroundings played a major role in attracting students and minor children towards

criminal activities. He said it was important for parents, schools and colleges to keep a watch on children and create awareness among them against crimes.

Another student asked, "Sir, my crush stays at Balaji Nagar. Yesterday, I proposed to her but she said no...we are only good friends, kuch karwado sir (please do something)". To this, Gupta replied, "Unfortunately, without her consent even we cannot be of any help. Nor should you do anything against her will. And if she does agree some day, you have our

best wishes and blessings. Gupta said this was his first ever Twitter Live and "it was a fruitful interaction". "I hope to do more of it in times to come. Together, let's work towards a better Pune for all." he tweeted.

India must develop tech to indigenously manufacture electronic material, says MoS

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE PUNE, MARCH 8

MATERIAL WAS the backbone of the manufacturing sector in the country, and India's electronics manufacturing had grown from Rs 1.90 lakh crore to Rs 5.33 lakh crore in recent years, said Sanjay Dhotre, Minister of State for Education, Communications, Electronics and IT, on Monday.

Dhotre was delivering the inaugural address organised at an event to mark the 30th foundation day of city-headquartered Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology (C-MET), which operates under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

"In 2014-2015, the manufacturing of mobile phones was worth Rs 6 crore, which in 2019-2020 grew to Rs 33 crore. From contributing approximately 1.3 per cent in 2012, the share of mobile phone manufacturing has increased to 3.6 per cent during 2019-2020. This growth has opened employability for thousands." Dhotre said.

With the Centre pushing for Aatmanirbhar Bharat in all sectors, the country needed to be greatly involved in materials technology, said Vijay Bhatkar, Vice-Chancellor, Nalanda University. "In the past, India did not do

significant research on electronics hardware, which is entirely dependent upon materials technology," said Bhatkar, who led India's supercomputer programme in the 1990s.

NITI Aayog member V K Saraswat too stressed on the urgent requirement of devel-

From contributing approximately 1.3% in 2012, the share of mobile phone manufacturing has increased to 3.6% during 2019-2020. This growth has opened employability for thousands

- SANJAY DHOTRE MoS FOR ELECTRONICS AND IT

oping technology to develop materials within India and cut down imports.

"We need focused efforts to develop technology for producing functional materials. It has been observed that whenever there is a need for some material, India imports it. It is high time that India develops technology to manufacture some materials like silicon wafer, multi crystalline silicon, silicon oxide," Saraswat said.

To mark International Women's Day, Jyoti Arora, special secretary and financial adviser, MeitY, highlighted the importance of sustained support for women to pursue STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) as a career.

"In India, the number of women taking up higher education or doctoral studies in STEM remains meagre. Though there are many reasons, women in leadership roles, too, are few," said Arora, who urged NITI Aayog and the Department of Science and Technology to continue women-centric programmes for scientists who had taken a career break due to family responsibilities or maternity. ornaments, cash worth Rs 14.9 L'

Domestic help

arrested 'for

stealing

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE PUNE, MARCH 8

PUNE CITY police have arrested a domestic help for allegedly committing theft of valuables and cash worth Rs 14.94 lakh at the residence of her employer in Hadapsar area of the city.

The accused was identified as Bangarevva Chandram Harale (49), a native of Karnataka. Vijay Rajan Farate (33), a businessman residing in a row house at Amar Nagari in Hadapsar, lodged the FIR in this case at Hadapsar police station.

As per a press release issued by police on Monday, stolen gold and diamond ornaments and cash worth Rs 14,93,500 were recovered from the accused woman.

As per the FIR, the complainant had gone to Deenanath Mangeshkar hospital with his parents between 1 pm and 4:30 pm on March 5. During this period, gold and diamond ornaments and cash, all worth Rs 14,84,500, were allegedly stolen from his house. Farate then approached the police and raised doubts about Harale, who works as a domes-

tic helper at their house. Subsequently, senior Police Inspector Balkrishna Kadam initiated a probe into the case. A team led by Police Sub-Inspector Saurabh Mane started to look for the suspect.

Following information obtained by policemen Nikhil Pawar and Prashant Tonpe of the detection branch, cops laid a trap and arrested Harale near Ravidarshan in Hadapsar on Monday. She was booked under section 381 (theft) of the Indian Penal Code.

CENTRE'S PRE-MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME

After social media campaign & reminders from waste pickers' children to govt, scholarship amount hiked

ALIFIYA KHAN PUNE, MARCH 8

FOUR DAYS after children of waste pickers in the city initiated a campaign and demanded a hike in their scholarship amount from Rs 1,850 to Rs 3,000 per year — which has been pending for several years now — the state Monday issued a government resolution (GR) in this regard and sanctioned the

increase in scholarship. On the occasion of International Waste Pickers' Day on March 2, The Indian Express had reported about a campaign started by Pune-based NGO Kagad Kach Patra Kashtakari Panchayat



The campaign was started by Pune-based NGO Kagad Kach Patra Kashtakari Panchayat (KKPKP). Express

(KKPKP) that demanded increased scholarships granted to children of

All children of waste pickers

are eligible under the centrallysponsored pre-matric scholarship of the children of those engaged in occupation involving

cleaning and prone to health hazards. In 2018, the Union government had announced an increase in the amount from Rs 1.850 to Rs 3,000 per year. However, the state government had not implemented the change, even three years after the Centre announced

After constant reminders failed, it was in March last year iust before the lockdown — when state ministers Dhananjay Munde and Deputy Chairperson of the Legislative Council Neelam Gorhe, among others, agreed to disburse the increased scholarship amount.

"But then the lockdown took place and everything was suspended. We are happy that the efforts and the follow-ups by volun-

teers and students finally paid off and the scholarship amount is being revised. The waste pickers will be very happy: this is probably the best women's day gift they have received," said Aditya Vyas, a volunteer at KKPKP. There are at least 1,500 chil-

dren of waste pickers in the city who are beneficiaries of the scholarship scheme. They had started a social media campaign on March 2 to remind the ministers to keep their promise of increasing the educational assistance provided to children of cleaning workers.

The children mailed postcards to the ministers, besides rallying with posters and raising slogans to create awareness around the cleaning occupations' scheme.

BUDGET '21-22 MAHARASHTRA

INTEREST-FREE CROP LOAN

35 lakh farmers to benefit, scheme to cost Rs 1,200 cr

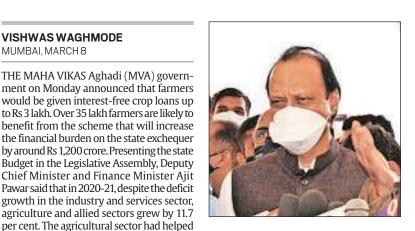
VISHWAS WAGHMODE MUMBAL MARCH 8

THE MAHA VIKAS Aghadi (MVA) government on Monday announced that farmers would be given interest-free crop loans up to Rs 3 lakh. Over 35 lakh farmers are likely to benefit from the scheme that will increase the financial burden on the state exchequer by around Rs 1,200 crore. Presenting the state Budget in the Legislative Assembly, Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Ajit Pawar said that in 2020-21, despite the deficit growth in the industry and services sector,

the state's economy to recover, he added. "Paying interest on crop loans was often a problem for farmers. Keeping in view the objective to free farmers from interest burden and preventing them from turning defaulter, the government has decided to provide zero per cent interest loans to farmers who take crop loans up to Rs 3 lakh and repay it on time. The amount of the interest on crop loan will be paid by the government. The required funds will be provided by the government," said Pawar in his Budget speech.

He added that the interest-free crop loan scheme would start from this Kharif season. The existing scheme of providing concessions in interest on crop loans is being converted into interest-free crop loan scheme, he added. Pawar also announced Rs 2,000 crore allocation for strengthening agricultural produce market committees (APMCs). "The APMCs lack basic facilities for farmers, who bring their produce there for sale. So, it is imperative to provide these facilities," he added.

In his speech, Pawar highlighted that to prevent farmer suicides, the MVA government had implemented the Mahatma Iyotirao Phule farmer loan waiver scheme. Under the scheme, an amount of Rs 19,929 crore has been credited to the accounts of 31.23 lakh farmers. "It also paved the way for farmers to get new loans. In 2019-20, crop loans amounting to Rs 28,604 crore were disbursed, after debt relief, loans worth Rs



Aiit Pawar after presenting the Budget, in Mumbai on Monday. Express

Paying interest on crop loans was often a problem for farmers. Keeping in view the objective to free farmers from interest burden and preventing them from turning defaulter, the government has decided to provide zero per cent interest loans to farmers who take crop loans up to Rs 3 lakh and repay it on time..."

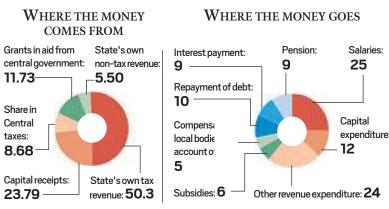
DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER AND FINANCE MINISTER

42,433 crore were disbursed in 2020-21." However, the MVA government did not make any announcement about giving Rs 50,000 as incentive to farmers who repay their loans on time and a one-time settlement option for those having loans above Rs 2 lakh. "We had promised to give Rs 50,000 to farmers who repay their loans on time and the one-time settlement option. We have not moved away from this promise. If the economic situation restores in future, the chief minister is of the view to consider these promises," said Pawar.



Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and minister Aaditya Thackeray arrive at Vidhan Bhavan on Monday. Express

IN NUMBERS



REVENUE DEFICIT State's revenue deficit has been shooting up. In 2020-21, it was the highest at Rs 46176 cr 2017-18: Rs-2083 cr 2018-19: Rs-11974 cr

2019-20: Rs17116 cr 2019-20: 2020-21: Rs 46178 cr 2020-21: 2021-22: Rs10226 cr 2021-22:

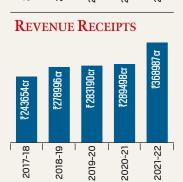
FISCAL DEFICIT The gap between the state's total income and expenditure is set to remain due to the Covid-19 economic disruptions. Last year, the deficit was as high as 87697 cr.

2017-18: ₹23015 cr 2018-19: ₹53886 cr ₹87697 cr ₹66641 cr

STATE SPENDS WELL OVER 60 PER CENT OF ITS REVENUES IN PAYING SALARIES, PENSION TO EMPLOYEES AND SERVICING ITS MASSIVE DEBT.

Year	Revenue Receipts	Spend on salary, pension, interest
2016-17	₹204693 cr	₹122367 cr (59.78%)
2017-18	₹243654 cr	₹131959 cr (54.16%)
2018-19	₹278996 cr	₹140772 cr (50.46%)
2019-20	₹283190 cr	₹170447 cr (60.19%)
2020-21	₹289498 cr	₹183731 cr (63.47%)
2021-22	₹368987 cr	₹210368 cr (57.01%)

REVENUE EXPENDITURE



MAHARASHTRA'S DEBT STOCK OVER THE YEARS

STOCK OVER THE TEMES				
Year	Debt stock	% to GSDP		
2016-17	₹364819 cr	16.6		
2017-18	₹402402 cr	17.10		
2018-19	₹407152 cr	15.78		
2019-20	₹451114 cr	16.01		
2020-21	₹538304 cr	20.22		
2021-22	₹615170 cr	20.64		

Focus on post-Covid care centres, ramping up medical infrastructure

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, MARCH 8

THE COVID-19 pandemic has drawn the Maharashtra's government focus towards improving hospital infrastructure and infectious care treatment, with the state government announcing a post-Covid care centre in every district and the setting up of a model infectious disease hospital in Aundh district hospital in Budget 2021-22

With thousands suffering from 'long Covid', a terminology for recovered patients suffering from mental trauma and continued physical weakness, the state government plans to establish a post-Covid counselling and treatment centre in every district hospital and medical college. Currently several government hospitals treat such recovered cases in their normal OPD.

The overall Budget for health has risen by 10.25 per cent from the previous year's Budget estimates. Budget estimates for 2020-21 were Rs 17,288 crore. This time, it is Rs 19,061 crore, an increase of Rs 1,773 crore, for health and medical education. The state government has allocated Rs 2,961 crore for public health schemes and Rs 1,517 crore for schemes under medical education department.

At least 11 government nursing schools attached to medical colleges will be converted into nursing colleges to prepare nurses in management of infectious diseases. Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar said there was a need for radical changes in the curriculum related to paramedical patient care and to give priority and encouragement to branches related to nursing. The state government announced Rs 7,500 crore for construction and upgradation of health infrastructure like primary health centres, psychiatric hospitals, trauma care centres in the next four years.

New government medical colleges have been announced for Sindhudurg, Osmanabad, Nashik, Raigad, Satara,

SILVER LINING IN THE COVID CLOUD

- New medical colleges in 7 districts
- Post-covid care centres in each
- GMC Latur to get new OPD costing Rs 72.29 crore
- Staff quarters in Sassoon Hospital
- costing Rs 28.2 crore
- upgraded into sub-district hospital ■ Fire fighting system in all

■ Rural hospital in Atpadi to be

- government hospitals
- Physiotherapy and occupational therapy colleges in 17 government medical colleges

	2020-21 BUDGET ESTIMATE	2020-21 REVISED ESTIMATE	2021-22 BUDGET ESTIMATE
Revenue	15,748.05 crore	18,096.72 crore	16,839.40 crore
Capital	1540.4 crore	1442.11 crore	2220.77 crore
Total	17288.4 crore	19,538.8 crore	19,061.8 crore

Amravati and Parbhani. At least 3,190 med-diagnose cancer, and eight cath labs for ical seats will be increased across medical colleges, this will include 1,990 undergraduate seats, 1,000 post-graduate seats and 200 for super-specialty.

To further expand the urban health mission, Rs 800 crore has been budgeted this year to improve health care in municipal corporations and nagar parishads. Total of Rs 5,000 crore has been allocated for urban healthcare for the next five years. A separate post for Director, Urban Health, has been created to tackle dispensaries and health posts in cities and towns under National Health Mission.

State officials said the infectious disease centre in Aundh district hospital would be a dedicated facility to tackle infectious diseases like Covid-19, H1N1. This facility will be followed by smaller centres under its umbrella at district levels to provide a ready infrastructure whenever a disease outbreak happens.

The state government is further expanding its program for non-communicable diseases with 150 hospitals across the state to

emergency angiograpny procedures for heart patients.

Following the Bhandara fire incident in January, which killed 10 babies, the state government has decided to install fire safety system in all government hospitals. State officials said they have received proposals worth Rs 800-900 crore for fire safety equipment by various districts.

Following the Budget speech, health experts flagged the state government's intention to involve public private partnership in medical colleges. The government has announced new medical colleges will be constructed or maintained on PPP model.

'Government must invest more in public infrastructure instead of relying on private players. If we compare revised Budget estimates for 2020-21 and this year's Budget estimate and factor funds required for Covid. the budget for health is slightly less," said Ravi Duggal, attached with Jan Swasthya Abhiyan. This year's budget estimate is Rs 477 crore less than revised estimates for

Stamp duty concession for property in women's name

VISHWAS WAGHMODE MUMBAI, MARCH 8

IN A move that could give impetus to women's ownership of property, the state government on Monday announced a concession in stamp duty for registering a property solely in a woman's name. Ajit Pawar, Deputy CM and Finance Minister, announced the concession under the Rajmata Jijau Griha-Swamini Yojana.

per cent over the prevailing rate exclusively to women provided the transfer of house property or registration of sale deed is in the name of woman or women only," said Pawar, adding that the concession will be given from April 1. 2021. He clarified that in a joint ownership, the concession in stamp duty would not be given if there is a man as a joint owner with the woman. "Both should be women," he added.

International Women's Day to announce a slew of other schemes aimed at women in the Budget. The minister announced the Sant Janabai Social Security and Welfare Scheme their condition has deteriorated during the lockdown. "I am announcing a seed capital of Rs 250 crore for this purpose. Various welfare schemes will be implemented for women domestic workers from this fund,"

Pawar also announced a scheme for free travel for girl students in rural areas in the name of social reformer Savitribai Phule. "The state has taken many progressive steps for the education of girls. Education for girls till 12th standard is free. I am now announcing a scheme for free travel of girl students in rural areas, from their villages to schools and colleges by the Maharashtra State Transport buses," he said.

He added that the state will provide 1,500 environment-friendly CNG and hybrid buses to the State Transport Corporation on a priority basis. Besides, Pawar announced formation of the first women battalion of the State Reserve Police Force in the country. "To empower women and children, it has been decided to reserve 3% funds from the District Annual Plan. I believe that around Rs 300 crore will be available every year," he added.

Eye on local bodies' polls, govt highlights ongoing projects

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, MARCH 8

KEEPING AN eye on the local bodies' polls next year, the Maha Vikas Aghadi government on Monday emphasised on its focus on fast-tracking infrastructure projects in an attempt to send out a message that it is working for the development of the state.

Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Ajit Pawar, in his Budget speech, mentioned various projects such as Jalna-Nanded expressway connector of Samrudhi corridor, Pune ring route and Pune-Nashik railway project as well as several Metro lines.

He also highlighted development projects in Mumbai such as 14 Metro corridors, coastal road project, cycle tracks on the eastern and western express highways and Bandra-Versova-Virar sea link among others.

While no new projects were announced in the Budget, all projects mentioned in the speech are in various stages of completion. Mentioning these projects assumes significance as the local bodies, such as in Mumbai, Thane, Pune, Pimpri-Chinchwad, Nagpur and others will go polls early next year. Elections to the 10 municipal corporations and over 25 zilla parishads is viewed as mini Assembly polls in political circles.

Pawar further said that 3,30,842 km of national and state highways, district roads and rural roads have been developed. "A financial development corporation will be set up under the public works department to raise funds for their timely improvement and regular maintenance." he added.

OTHER STORIES Why is Khadse arrest necessary if he is cooperating, HC asks ED

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, MARCH 8

HEARING A plea by former state Revenue Minister Eknath Khadse against the Enforcement Directorate (ED), the Bombay High Court on Monday asked the central agency why it was necessary to arrest the accused if he was cooperating with the probe.

The ED had registered an Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) against Khadse last October in connection with a case related to a 2016 land deal in Bhosari, Pune.

A division bench of Justice S.S.Shinde and Justice Manish Pitale asked why Khadse's apprehension of being arrested while responding to summons and "incriminating questions" was unfounded. The ED had sent a notice to Knadse over the land deal in December 2020.

Khadse, who left the BJP to join the NCP last October, appeared before the ED on January 15 and was questioned for over six hours in connection with the case

Thereafter, Khadse had moved a criminal writ petition before the HC seeking quashing of the ECIR and sought interim protection from coercive action pending hearing of his plea. Khadse's counsel had submitted that his client has been cooperating with the central agency and would continue to do so, therefore no arrest be made pending hearing.

The ED had from time to time orally assured the HC that it would not take any coercive action against Khadse till the next hearing. Senior counsel Aabad Ponda, representing Khadse, said during an earlier hearing that his client had filed the plea as he was apprehensive of being arrested in connection with the ECIR through "incriminating questions" being asked by the investigating agency. He submitted that though Khadse was named in the ECIR, the report was prepared in view of the earlier FIR registered against Khadse and others in the land deal case.

Ponda submitted that his client was not challenging the ECIR but praying for quashing proceedings arising out of it, which included the earlier summons issued to him along with restraint on future summons.

On Monday, Ponda submitted that ED's challenge to the maintainability of the petition was not valid as the summons did not mention any scheduled offences against Khadse

and there was an "abuse of power" by ED. Ponda on behalf of Khadse said, "I (Khadse) may not be an accused in the current proceed-

ings qua ECIR, but the subject matter in the FIR and then ECIR is same and asking me questions which will implicate me in the FIR, will be against my rights under Article 20(3) of the Constitution." After hearing Khadse's submissions, Justice Shinde asked Additional Solicitor General Anil Singh (representing the ED), "If someone is ready to cooperate in that case, why arrest is necessary is his (Khadse) contention. Is he or is he not in an imminent threat of arrest? If he refuses to answer, will he not be arrested for non-cooperation?'

The bench added that apprehension was against not giving him an opportunity to respond to the proceedings against him and the same could be given to him (Khadse). The HC also said that as per past judgments, the accused was to be informed of offences before arresting him or her.

FULL REPORT ON

Opposition hits out at govt for not reducing taxes on fuel

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, MARCH 8

THE OPPOSITION lashed out at the state government for not reducing "a single rupee" on state taxes on diesel and petrol, and said the Budget had disappointed farmers, youths, women and backward classes.

"Ruling party members used to carry placards on petrol and diesel prices every day, but the state did not reduce a single rupee from its taxes on the fuel prices," said Devendra Fadnavis, Leader of Opposition in the Assembly, referring to the Shiv Sena's recent protests against the Centre for the high fuel prices.

Fadnavis also said that no provision had been made in the Budget for an incentive scheme or one-time settlement scheme for farmers who pay their loans regularly. "Around 45 per cent of the farmers have been deprived of the farm loan waiver scheme. This proves that the farm loan waiver of the Thackeray government is a deceptive loan



Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnavis after presentation of the Budget, in Assembly on Monday. Express

waiver scheme," he said.

The Opposition leader further said that crop loans up to Rs 3 lakh at zero per cent interest rate would not benefit 80 per cent of farmers in the state. "Because these farmers having nonirrigated land never borrow more than Rs 50,000 to Rs 1 lakh. So the announcement is for namesake," he said.

Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Ajit Pawar admitted there were a lot of expectations but pointed to the revenue deficit for not reducing state taxes on fuel. "Due to the state's financial position, the expectations could not be fulfilled. There is a huge revenue deficit, which may go up further. But the Centre should have reduced its taxes on fuel. I do admit that we could not provide any concession on it," said

He further said that the interest-free crop loan scheme will benefit a large number of farmers in the state Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said the

Budget was a relief to all sections of society while fast-tracking infrastructure development in the state. "Despite the challenging situation due to the pandemic, we have presented a Budget giving relief to all sections of society and will move the state forward," said Thackeray.

for women domestic workers, stating that

"I propose concession in stamp duty of 1

The government used the symbolism of

www.indianexpress.com

WORDLY WISE

BE THINE OWN PALACE, OR THE WORLD'S THY JAIL — JOHN DONNE

The Indian EXPRESS

∽ FOUNDED By ∽ RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

A race to the bottom

Nativist law will not 'Make Haryana Great Again'. It sends out bad signals in labour market, sows seeds of division

CHINMAY TUMBE

WOMEN'S EVERY DAY

Her struggle is no longer just for a foothold in public spaces, but to demand change, drive it. Hers is an irreversible force

HE LONG JOURNEY of Indian women towards redeeming the promise of equality is too significant to be limited to a day in the year. But International Women's Day 2021 demands that the ordinary trappings of the occasion — from the regulation political lip service to easy-to-consume brand campaigns — be kept aside to acknowledge and catch up with a vital shift. Women are now at the centre of all important contestations of Indian democracy. They might still remain on the margin of institutions and power, but their struggle is no longer only about pushing the system to grant them a bigger foothold in public spaces. In the fault lines and barricades opening up across India's democratic landscape, their impatient and fierce assertion is right at home.

That was the spirit that brought thousands of women on to the streets during the protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act, not just in Delhi's Shaheen Bagh but also its replicas in public spaces across the country. That is also why women farmers from Punjab have dug their heels in at Delhi's borders, along with the men, to protest against the Centre's three farm laws, never mind the highest court's anxiety about their presence in the agitation. It is an assertion that comes with a price, but that has not led women to back down from a faceoff with an increasingly heavy-handed state. From Sudha Bharadwaj to Safoora Zargar, Devangana Kalita to Disha Ravi and Nodeep Kaur, so many women have faced penal action and imprisonment in the course of political mobilisation, activism and protests. This visible contestation is connected to other larger changes that are afoot. From the growing numbers of women in higher education to their mounting presence in voter turnouts, the Indian woman's choices add up to an insistent demand for greater freedom and agency.

The empowerment brought about by politics and education is in contrast to the increasingly precarious economic conditions, leaving a substantial section of women with the electric charge of aspiration but not the release of opportunity. The pandemic has only worsened this deprivation, with an alarming number of women being pushed out of the workforce and education. In each of these cases, caste and class and location have served to deepen gender inequality and increase family and clan control. Political parties mostly deal with the woman voter who demands a better life by turning her into a recipient of welfare schemes. The woman as unapologetic political being; the woman insistent on her sexual and personal autonomy, on equality of employment and opportunity, is answered with a patriarchal and cultural backlash. That manifests in violence and intimidation and workplace harassment, in the slew of criminal defamation cases against women who said #MeToo as well as the state-sanctioned misogyny of "love jihad" laws. The history of International Women's Day underlines the importance of solidarity and mobilisation to the many hard-fought battles of feminism. It's a lesson that is lived out and practised every day, in private and in public, by India's women – and will shape the future for both women and men.

POLITICAL RHETORIC AND the occasional violence against inter-state migrant workers is nothing new in India. Starting from the Mulki rules in Nizam-ruled Hyderabad in the late 19th century that favoured local employment to the anti-South Indian movements in Bombay in the 1960s (when this writer's family surname was changed to fit in with the locals) to the "sons of the soil" movement in Assam and beyond, India has witnessed many instances of subnational nativism.

This nativism peaked in times of high unemployment and withered away when the economy did well. Nativist rhetoric also rarely transcended into actual laws in India as they remained in the realm of pre-election vote-catching banter. After all, several Articles of the Indian Constitution prohibit discrimination in employment on the basis of place of birth. As pointed out by the report of the Working Group on Migration in January 2017, the Supreme Court decision in 2014 in the Charu Khurana v Union of India case "clearly renders restrictions based on residence for the purposes of employment unconstitutional.

Despite the constitutional provisions, in the past three years, anti-migrant rhetoric is increasingly turning into legislative reality. In 2019, the government of Andhra Pradesh passed the Andhra Pradesh Employment of Local Candidates in the Industries/Factories Bill, 2019, reserving 75 per cent of jobs for locals. This law was soon challenged and the petition was accepted by the Andhra Pradesh High Court as a matter of public interest. Yet, the clamour for similar laws pervades across states including Madhya Pradesh and Goa. Most recently, in March, the Haryana government passed the Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Bill, 2020,

Life is tough for low-income inter-state migrant workers in India, as was painfully illustrated by the migration crisis of 2020. To their long list of woes, ranging from precarious livelihoods to lack of access to portable social security, they now have an added concern — nativist laws. Sectors which do end up employing a large number of inter-state migrant workers do so because the local workers do not aspire for those jobs. Migration for work represents a match between employers looking for certain skills at low rates and workers who want to earn much more than what

they can make back home.

reserving 75 per cent of jobs in the private sector for locals, when the monthly salary was under Rs 50,000 per month.

Let us, for a moment, forget the apparent unconstitutionality of this law. Let us also ignore the hypocrisy that the BJP-led Haryana state government is attempting to curtail the employer's choice of recruiting labour from anywhere in the country at the same time that the BJP-led central government is pushing hard to give farmers the choice to sell their goods anywhere in the country. Let us brush aside the fact that most migration for work in India happens within state borders or that Census 2011 data revealed that in almost all Indian districts, less than 10 per cent of the urban workforce comprised of interstate migrants. The fundamental problem with this law is that low-income migrant workers will once again become the victims

of India's public policies. Life is tough for low-income inter-state migrant workers in India, as was painfully illustrated by the migration crisis of 2020. To their long list of woes, ranging from precarious livelihoods to lack of access to portable social security, they now have an added source of concern — nativist laws. Sectors which do end up employing a large number of inter-state migrant workers - think of Surat's power loom industry which employs workers from Odisha - do so because the local workers do not aspire for those jobs. Migration for work represents a match between employers who are looking for certain skills at low rates and workers who want to earn much more than what they can make back home.

The current premise of the nativist laws is that with adequate skill training given to locals, they can perform the same tasks as the migrants. But are they willing to? The law also appears to be tough to implement on the ground and one can expect a parallel market to emerge on the ability to prove local residence, as it often happens in the case of ration cards. Further, the income cutoff in Haryana's law conveys that the rich can move anywhere in India and work as they please but those same opportunities are to be denied to poorer inter-state migrant workers.

In the coming decades, internal migration is only going to continue to surge in India, as it did in China over the past three decades, and as it did in the developmental trajectory of practically every country on this planet. By restricting migration choices, the governments of Andhra Pradesh and Haryana send out bad signals in the labour market, especially when their own elites have benefited tremendously from internal and international migration.

There used to be a time not so long ago that Indian elites would bemoan Donald Trump's immigration policies that restricted H1B visas, often the golden pathway to access the American dream. Trump's departure has led to a softening of the stance on immigration in America much to the delight of prospective Indian emigrants and employers in the US. Sadly, there is little to cheer for India's internal migrants as Trumpian avatars descend in India's state-level politics. Haryana's nativist law alas will not "Make Haryana Great Again". Instead, it sows the seeds of the balkanisation of our country. Such laws ought to be challenged in the courts.

> The writer is a faculty member of IIM-Ahmedabad and the author of India Moving: A History of Migration

BATTLE FOR AIADMK

As Sasikala retreats from electoral battle, onus is on Edappadi Palaniswami to prove his leadership credentials

LOSER TO THE elections, the cast of characters on Tamil Nadu's political stage seems to be thinning out. Superstar Rajinikanth, who promised a new "spiritual politics", was the first to bow out citing health reasons. Last week, Jayalalithaa's aide Sasikala Natarajan announced that she was stepping aside from active politics. The move was unexpected and intriguing since her return to Tamil Nadu in February after four years in a Bengaluru jail appeared to be choreographed in a manner that left no one in doubt about her political ambitions: It seemed clear that she sought to appropriate the legacy of Jayalalithaa and take over the AIADMK. However, her re-entry into the AIADMK was opposed by Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswami and the issue threatened to divide the party. Her withdrawal from the fray leaves the AIADMK intact, at least for now, and Palaniswami has a free hand to decide on seat-sharing with allies and pick candidates.

It may be too early, however, to write Sasikala's political obituary. In fact, her words suggest that her exit could be temporary, and that it is meant to facilitate the success of Amma's party. The AIADMK has been here before. It was forced into a similar situation after its founder, M G Ramachandran, died in 1987. The inner-party struggle for control of the AIADMK and the film-star-turned-politician's legacy, involving Jayalalithaa and MGR's widow, Janaki Ramachandran, split the party and allowed the DMK to win office after more than a decade in opposition in the assembly election that followed. Later, the decimated AIADMK factions regrouped under Jayalalithaa while Janaki Ramachandran retired from politics. Palaniswami now has the unenviable task of leading the AIADMK in the face of incumbency — the party has been in office for a decade — and a formidable alliance led by the DMK. A fratricidal tussle today, on the eve of elections, could cost the party dearly and Sasikala would be forced to share the blame.

Now it is up to Palaniswami to prove his mettle as a leader or bow out. Interestingly, Palaniswami, a grassroots politician chosen by Sasikala for the CM's office, has turned out to be a shrewd leader and a reasonably able administrator though it's anybody's guess if he can swing the polls his way this time. Politics in Tamil Nadu, always full of spectacular twists, may yet take a new turn.

OUT OF TOUCH

Meghan Markle-Prince Harry interview highlights just how ill-fitting an institution House of Windsor is in modern times

ACISM, CONTROL, SILENCING, callousness — the much-anticipated Meghan Markle-Prince Harry interview does not paint a flattering picture of the House of Windsor. On the face of it, the revelations by the Duke and Duchess of Sussex to Oprah Winfrey are shocking: Members of the royal household expressed concern about their child's skin colour (Markle is part African-American); the Duchess was told that she must not seek help for mental health issues since "this would damage the institution (royalty)"; Harry and Meghan were cut off financially and his father, Prince Charles, broke off contact with him. In fact, the British Royal family's attitude may be of a piece with the sheer anachronism of the idea they represent in modern times - royalty.

In the last few years, popular culture has done much to justify, and make palatable, the myth of nobility, of inherited wealth and class, to paint royalty as an innocuous, even charming, institution. Downton Abbey, a glorified soap opera featuring English nobility, for instance, helped serve this end and The Crown, a Netflix show that has been on since 2016, celebrates Queen Elizabeth. The mirage of royalty, the notion that some people are born inherently superior, is kept alive.

When the ivory tower is a palace, it is easy to lose touch. To comment on the skin tone (pejoratively) of an unborn child, to believe a "stiff upper lip" can cure depression, to drive a young woman to thoughts of suicide — these attitudes ill fit the 21st century. Perhaps only an "outsider" like Markle could shatter the myth of royalty, and perhaps only love could have moved the young prince to recognise his environment as toxic. As for the royals that remain in England as symbols of the country's sovereignty, there's an easy way to understand how the world really works. Get a job.



World is her stage

After pandemic, public spaces must be reclaimed for both men and women

SONALDE DESAL

WHEN WE tell our children and grandchildren about 2020, we will talk about a time when we shut ourselves in our homes to keep the world and the pandemic out. Our only contact with friends and relatives was via the telephone, and we only ventured out for essential activities, that too during daylight. vve covered our faces and passed people on the street, refusing to make eve contact.

Men will talk about this as a year out of time, but perhaps many women will say, this is how we lived anyway. The pandemic was the first time it was recognised as a problem. As we think of emerging from this isolation and resuming our social lives, can we make sure both men and women reclaim public spaces and that the new normal for women does not look like the old normal?

Statistics on women's lack of access to public spaces are sobering. The India Human Development Survey of 2012 (IHDS), conducted by the University of Maryland and National Council of Applied Economic Research, revealed that 18 per cent of women respondents do not go to a kirana shop. A further 19 per cent would not go alone. A third of households relied only on men or children to do any grocery shopping. Only 11 per cent of rural women had ever attended a gram sabha. Barely 18 per cent had ever visited a metropolitan city, and an equal proportion had ventured outside their state.

Even before mask-wearing limited our ability to connect with the external world, it was commonplace for 60 per cent of Indian women who practise either the ghunghat or purdah. The telephone was already the lifeline connecting women to their support network - about a quarter of women respondents were unable to visit their natal families more than once a year. Part of this isolation may be because it is difficult for women to travel unless someone accompanies them;

Even before mask-wearing limited our ability to connect with the external world, it was commonplace for 60 per cent of Indian women who practise either the ghunghat or the purdah. The telephone was already the lifeline connecting women to their support network — about a quarter of women respondents were unable to visit their natal families more than once a year. Part of this isolation may be because it is difficult for women to travel unless someone accompanies them; among the IHDS respondents, only half of them felt able to travel alone.

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Perhaps the pandemic-enforced isolation will increase our empathy for the substantial proportion of Indian women who have found themselves confined to their homes during the normal course of life. The chalienge, nowever, lies in understanding what has caused this isolation and finding ways to address it.

A large number of studies have documented that women face sexual harassment as they venture outside the home. Fear of sexual harassment has negative societal consequences in many areas of life. In a research paper (using IHDS data), economist Tanika Chakraborty — then at IIT, Kanpur and her co-authors found that women are less likely to work away from home in areas where perceived sexual harassment of girls is higher. World Bank economist Girija Borker in a highly innovative study, found that despite having high marks, girls in Delhi University choose to attend lower-quality colleges to avoid sexual harassment while traveling to college.

Safety concerns are not limited to major metropolitan cities. A study carried out by the NGO Safetipin in Bhopal, Gwalior and Jodhpur found that 95 per cent of women feel unsafe using public transport, 89 per cent feel unsafe in the marketplace, 84 per cent feel unsafe waiting for public transport while 76 per cent feel unsafe on roads or footpath. The study found that about 30 per cent of women reported having faced some form of sexual harassment in the past year. Half of these incidents took place while using public transport and 16 per cent were while waiting for public transport.

What can be done to enhance women's feeling of safety and to ensure their full participation in public life? Some of these are relatively simple – improving lighting around roads, buses, and train stations is relatively simple. However, we also need to look to more creative solutions to create a critical mass of women in public spaces so that women don't feel isolated and see safety in numbers. This may involve hiring women drivers and bus conductors, emulating Lanore's pink buses, and expanding spaces allocated to women vendors in markets.

It also involves creating an environment where the whole society collaborates to welcome women into public life. This is not a one-way street, benefitting women alone. The Indian Independence movement offers an inspirational example of the synergy between the women's movement and the nationalist movement. This intertwining won freedom for the nation while creating an obligation for an Independent India to deliver gender justice, resulting in the Hindu Code Bill that provided for monogamy, divorce, and inheritance rights for women. My research shows that MGNREGA, with equal pay for men and women, has played an important role in bringing women, who used to work only on family farms in the past, into paid work. Finding opportunities for women to participate in creating public goods, whether through special programmes designed for women or structuring existing programmes in a way that allows for enhanced participation by women can only be a win-win situation.

Let us hope that when we tell our grandchildren about 2020, the pandemic generated isolation is as unfamiliar to our granddaughters as to our grandsons, and the reclaiming of public spaces occurs for both

The writer is professor of sociology, University of Maryland and professor and centre director NCAER-National Data Innovation Centre. Views are personal

MARCH 9, 1981, FORTY YEARS AGO

PAK TALKS BREAK DOWN THE FATE OF more than hundred people held hostage by the hijackers of a Pakistani plane at Kabul airport remained uncertain as the Pakistani negotiating team broke off talks with the hijackers tonight. Radio Kabul in a late night bulletin said that the leader of the Pakistani team, Ajaz-ul-din, had accused the hijackers of trying to bring political pressure on the Pakistani government. Ajaz-ul-din made this announcement after a round of talks with the leader of hijackers, Alamgir. Alamgir had demanded the release of 43 prisoners as a condition for the release of the hostages. Earlier, they had demanded the release of 93 prisoners.

POLISH WORKERS STRIKE POLISH WORKERS JOINED thousands of students at the University of Warsaw tonight to commemorate a month of riots that began here 13 years ago. The commemoration took place near the exact site where the riots erupted on March 8.1968 and sparked clashes between students and the police. Meanwhile, another ceremony with strong anti-Zionist accent took place at a building in downtown Warsaw.

J&K REFUGEE IMPASSE ABOUT 300 WEST Pakistan refugees who migrated to Jammu and Kashmir at the time of Partition entered into Pakistan territory at noon today in protest against the state government's failure to confer citizenship rights. As the Pakistan Rangers prevented them from proceeding beyond 100 yards of the international border, the refugees sat on dharna with 300 women and children.

TAKING ON DACOITS

CHIEF MINISTERS OF Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh held two rounds of talks for joint action to tackle the dacoit menace in the Yamuna and Chambal ravines. UP CM V P Singh said that it was decided to improve the communication system between the two states so that any information on dacoits could be shared.

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 2021

THE IDEAS PAGE

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"Congress has dithered for years without advancing legislation that will address Big Tech's profound power disparity. If lawmakers wait until the next major -THE NEW YORK TIMES data breach, it will be too late."

Getting the bank

balance right

As India warms to bank privatisation, a public bank movement is on in the US. Critical to both is getting

Despite the doubters

India-US relationship has grown by leaps and bounds. Delhi is now well-positioned to raise the Ouad agenda to a higher level at the digital summit of its leaders this week



BY C RAJA MOHAN

INDIA'S EXPANDING PARTNERSHIP with the US is marked by a fascinating political puzzle. The relationship has advanced by leaps and bounds even as doubters dominate the public discourse in both Delhi and Washington. The latest evidence comes from the quickening pace of diplomatic engagement between the two capitals.

For months, analysts in Delhi and Washington told us to expect a slowdown, if not setbacks, under the Joe Biden presidency. What we have instead is the likely elevation of the strategic partnership at the first-ever summit of the Quad nations scheduled for

The Quad, or the quadrilateral security dialogue, brings India and the US together along with Washington's longstanding treaty-allies, Australia and Japan. That the Quad is meeting at the summit level, well before Biden has spent two months at the White House, underlines the growing gap between our foreign policy debate and policy.

The roots of this problem, on the Indian side at least, lie in the enduring reluctance of Delhi's foreign policy community to either acknowledge or accept the unfolding transformation of India's ties with the US. It also rests in the continuing underestimation of Delhi's capacity to rework its great power relations to meet India's changing interests and circumstances. Consider, for example, some of the recent lines of the argument on India-US relations. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, it was said, made a big mistake by investing far too much in engaging Trump and that Biden would neither forget nor forgive.

The Democratic Party's strong concerns on human rights, it was argued, were bound to undermine US ties with the Modi government. It was widely held that the Indo-Pacific and the Quad will become footnotes in Biden's foreign policy. This in turn was based on the bet that Biden is likely to embrace China rather than confront it in the manner that Trump did. All these assumptions turned out to be inaccurate

Biden has far too much on his plate at home and in the world to pick on the international friends of Trump. Biden has been in Washington long enough — for nearly half a century before he became President — to know that the international outreach to Trump was about sustaining the partnerships with the US at a difficult moment.

Concern for democracy and human rights has always been part of US foreign policy idebiogy. But to believe that they will define America's engagement with India required a leap of faith. No state, not even a revolutionary one, can run its foreign policy on a singlepoint agenda. All chancelleries need to balance competing interests.

Biden has signalled more continuity than discontinuity with Trump's China policy. He affirmed continuing commitment to the Indo-Pacific and the Quad. The foreign ministers of the Quad were quick to convene digitally and the summit appears a natural next step.

Analysis of international dynamics, espe-



cially at a time of fluidity, does not lend itself to easy assessments. Yet, a focus on structural trends does give us a sense of where major powers relations might be headed. India-US relations have been on a steady upward trajectory over the last three decades, withstood significant political transitions in both countries, and managed to overcome many difficult barriers.

The US is now India's most comprehensive partner. The Russia relationship is long on defence but short on commerce. India's commercial ties with China are large, but tilted heavily in Beijing's favour; meanwhile, Delhi's political trust in Beijing has evaporated amidst China's aggressive antics on the contested boundary. Collective Europe is big on commerce but small on security cooperation. The US has a sizeable presence in both economic and security dimensions and the political common ground with India has steadily expanded.

Why, then, the persistent doubts in Delhi about the US partnership? One part of it is the ingrained ideological bias in the dominant foreign policy elite. It was generous to a fault when it came to assessing China's interests and motivations, but always unduly suspi-

But official Delhi has moved away from the legacy of anti-Americanism. The popular opinion — or the "street" as External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar calls it — has been enthusiastic about the partnership with the US. Delhi's stilted debate on the US is, unfortunately, reinforced by the sad absence of investment in institutional capabilities to study American politics, economics and international relations.

the Indian foreign policy elite has not appreciated India's agency to shape the relationship with America. The conviction that Delhi is perennially under US pressure to accept policies harmful for itself further distorts the discourse in the media and among the chatter-

The evidence from the 1990s - one of India's most vulnerable moments after Independence — should have corrected this misperception. A series of weak coalition gov-

ernments deflected the Clinton administration's attempts to force a Kashmir settlement with Pakistan. Delhi defied the US pressure to roll back the nuclear and missile programmes, conducted nuclear tests, and began a serious diplomatic effort at bridging the prolonged atomic divergence.

Much water has flown in the Yamuna and Potomac since then; but the dominant discourse remains stuck in a groove. If Delhi negotiates a ceasefire with Rawalpindi, it is assumed that the Biden administration must have played a role. If Delhi sees value in the "Indo-Pacific" construct, it must be under American pressure. The traditional discourse finds it hard to come to terms with the twin factors shaping India's new approach.

One is the significant increase in India's material capabilities. India's aggregate GDP increased ten-fold between 1990 (\$270 billion) and 2020 (about \$2,700 billion) and pushed it into the world's top five economies. These relative gains have immensely expanded India's geopolitical possibilities.

Equally important is the new political will in Delhi. The UPA government (2004-14) made such heavy weather of the historic initiatives it had signed with the US in mid-2005. It struggled to implement the nuclear deal and started walking back from the framework for defence

The NDA government, in power since 2014, had the political will to build on the US initiatives launched by the UPA government. The new India no longer wrings its hands in dealing with the US; it relishes the large room for strategic bargaining with America. Even more important, Deini is no longer a reluctant partner to Washington. Over the last three years, it revived the Quad, shaped the coalition's approach to strategic connectivity, and has demonstrated its leadership in vaccine diplomacy. Delhi is now well-positioned to raise the Quad agenda to a higher level at the digital summit of its leaders this week.

The writer is director, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore and contributing editor on international affairs for The Indian Express optimal mix of financial inclusion and lending While the United States epitomises the private banking model, a nationwide public banking movement is coming into vogue – this includes recently introduced state bills from California to New York. If modelled along the lines of the Bank of North Dakota, America's only public bank, reports suggest that public banks can contribute to state revenues, support community banks, fund public infrastructure projects, and help small businesses grow by offering lower interest

rates and lower fees. The public banking movement can also help with efficient government transfers and financial inclusion via universal checking accounts. According to pre-pandemic data from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), 5.4 per cent of the households in the United States are unbanked. India is no stranger to the imperative for digital financial inclusion. The Jana Dhan Yojna (PMJDY) is a flagship scheme designed to overcome slippages in delivering transfer payments to ultimate beneficiaries. The programme is administered primarily through government-owned banks.

The stellar success of Indian PSBs in implementing the PMJDY while missing the mark on creating high-quality credit highlights a critical divide between the asset and the liability side of a bank. Banks provide two functions at a fundamental level: Payments and deposit-taking on the liability side and credit creation on the asset side. The payment services function, a hallmark of financial inclusion, is similar to a utility business banks can provide this service, a public good, at a low cost universally. The lending side, in contrast, is all about the optimal allocation of resources through better credit evaluation and monitoring of borrowers. Private banks are more likely to have the right set of incentives and expertise in doing so. It comes as no surprise that the PSBs in India are better at providing the public good functions, whereas private banks seem better suited for credit allocation.

The optimal \min of the banking system across public and private boils down to what you need out of your banking system and ne particular friction your economy faces. When the wedge between social and private benefits is large, as with financial inclusion, there is a strong case for public banks. At this stage, inefficiency in capital allocation seems to be a bigger issue for the Indian banking sector, whereas, in the US, the debate is centred around the public goods aspects of banking. Therefore, it may make sense for the US to think hard about public banks that can be used for financial inclusion in line with the success of PMIDY in India. On the other hand, selective privatisation of inefficient PSBs is a welcome move for India's banking sector.

narı ıs Projessor of economics and financ and director of Modern Indian Studies Initiative, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Purnanandam is Michael Stark Professor of Finance at Ross School of Business, University of Michigan



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AMIYATOSH

bank privatisation.

Purnanandam

ONE CANNOT BUT be struck by the appar-

ent irony in recent banking system trends in

India and the United States. Spurred by a lack

of financial inclusion, a public banking move-

ment is rapidly gaining traction in the United States, a bastion of free markets. In contrast,

India, a prime example of state intervention

and government-owned-bank dominance,

seems to be quickly warming to the idea of

public versus private banks is not new.

Dating back to Alexander Gerschenkron in

1962, the development view sees govern-

ment presence in the banking sector as a

means to overcome market failures in the

early stages of economic development. The

core idea is that government-owned banks

can improve welfare by allocating scarce cap-

ital to socially productive uses. By contrast,

the political view argues that vested inter-

ests can commandeer the lending appara-

tus to achieve political goals. Political or spe-

cial interest capture can distort credit

allocation and reduce allocative efficiency in

ment ownership in the banking sector leads

to lower levels of financial development and

growth, waves of banking sector privatisa-

tions swept across emerging markets in the

1990s. The policymaker consensus saw bank

privatisation as an efficient means to achieve

economic and financial development.

Indeed, cross-country evidence suggests that

bank privatisations improved both bank ef-

ficiency and profitability - specifically, in-

creasing solvency and liquidity whilst reduc-

ing troubled or non-performing assets. India

Indian banking, controlling over 60 per cent

of banking assets. The private-credit to GDP

ratio, a key measure of credit flow, stands at

50 per cent, much lower than international

benchmarks — in the US it is 190 per cent, in

the UK 130 per cent, in China 150 and in

South Korea it is 150 per cent. The quality of

credit is problematic as well. India's Gross

NPA ratio was 8.2 per cent in March 2020,

With striking differences across PSBs (10.3

per cent) and private banks (5.5 per cent).

The end result is much lower PSB profitabil-

ity compared to private banks. Clearly, the

rationale for privatisation stems from these

considerations.

Public sector Banks (PSBs) dominate

is, therefore, somewhat late to the game.

Persuaded by the evidence that govern-

government-owned banking systems.

The debate on the benefits and costs of

it. All these assumptions turned out to be inaccurate Biden has far too much on Even as it continuously misjudged the US, his plate to pick on the international friends of Trump. Biden has been in Washington long enough to know that international outreach to Trump was about sustaining the partnerships with the US at a difficult moment.

Law of overreach

Under UAPA, government's powers to ban are sweeping and opaque

INTHE WIDELY-REPORTED bail proceedings in the Disha Ravi case, one of the grounds cited by the prosecution was Ravi's alleged links to Sikhs for Justice (SFJ). SFJ is a pro-Khalistani organisation, banned and designated "terrorist" under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA). In Ravi's case, the court inter alia held that no link had been established between her and SFJ, and granted her bail. But the very invocation of links to a banned organisation as grounds to prosecute or deny bail raises important questions. What does it take to ban an organisation? Once banned, what consequences emerge for the organisation, and for anyone who might be in its orbit?

The UAPA has run riot with banning regimes throughout its 54-year history. Today it provides multiple ways to ban organisations. Worryingly, each regime has come with greater powers for the state and fewer safeguards for individuals, whittling away basic liberties.

Initially in 1967, the Act concerned itself with banning "unlawful" associations alone and had no mention of terrorism. "Unlawful activity" was defined as activities including speeches, writings etc that supported secessionist claims or questioned India's sovereignty. The central government could ban any association as unlawful for two years if, in its opinion, the association encouraged unlawful activity. Once an association was banned, a host of people could be prosecuted — not just members, but anyone who assisted the association in any way. Recognising the high stakes involved, the

Act provided some safeguards. The government's mere opinion of whether an organisation "encouraged" secessionist claims wouldn't be enough. A tribunal consisting of a High Court judge would have to hear the banned association and decide within six months whether to confirm or reject the ban. There were still grave problems with these provisions. If they showed up to defend the association, members could technically be prosecuted, because membership became a crime from the day the association was banned. The underlying definition of unlawful - as including words that "support" secessionist claims or "question" sovereignty – was broad and vague, and potentially represented an unconstitutional incursion into free speech.

But these problems pale in comparison to what followed. In 2004, the Prevention of Terrorism Act was repealed and its provisions were largely inserted verbatim into the UAPA. Now under the UAPA, organisations can be banned as "terrorist" as well. Unlike with "unlawful" associations, there is no judicial oversight. The only condition necessary for a permanent ban is that the central government believes an organisation is "involved in terrorism." Circularly, an organisation can be deemed involved in terrorism if it has committed, promoted or was "otherwise involved in" terrorism. In 2008, the definition of the terrorist act was changed further, taking it far beyond what we usually associate with the term - to take hostages or use bombs or lethal weapons or hazardous substances. It even went beyond bringing under its ambit intention to strike terror or threaten India's security. If someone were to, for instance, commit an act likely to threaten India's ecological security by using non-lethal means of whatever nature, they can be prosecuted for terrorism.

Based on such over-broad and circular definitions, the Centre can permanently ban organisations as terrorist. The organisation's only remedy is to appeal to an opaque and unaccountable Review Committee housed within the very organ of state that banned it. The government need not provide reasons for its ban, and the committee need not ever make its hearings public. Yet a dizzyingly wide range of people become liable for prosecution after the ban, including persons alleged to have helped organise events addressed by persons who may be "associated with", but not even members of, terrorist or-

In 2019, the government extended its powers of banning organisations as terrorist to designate individuals as terrorists as well. The potency of this amendment lies in its complete ambiguity. On one hand, the changes do not create any new punishment for terrorist

individuals, almost as if to indicate that by now, the power to ban exists for the sake of banning alone. On the other hand, they leave open terrifying possibilities. For example, harbouring someone knowing them to be a terrorist is a crime under the UAPA; and the Act also allows the government to forfeit the property of terrorist individuals without prosecuting them. If these sections are interpreted as referring to designated terrorists, then regardless of whether the government's designation is legitimate, all the property of that individual can be seized without their guilt ever being proved in a trial, and anyone living with that individual could be prosecuted.

These multiple overlapping regimes of banning often lead to bizarre results. At least one of the banned organisations, the Students Islamic Movement of India, has been declared both unlawful and a terrorist organisation. The government keeps setting up tribunals to confirm its declaration of the association as unlawful, even though the tribunal judgment has no practical effect, as the organisation is banned as a terrorist organisation anyway. Over the years, the government has thus given itself increasingly wide powers of banning for increasingly unclear reasons. The work of challenging these provisions, which impinge on our fundamental freedoms, must be equally sustained over time.

The author is a lawyer based in Delhi

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

REASSURE DHAKA

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Friends in deed' (IE, March 8). India and Bangladesh observed the anniversary of the defeat of Pakistani forces in the war of 1971 in December last year. Beijing has reached out to Dhaka by offering economic and other partnerships besides allowing it to export goods to China with zero tariffs. If New Delhi fails to resolve the Teesta water-sharing pact and assure Dhaka that there will be no impact of the CAA on Bangladesh, India will lose a trusted and friendly neighbour.

SS Paul, Nadia

CREATIVITY AT STAKE

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Laughing with Shiva' (IE, March 8). The Tandav row and subsequent apology by Amazon India have thrown open the debate on the interpretations of the freedom of expression. The fact that 20th century creations could jest at Lord Shiva and other religious and mythological figures, throws light on the rapidly-growing conservatism in contemporary times. Even the judicial elucidation of Article 19 (1A-B) isn't aloof of societal influence. Every piece of satirical content today passes through a litmus test of "hurt sentiments", hurting the creative profession-

als and their work. Nischai Vats, Sultanpur

Fair enough

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'A black cat in the dark room' (IE, March 8). The people opposing the new regulation of OTT platforms have effectively lost the distinction between censorship and self-clas-

A KERALA MODEL **FOR UNIVERSAL EDUCATION: NAVNEET SHARMA** HER BUSINESS **AS WELL: APARAJITA SARANGI**

IDEAS

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sification, restriction and transparency, and for all means consultation and concurrence. As has been rightly pointed out in the article, various democratic countries are practising the same kind of regulation and the very idea of freedom of expression comes with a caveat - reasonable restriction.

Yash Sinha, Vadodara

SLOW GROWTH

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'A slower recovery' (IE, March 8). When the economy is opening up after an unprecedented lockdown and pandemic, we are bound to see better numbers. But expecting to see 6.5-7 per cent growth in a hurry would not be wise. Especially when we know that it is the government that is doing most of the heavy lifting, as the private sector is yet to show their animal instinct as far as capex investment is concerned.

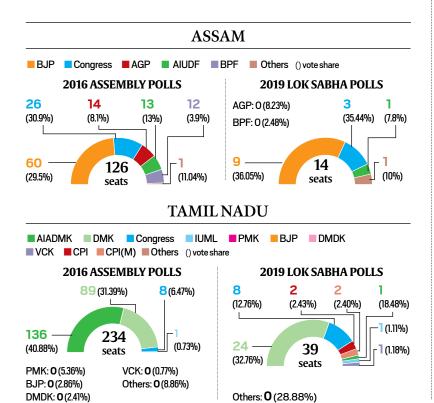
Bal Govind, Noida

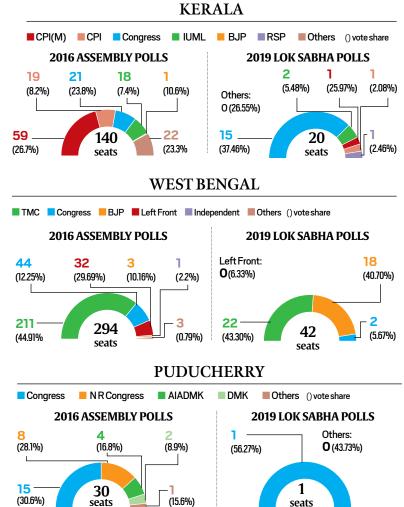


WEST BENGAL • KERALA • TAMIL NADU • ASSAM • PUDUCHERRY

Khela hobe

For the BJP, this is a contest to showcase PM Narendra Modi's "lasting popularity", despite the Covid pandemic, the lockdown misery, the economic slowdown, and the CAA-NRC issue which has the most resonance in Assam and Bengal — two of the four states, and the Union territory of Pondicherry — which vote in the coming elections. Should Mamata Banerjee and Pinarayi Vijayan withstand the heat of the BJP pressure, the Opposition may get a fresh wind





WHAT'S ONLINE

INTERVIEW

BHUPESH BAGHEL, **CONG'S OBSERVER FOR ASSAM**

WHAT'BANGLAR CHELE' **MITHUN CHAKRABORTY BRINGS TO THE BJP**

THE KEY PLAYERS SUBRATA BAKSHI: THE LOYALIST WHO HAS STOOD BY MAMATA

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HASHTAG POLITICS



To mark Women's Day, PM @narendramodi tweeted:

"You have seen me wear the Gamusa very often. It is extremely comfortable. Today, I bought a Gamusa made by various selfhelp groups of Kakatipapung Development Block. #NariShakti." In another tweet he wrote: "I am eagerly awaiting to receive Classic Palm Craft Nilavilakku made by women in Kerala. It is commendable how our #NariShakti has preserved... local crafts..."

@RahulGandhi tweeted on the ocassion too. "Women are capable of creating history and future with formidable grace. Don't let anyone stop you. #InternationalWomensDay," the Congress MP wrote.

KEY PLAYERS INSIDERS ON THE OUTSIDE

A party for Mr Biswa

More firmly ensconced than ever in BJP, Himanta Biswa Sarma is back in the poll race — and back amidst buzz regarding his plans

ABHISHEK SAHA GUWAHATI, MARCH 8

IN A party with few stars beyond the Centre, he holds his own. In a government that he doesn't lead, he is sometimes credited with commanding more power than the Chief Minister. In a region that Delhi only infrequently remembers, he is a name with the most recall

And, Himanta Biswa Sarma is just starting. Having got a ticket from the BJP to contest from his constituency Jalukbari, despite protestations otherwise, the 52-year-old is back in the CM sweepstakes. Can the party that he almost single-handedly hauled to power in 2016 in Assam deny him the prize he has long sought, in case of a win?

Tussle for power is what saw Sarma defect from the Congress in 2015 after 20 years, starting out as a student leader. Mentored by Congress stalwarts Hiteswar Saikia and Tarun Gogoi, he had seen to his dismay Gogoi promoting son Gaurav. Sarma decided to leave after famously kept hanging by Rahul Gandhi in Delhi when he went to discuss state matters — once, according to Sarma, as the then Congress president fed his \log .

Sarma may enjoy the irony that, with Gogoi dead, Gaurav, 38, is now fighting for control among several Congress CM hopefuls in Assam. (Incidentally, Sarma had made it a point to supervise Gogoi senior's treatment when hospitalised following Covid.) The Congress itself is banking on a Mahajot (grand alliance), with the AIUDF, three Left parties, a new regional front called the Anchalik Gana Morcha and the Bodoland People's Front.

Sarma, meanwhile, has come a long distance. The man who in the run-up to the 2014 Lok Sabha elections attacked the BJP's prime minister candidate Narendra Modi over the 2002 riots, saying that in Gujarat



Sarma with Home Minister Amit Shah and CM Sarbananda Sonowal at a rally at Batadrava in Nagaon last month. PTI

"blood of Muslims" flows through pipes, is now among the most vicious in attacking 'Miya" (or Bengali-origin) Muslims of Assam, the most vulnerable to the citizenship determination process in Assam.

Sarma has called AIUDF leader and MP Badruddin Ajmal "enemy" of Assam, said the BJP does not need votes of the Bengali-origin Muslims and accused the community of 'openly challenging Assamese culture and composite Indian culture". Last month, he said he would be very happy if described as

the "extreme" of polarisation politics. As the Finance, Health, Education and Public Works Minister of Assam, plus the convenor of the BJP-led NEDA (North East Democratic Alliance), Sarma is the face of the BIP's Assam campaign along with CM Sarbananda Sonowal. His name is associated with some of the biggest development schemes in Assam, and at the height of the Covid pandemic, he frequently made news for personally overseeing hospitals and quarantine centres and often landing up for surprise checks late into night. Sarma had also courted controversy by releasing names of Assam residents linked to the Tablighi Jamaat event in Delhi that had

emerged as a superspreader, but had

brushed it off as being "in public interest". There have been allegations of corruption, particularly in the Saradha and Louis Berger scams, but not enough to slow

Sarma's rise. Earlier, before to the 2019 general election, there had been speculation that Sarma would contest, but he did not get a ticket. Underlining his significance though, then BJP president Amit Shah had in an unprecedented move released a statement explaining that they needed Sarma in the Northeast to help the party grow.

CHENNAI, MARCH 8 Ahead of current elections, talk has again started on whether Sarma would be CM or be accommodated in Delhi. Sarma said multiple times that he would not con-

list of 70 candidates. On Monday, the BJP said it won't announce a CM candidate, unlike 2016, when Sonowal's name had been declared. "When there is no government, then the CM name is projected. When we are in government, then we do not project any name," BJP state chief Ranieet Kumar Dass told PTI.

test, but he was present on the dais in Delhi

as the BJP announced his name in its first

Sarma told reporters, "It is the prerogative of the parliamentary board to announce for an announcement from Delhi." Asked why he is contesting after earlier stating he would not, Sarma said it's because the party asked him to.

It's not like Sarma to play shy. An author of four books (including one released in February), he routinely uploads photos with family and of his college days. The doting father was unsparing recently when a photograph of him with his daughter was misinterpreted on social media.

Sarma's wife Riniki, with whom he has two children – 19 and 17 – is a media entrepreneur and the owner of prominent news channel News Live.

There is another quality that makes Sarma different from the usual politician. In a party not known to appreciate humour, particularly at its leaders' expense, the 52vear-old dubbed 'mama' on social media encourages the many viral memes and jingles featuring him — sharing the more viral ones himself.

Asked about the memes recently, Sarma said, "If someone loves being creative and making memes... I have a lot of respect for the young generation... I am ready, let them make more memes on me.

Worry for ADMK as TTV allies with Owaisi, declares dharma yudham

ARUN JANARDHANAN

MAKING HIS intentions to stay in the race clear despite aunt V K Sasikala's sudden decision to pull out. TTV Dhinakaran announced Monday that he now also had an ally: Asaduddin Owaisi's AIMIM.

The Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam will be contesting in as many seats as possible to "establish Amma rule", Dhinakaran said. Comparing his camp to the Pandavas, he said the battle would be the real "dharma vudham" - the exact words used incidentally by Deputy Chief Minister O Panneerselvam in early 2017 when he had declared a revolt against Sasikala, the then AIADMK general secretary.

With the Tamil Nadu contest delicately poised, Dhinakaran's decision is set to give the AIADMK sleepless nights. In the 2019 Lok Sabha votes, the AMMK had got 5% of the votes. While this had not translated into any seat. Dhinakaran is believed to lopped 15% votes off the AIADMK's share. The DMK-led alliance had swept the state, winning 38 of

Before that, Dhinakaran had won the R K Nagar Assembly constituency, earlier represented by Jayalalithaa, as an Independent, defeating both the ruling AIADMK and DMK.

Many AIADMK leaders with sympathies for the Sasikala-Dhinakaran camp are dismayed at his decision. "A majority of the people who will vote for the AMMK will be AIADMK supporters, especially in north Chennai and Delta and Southern Tamil Nadu regions. The Sasikala camp continues to have support, especially among the Thevars. Many people also have sympathies for Sasikala and Dhinakaran because of her four-year prison term, and think Sasikala withdrew from politics under threat. Even if a section of them votes for the AMMK, it will hurt the AIADMK," said a senior AIADMK leader.

Another senior AIADMK leader pointed to Sasikala's announcement withdrawing from politics in which she appealed to cadres to unite to defeat the DMK but didn't ask for votes for either the AIADMK or AMMK. Sasikala had thus ensured that if the DMK won, no blame would come to her, the leader argued.

Belonging to the Delta region, the leader added that even if Sasikala speaks against the AMMK, it won't impact the party as it has been founded and sustained by Dhinakaran.

As for Owaisi, Dhinakaran had few options for allies, with almost all other Tamil Nadu parties taken. In the 2016 Assembly polls, Ôwaisi's party had contested from the Vaniyambadi seat and got 10,000 votes. It will be fighting this constituency, apart from Krishnagiri and Sankarapuram that also have a significant Muslim population, this time in alliance with the AMMK. While it might end up making some impact only in Vaniyambadi, the AIMIM could hurt the DMK by splitting the Muslim vote.

AIADMK spokesperson Covai Sathyan said the AMMK was little but the B-team of the DMK, and the alliance with the AIMIM only confirmed that. He said the DMK wished to have a tie-up with the AIMIM but had backtracked fearing they would lose the majority vote bank.

The pied piper

Mamata may denounce them as 'rats', but Trinamool is hurting as former No. 2 Mukul Roy woos over her leaders to BJP, helps build the party

SANTANU CHOWDHURY KOLKATA, MARCH 8

THE FORMER No. 2 of Mamata Banerjee, 66year-old Mukul Roy is among the chief architects of the BJP's slow and steady build-up in West Bengal. This includes chipping away at the Trinamool's edifice, by helping the BJP wean away leaders from the party.

The party's national vice-president, Roy is now part of every frame in the BJP's Bengal campaign. If there is resentment over not being counted as among the chief ministerial hopefuls, Roy hasn't shown it, as he asserts the BJP's target: "Iss bar 200 paar (This time, more than 200 seats)." The West Bengal Assembly has 294 MLAs.

Roy started his political career as a Youth

Congress leader, around the same time as Mamata Banerjee was part of the outfit. He was among the founding members of the All India Trinamool Congress when Mamata floated it in January 1998 after splitting from the Congress. Soon Roy emerged as the party's face in Delhi, and in 2006, was made its general secretary and earned a berth in the Rajya Sabha. In the UPA II government, he served initially as Minister of State, Shipping, before becoming Railways Minister – a portfolio Mamata held till she moved to Bengal as the CM.

Roy's tenure though was brief, as in September 2012, the Trinamool exited the UPA coalition over its clearance to 51% FDI in retail and aviation sector.

Roy and Mamata finally fell out in 2015 after his name came up in the Saradha scam



Mukul Roy, state party chief Dilip Ghosh welcome Trinamool leaders Sonali Guha (right), and actress Tanusree Chakraborty to the BJP in Kolkata on Monday. PTI

as well as the Narada sting operation allegedly involving Trinamool leaders.

In September 2017, Roy was suspended from the Trinamool for six years. He formally joined the BJP in November.

The man dubbed "Chanakya" of Bengal politics has since been working on the ground helping the BJP build base in the state, and is credited with the party winning 18 seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. Among the leaders believed to have been brought to the BJP by Roy are his son and MLA Subrangsu Roy, apart from Trinamool legislators Sovan Chatterjee and Sabyasachi Dutta, and Sunil

WHO'S WHERE TODAY

WEST BENGAL CM MAMATA BANERJEE IN NANDIGRAM; KERALA CHIEF MINISTER PINARAYI VIJAYAN IN DHARMADOM IN KANNUR

Singh, Biswajit Das, Wilson Champamary, and Mihir Goswami. He also played a key role in the BJP's success in wooing over Trinamool stars such as Suvendu Adhikari, Rajib Banerjee and Jitendra Tiwari

On Monday, five more sitting Trinamool MLAs - Sonali Gula, considered close to Mamata; Rabindranath Bhattacharya, a prominent face of the Singur land agitation; Jatu Lahiri; Sital Sardar; and Dipendu Biswas switched to the BJP. Guha said she was moving to the BIP on the request of "Mukul da".

In her latest swipe at "gaddar" Roy and other deserters, Mamata said after the Enforcement Directorate questioning of her nephew Abhishek Banerjee's wife, "The tiger cub is not scared of cats or rats."

13 GOVT & POLITICS

DECISION

2021

Budget session second leg off to stormy start



Opposition leaders stage a protest over rise in fuel prices in Raiva Sabha on Monday. RSTV/PTI

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

THE SECOND leg of the Budget session of Parliament began on a stormy note Monday with both Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha witnessing sloganeering and protests by Opposition parties demanding an immediate discussion on the rise in fuel and cooking gas prices.

Amid the disruption, it was announced that both Houses will revert to the usual timing from Tuesday and commence their sitting from 11 am.

In both Houses, Opposition members had given notices demanding suspension of all business to take up a discussion on the increase in prices of petrol, diesel and LPG. With the presiding officers not accepting the notices, Opposition members staged protests, leading to multiple adjournments. In Rajya Sabha, the notice was given by Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge. The House could not transact any business because of the protests.

"I have gone through the notice and I have come to the conclusion that this issue can be discussed during the course of the discussion on the Appropriation

IRAM SIDDIQUE

BHOPAL, MARCH 8

THE FREEDOM to Religion Bill,

2021 was passed in Madhya

Pradesh Assembly with voice vote

on Monday amid opposition from

the Congress and slogans of 'Iai Shri Ram' raised by some mem-

The Bill was brought to replace

the Freedom to Religion

Ordinance that was cleared in a

special cabinet meeting and came

Bill was passed, Home Minister

Narottam Mishra said, "Any love

that heads towards jihad, we will

oppose it. Any love that offends

our sentiments, we will oppose it.

Any love that will make our

daughters and sisters suffer, we

will oppose it." He said the way

Congress opposed the legislation

on the International Women's

Day "makes my heart sad" and ac-

cused the Opposition party of

playing politics of appeasement

Assembly, Lahar MLA and

Congress leader Dr Govind Singh

Earlier, opposing the Bill in

and spreading misinformation.

Speaking to reporters after the

bers of treasury benches.

into effect on Ianuary 9.

Will oppose love that

minister after MP nod

to anti-conversion law

leads to jihad, says

Bill. ... Also, we have enough opportunities to discuss it during the Budget part of the Session," Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu said, rejecting the notice. In Lok Sabha, Speaker Om Birla said, "The issue is important, Members can speak on the subject during the discussion on the finance Bill."

Arguing that the issue was important and people are agitating, Kharge said, "Petrol prices are nearing Rs 100 per litre and the diesel prices are more than Rs 80 per litre. Prices of LPG have also increased. Prices of all the petroleum products have gone up and there is a rise of nearly 820 per cent excise duty on diesel and around 258 per cent excise duty on petrol after 2014...Rs 21 lakh crores have been collected by putting excess excise duty, cess and all these things...because of this, the entire country is suffering."

With Opposition members rushing to the Well, Naidu adjourned the House to 11 am, saying, "This is not the way. I don't want to take any drastic action on the first day." Similar scenes were witnessed when the House reassembled, leading to multiple adjournments before it was adjourned for the day. The Lok Sabha too saw multiple adjournments over the same issue.

EPS promises Rs 1,500 monthly allowance for housewives

ARUNJANARDHANAN

CHIEF MINISTER Edappadi K Palaniswami promised that the AIADMK will give a monthly allowance of Rs 1,500 to all housewives and six free gas cylinders annually to each family if it was returned to power after upcoming

Assembly elections. statement The comes a day after DMK chief M K Stalin announced a monthly allowance of Rs 1,000 for housewives if his party

was voted to power.

Extending his greetings on the occasion of International Women's Day, Palaniswami said the announcement was a gift for the women of

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

WEST BENGAL Chief Minister and

Trinamool Congress chief

Mamata Banerjee on Monday hit

out at Prime Minister Narendra

put his photographs on Covid-19

vaccination certificates. He has

turned the Covid vaccine to Modi

vaccine. A day will come when the

country will be named after him,"

Banerjee said after leading a

women's day rally from College

Modi, saying

the day was

not far when

the country

named after

Minister has

named a sta-

dium after

himself.He has

"The Prime

would

KOLKATA, MARCH 8

DECISION

2021



Edappadi K Palaniswami

Asked whether his party was following the DMK's idea. Palaniswami said the decision was a part of their party's manifesto, discussions regarding which have been taking place over the past 10 days. "The DMK might have made their announcement in advance

after they got leaks regarding AIADMK's manifesto. It is natural to have similar ideas," the Chief

Day not far when country will

be named after Modi: Mamata

Square to the Dorina crossing in

Esplanade. Actors such as Saayoni

Ghosh, Sayantika Banerjee, and

June Malia participated in the

"Didir Sathe Amra (We are with

Tearing into Modi for question-

ing women's safety in Bengal — the

Prime Minister made such re-

marks at his Brigade Parade

Ground rally in Kolkata on Sunday

- Banerjee said, "See what you

[BJP] did in UP, Madhya Pradesh

and Gujarat. Media reports say that

Didi)" march.

Mamata Banerjee at a women's rally in Kolkata. Partha Paul

Following DMK's announcement on Sunday, Makkal Needhi Maiam leader Kamal Haasan had alleged that Stalin's party was stealing ideas from his party as it was Haasan who had first made the promise of a monthly allowance for housewives.

While it is raining sops in Tamil Nadu, it is interesting that as per portions of manifestos released by DMK and AIADMK, both parties have been looking to roll out schemes for women, and education and health sectors.

However, there are also questions about the lack of clarity on how the state government could source funds to cater to these heavy-budget schemes.

Top sources within the CPI(M) and Congress in Kerala, which is also going to the polls this month, said they, too, are coming up with similar schemes in the coming days.

DMK allocates 6 seats to CPM

Chennai: The DMK on Monday inked its seatsharing deal with the CPI(M) after much deliberations, allotting it six seats. It also allotted one seat each to Tamizhaga Vazhvurimai Katchi Aathi Tamizhar Peravai and Makkal Viduthalai Katchi. These local parties will contest on the DMK's 'Rising Sun' symbol. Vaiko's MDMK had earlier agreed to contest all its six seats on the DMK symbol. The DMK has apportioned 25 seats to the



A P Abdullakutty is BJP's

Abdullakutty is BJP candidate for Malappuram LS bypoll

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,

THE BJP Monday named its national vice-president A P Abdullakutty as the party's candidate for the Malappuram Lok Sabha bypoll scheduled to be held on April 6.

 $after\,sitting\,MPP\,K\,Kunhalikutty$ of the Indian Union Muslim League resigned from the Lok Sabha to contest the upcoming Assembly elections in the state. This is the first time

Abdullakutty will be in the electoral fray for the BIP since his entry into the party in 2019. He was promoted as the national vice-president of the party in September, 2020 and is seen as its most promi nent Muslim face in Kerala.

Abdullakutty, who hails from Kannur was a two-time CPM MP representing the Kannur Lok Sabha constituency between 1999 and 2009. He was also the state president of the SFI, the student wing of the CPM. However, he was expelled from the CPM in 2009 after he publicly praised then Gujarat CM Narendra Modi.



national vice-president

VISHNU VARMA MARCH 8

The constituency fell vacant

In Kerala, local protests over 'exclusion' of some by CPM

SHAJU PHILIP THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MARCH 8

IN AN unusual development, hundreds of CPI(M) workers and sympathisers took to the streets in protest against probable candidates named by the party for the April 6 Assembly polls.

At Ponnani in Malappuram district, scores of men and **U**M women raised slogans demanding that local CPI(M) leader T M **DECISION** Siddique be made the 2021 party candidate. The CPI(M) has named CITU all-India secretary P Nanda Kumar in the list

of probables for the constituency, currently represented by Speaker P Sreeramakrishnan. Sreeramakrishnan is not contesting, having completed two

consecutive terms as a legislator, a norm introduced by CPI(M) in Women held banners stating

that the "party would correct the leaders, people would correct the Siddique is a prominent leader

in Ponnani, where the CPI(M) has a strong base among the Muslim community. After reports that Siddique did not figure in the list of probable candidates, the local community had protested. CPI(M)'s Malappuram district

secretary E N Mohandas said. "When the party announces the candidate, this protest would fizzle out. Today's march should be seen only as an emotional reaction of people..

At Kuttiyadi, in Kozhikode district, party cadres protested against the seat being given to Kerala Congress (M), a new entrant in the LDF. Kuttiyadi is a CPI(M) stronghold and the party has been contesting all elections there. Local CPI(M) cadres and leaders want former Kozhikode district panchayat president KP



P Jayarajan: Name missing

Kunhahammed Master as the candidate.

Meanwhile, a section of CPI(M) cadres are irked over exclusion of senior party leader P Jayarajan from the probable list of candidates in his home district -Kannur, Jayarajan, a key figure in the CPI(M)'s

battle against the BJP and Sangh Parivar outfits in a district which has seen several political killings over the years, has been projected as a victim of what his party calls "Sangh Parivar-backed violence" in Kannur. He survived a brutal attack, allegedly by BJP workers, in 1999 and is also an alleged accused in two political murders.

A former CPI(M) Kannur district secretary, Jayarajan had unsuccessfully contested the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. Other CPI(M) leaders who lost the 2019 polls are scheduled to contest the Assembly elections. Jayarajan's supporters have been increasingly protesting on social media against the decision to drop his name.

Sources in the party said the leadership fears the issue of political violence will be brought to focus, putting LDF on the defensive, if Jayarajan contested the elections. In 2019 Lok Sabha polls, when Jayarajan contested from Vatakara, rivals had raised the issue of political violence involving the party, they pointed out.

Jayarajan, meanwhile, posted on Facebook, "It is up to the party to decide what responsibility should be given to me. Party workers and sympathizers should keep away from protest..."

Pinarayi's counter to Shah: Who has faced cases of grave crime?

SHAJU PHILIP THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,

A DAY after Union Home Minister Amit Shah threw guestions at him, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Monday made a scathing counterattack, calling Shah the "embodiment of communalism", who is "ready to do anything to nurture communalism".

Referring to Shah's allegation that a witness in the gold smuggling scandal had died under mysterious circumstances, Vijayan, kicking off the election campaigning in his constituency Dharmadam, in Kannur, said the state government is ready to investigate if it gets the details. "But I want to tell you, I was not lodged in jail for abduction. Who has faced (cases under) grave crimes of murder, abduction etc.... You have faced such cases. They were not false cases, as the ones you are trying to (foist on the state) now. Don't try to create smokescreen



Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan

Recalling the encounter killing of Sohrabuddin Shaikh, Vijayan said, "Don't you remember the fake encounter killing? Who was chargedsheeted on charges of conspiracy behind those killings? The person named in the chargesheet was Amit Shah... Such a person has

about the death of a witness."

Vijayan said mystery still remains over the death of Judge Lova, who was presiding over the CBI court in the Sohrabuddin encounter case. "No BJP leader has spoken about it." Vijayan also said, "Don't you

come to Kerala to teach us about

the sense of justice."

know the person who has created 'achhe din' by increasing his wealth 16,000 times over a year? That is not Pinaravi Viiavan. Your culture is different from ours—do not try to measure others with that...'

SCBA plea challenges SOP for hybrid hearings

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

THE SUPREME Court Bar Association (SCBA) Monday moved the Supreme Court challenging the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) issued by the court for hybrid hearings starting March 15.

The SCBA said the SOP had been framed without consulting the Bar which is an equal stakeholder in the justice delivery sys-

The hybrid mechanism will enable the counsel to appear either via virtual mode or be physically present in court — mooted as a step before complete nor-

malcy is restored. The SCBA plea said that the SOP does not have a provision for hybrid hearing on Monday and Friday when miscellaneous (fresh) matters are taken up. It also does not have any provision to facilitate oral mentioning for

urgent matters, it said. The SOP was issued on March 5.



Narottam Mishra

said, "Does this Bill not violate Article 21 of the Constitution that guarantees personal freedom and liberty and Article 25 that guarantees a person the freedom of choosing their religion of his own will?"

Citing the number of cases registered under the ordinance, Congress MLA from Jabalbur Vinay Saxena said, "It will make up about 200 cases a year, but there are about 10.000 cases of crime against women. Why is the government not serious about it?"

Heena Kavera, Congress MLA from Balaghat, questioned if there is data that supports the need to bring the Bill.

BJP MLA from Hoshangabad, Sitaram Sharma, suggested changes to the law to allow "social institutions" to register a complaint.



DISQUIET IN THE HILLS **Uttarakhand Chief Minister**

there have been two murders and

four rapes on an average daily in

Gujarat in the last two

years...Ahmedabad and Modi's

favourite UP are at the top of the list

of incidents of rape in the country.'

Bengal, women are safe even at

midnight... But in those states,

women are not safe even at 3

BJP government at the Centre for

Banerjee also slammed the

pm.... Our women work here."

rising fuel prices.

The Chief Minister said, "In

meeting BJP president [] Nadda at the latter's residence in New Delhi on Monday, A section of state leaders are reportedly miffed with Rawat's leadership and are of the view that the party's electoral prospects under him may not be very bright.

Minority panel vacancies should be filled expeditiously, Delhi HC tells Centre

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

THE DELHI High Court on Monday said the vacancies of members in the National Commission for Minorities ought to be filled expeditiously and directed the Centre to submit a timeline regarding the appointments within one week. It also pulled up the Centre for filing an "unsatisfactory" reply in response to an order passed by it last

The court passed the order while hearing a petition seeking the filling up of the vacancies at the Commission. The petition stated that six out of seven posts in the Commission, including the position of Chairperson, are vacant at present. The Commission has representation from only the Muslim community now. On February 15, the court had

sought a status of the appointments from the Ministry of Minority Affairs. Describing the ministry's reply as "unsatisfactory", Justice

Prathiba M Singh said, "How can you say this? There has to be... some steps given like these are steps we have taken and this is where it is. In effect it is saying that the provision does not tell us to do it in any timeline"

The court also said the petitioner is absolutely right in saying that the purpose of the Commission is to ensure representation of all minorities. "The mere fact that the persons of eminence, ability and integrity have to be appointed, would not mean that the said appointments would not be expeditiously filled/made," the order said.

Additional Solicitor General Chetan Sharma earlier submitted

before the court that the vacancies have arisen during the pandemic but the Commission is functioning efficiently. The ministry in its reply also said that out of 1,279 cases listed before the Commission, 815 have been disposed of.

The petition filed last month by Abhay Ratan Bauddh, who belongs to the Buddhist community, has contended that the government is deliberately not filling the vacant posts and thus violating the provisions of the law. The Commission is currently functioning only with its Vice-Chairperson.

Complete misreporting of rape hearing last week: CJI "You asked a question in a difwithout the leave of the Court, to

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

Apparently upset over the controversy over his remarks during the hearing of the anticipatory bail plea of a rape accused last week, Chief Iustice of India S A Bobde Monday said there was "complete misreporting" of what he actually said and that the court "has given highest respect to womanhood".

The remarks come in the wake of recent criticism against the Supreme Court during a March 1 hearing, in which it had purportedly asked a rape accused who had complained against him. Both the accused and the complainant girl in the case were minors when the alleged crime was

After that hearing, CPI(M) politburo member Brinda Karat had written to the CII, asking him to withdraw his remarks. Several women's rights activists, eminent citizens, intellectuals, writers and artistes had also penned an open letter to the CJI, demanding an apology and retraction of the re-

On Monday, the CJI sought to clarify that his query "will you



CII Bobde: We never gave a suggestion that you should marry. We had asked, are you going to marry?

marry her" to the accused in the March 1 hearing was in the context of that particular case. The pewas accused by the girl of reneging on his promise to marry her. ...we never gave a suggestion

that you should marry. We had asked, are you going to marry?" the CJI said while hearing another case of a 14-year-old rape survivor seeking the court's permission to abort her 26-week pregnancy.

Advocate V K Biju, appearing for the 14-year-old, was thanking the Court for being considerate to his client when the CJI recalled last week's developments.

"Good to hear this. We have heard the opposite in the last two weeks", the CJI told the counsel.

ferent context. You were quoted out of context". Solicitor General Tushar Mehta weighed in.

The CJI then referred the SG's attention to section 165 of the Evidence Act which says that "a Judge may, in order to discover or to obtain proper proof of relevant facts, ask any question he pleases, in any form, at any time, of any witness, or of the parties, about any fact relevant or irrelevant; and may order the production of any document or thing; and neither the parties nor their agents shall be entitled to make any objection

to any such question or order, nor,

cross-examine any witness upon any answer given in reply to any such question." The SG responded that the CJI

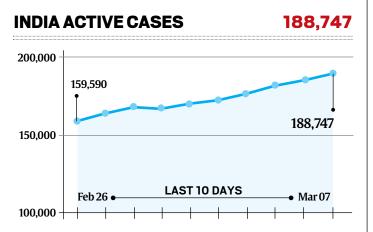
was "completely in sync with the mandate of Section 165 of the "The fact of the matter is an in-

stitution and this bench we have had the highest respect of womanhood", added the CJI. Advocate Biju suggested that

there should be some mechanism to deal with such issues but the CJI did not seem to agree and said "our reputation is always at the hands of the Bar".

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

CORONAVIRUS DASHBOARD



Note: The March 7 figure in this graph is based on the government update on March $8\,$

INDIA TOTAL CASES 11,229,398

11,229,398
Source: Ministry of Health & Family
Welfare, updated at 11 pm on March 8

WORLD TOTAL CASES
116,942,682
Source: Johns Hopkins University,
updated at 11 pm on Mar 8

Tocilizumab reduces death risk in severely ill Covid patients, trial in India finds

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICEMUMBAI, NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

A PHASE 3 trial in India has found tocilizumab improves outcomes in severely ill Covid-19 patients, reviving the debate over the anti-inflammatory drug that is used primarily to treat rheumatoid arthritis. The study, conducted by researchers from Medanta Institute of Education and Research and the University of Bristol, has been published in The Lancet Respiratory Medicine. While suggesting that tocilizumab may help se-

verely ill patients, the authors also noted that the study does not support the routine use of tocilizumab in adults with Covid-19.

The debate

On the one hand, the study adds to existing evidence about the drug's utility in treatment of Covid-19. For instance, in January 7 researchers published on a pre-print server the results of a REMAP-CAP trial, which assessed 803 Covid-19 patients in ICU (353 given tocilizumab and 402 given standard treatment). While 64.2% ICU patients survived in the control arm, 72% sur vived when administered tocilizumab.

On the other hand, some studies have found tocilizumab less effective against Covid-19. The most crucial one came from tocilizumab manufacturer Roche in July 2020: it published phase 3 trial results that found tocilizumab did not meet the primary endpoint of clinical improvement or the secondary endpoint of reduction in mortality. And in October, The New England Journal of Medicine published a study on 243 patients that found tocilizumab was not effective in preventing death in moderately ill, hospitalised Covid-19 patients.

COVINTOC findings

Called COVINTOC (Covid India Tocilizumab), the phase 3 trial reported in The Lancet was conducted in 12 public and private hospitals across India. Of 180 adult patients, 89 patients received standard care, and 91 received standard care plus tocilizumab. Patients were followed up over a 28-day period.

Analysis of the data revealed a subset of patients with severe disease in whom tocilizumab might have a reduced risk for progression to death if treated with tocilizumab in addi-

tion to standard care, the University of Bristol said in a media release.

LimitationsClinical parameters or

Cipla

biomarkers to reliably identify patients who might benefit from tocilizumab, and the optimal timing of treatment during Covid-19 progression, remain unknown, the University noted. The authors conclude that while the study does not support the routine use of tocilizumab in adults with Covid-19, it adds to the growing evidence suggesting it may help some severely ill patients.

"Our study suggests tocilizumab might still He be effective in patients with severe Covid-19

and so should be investigated further in future studies. It adds to existing evidence from the RECOVERY and REMAP-CAP studies which demonstrate that tocilizumab does have a significant impact on reducing mortality in those with Covid-19 requiring oxygen or being ventilated," the release quoted the trial's lead co-author, Professor A V Ramanan from the University of Bristol's Medical School, as saving

as saying.
The study was funded by
Medanta Institute of Education and
Research, Roche India, Cipla India, and
Action COVID-19 India.

SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

Revisiting the quota template

The Supreme Court will examine whether it needs to revisit its landmark 1992 decision on reservations in the Indra Sawhney ruling. What was the landmark ruling, and what has given it a new context?

APURVA VISHWANATH

NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

THE SUPREME Court, while examining the constitutional validity of the Maratha reservation, said on Monday that it will look into whether the landmark 1992 decision in *Indra Sawhney v Union of India* needs to be revisited. The potential reconsideration of the 11-judge ruling, popularly referred to as the Mandal case, could alter the structure of reservations that has been in place for decades.

Why is the Supreme Court considering revisiting the Mandal case?

A Constitution Bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan is currently hearing the challenge to the Maharashtra law providing quotas for Marathas in jobs and admissions in the state. While the Bombay High Court had upheld the constitutional validity of the quota, it said the quota should be reduced from 16% to 12-13%, as recommended by the State Backward Classes Commission. The ruling was challenged before a Supreme Court Bench, which referred it to a larger Constitution Bench.

What is under challenge in the Maratha quota?

There are two main constitutional questions for the court to consider in the challenge to the Martha quota law. First, is whether states can declare a particular caste to be a socially and educationally backward class. The second is whether states can breach the 50% ceiling for "vertical quotas" set by the Supreme Court.

What is the Indra Sawhney case that the Bench has referred to?

In 1979, the Second Backward Classes Commission (Mandal Commission) was set up to determine the criteria for defining the socially and educationally backward classes. The Mandal report identified 52% of the population at that time as "Socially and Economically Backward Classes" (SEBCs) and recommended 27% reservation for SEBCs in addition to the previously existing 22.5% reservation for SC/SIS.

In 1990, when the VP Singh led-government set out to implement the Mandal report, it was challenged in court amidst widespread protests against the move. The case came up before a nine-judge Bench and a 6:3 verdict was delivered in 1992.



A protest in Mumbai last October demanding speedy implementation of the Maratha quota. The Supreme Court's reference to the Indra Sawhney came during a hearing on the Maratha quota llaw. *Prashant Nadkar*

What did the verdict say?

The court upheld the office memorandums that essentially implemented the Mandal report. The majority opinion, penned by justice Jeevan Reddy, said the executive orders mandating 27% reservation for backward castes were valid and that the reservation was made not just on the basis of caste, even if it appears so, but on the basis of objective evaluation of social and educational backwardness of classes, which is the criteria previously laid down by the court.

'To conclude, though prima facie the list of Backward Classes which is under attack before us may be considered to be on the basis of caste, a closer examination will clearly show that it is only a description of the group following the particular occupations or professions, exhaustively referred to by the Commission. Even on the assumption that the list is based exclusively on caste, it is clear from the materials before the Commission and the reasons given by it in its report that the entire caste is socially and educationally backward and therefore their inclusion in the list of Backward Classes is warranted by Article 15(4). The groups mentioned therein have been included in the list of Backward classes as they satisfy the various tests, which have been laid down by this Court for ascertaining the social and educational backwardness of a class," the court said.

The landmark *Indra Sawhney* ruling set two important precedents. First, it said that the criteria for a group to qualify for reservation is "social and educational backwardness". Additionally, the court also reiterated the 50% limit to vertical quotas it had set out in earlier judgements in 1963 (*M R Balaji v State of Mysore*) and in 1964 (*Devadasan v Union of India*), reasoning that it was needed to ensure "efficiency" in administration. The court said this 50% limit will apply — unless in "exceptional circumstances".

While the social and educational backwardness criteria stemmed from interpretation of various constitutional provisions, the 50% limit is often criticised as being an arbitrary limit.

How does the Maratha reservation relate to the Indra Sawhney case?

Based on the 102nd Amendment to the Constitution, which gives the President powers to notify backward classes, the court will have to look into whether states have similar powers. Also, since this power flows from the Constitution, whether the President is still

required to comply with the criteria set by the Supreme Court in the Mandal case.

The relevance of the *Indra Sawhney* criteria is also under question in another case in which the validity of the 103rd Amendment has been challenged. The 103rd Amendment, passed in 2019, provides for 10% reservation in government jobs and educational institutions for the economically weaker section in the unreserved category.

Similar to the Maratha issue are the cases of Patels in Gujarat, Jats in Haryana, and Kapus in Andhra Pradesh.

Additionally, with the implementation of the Maharashtra law, the vertical quota in the state could go up to 68% which was earlier 52% before the passing of the law. This aspect will also come under question. Since the Indra Sawhney verdict gives a pass to breach of the 50% quota rule only in exceptional circumstances, the court will have to test if the Maharashtra law qualifies to be an exception.

Have any other states breached the 50% ceiling before?

States have breached the 50% ceiling before and intend to bring more reservation.

A notable example is Tamil Nadu. The Tamil Nadu Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions and of Appointments or Posts in the Services under the State) Act, 1993, reserves 69% of the seats in colleges and jobs in the state government. However, this was done by amending the Constitution, to place the law in the Ninth Schedule after the *Indra Sawhney* judgment.

The Ninth Schedule provides the law with a "safe harbour" from judicial review under Article 31A of the Constitution. Laws placed in the Ninth Schedule cannot be challenged for reasons of violating any fundamental right protected under the Constitution. However, when the Tamil Nadu law was challenged in 2007 (*IR Coelho v State of Tamil Nadu*), the Supreme Court ruled in a unanimous 9-judge verdict that while laws placed under Ninth Schedule cannot be challenged on the grounds of violation of fundamental rights, they can be challenged on the ground that it violates the basic structure of the Constitution.

A later Bench was to decide whether the Tamil Nadu law itself (breaching the 50% ceiling) violates basic structure, based on the IR Coelho verdict. The Bench has not yet been set up.

Brent over \$70/barrel: will it hit prices in India?

KARUNJITSINGH

NEW DELHI, MARCH

SECURITY CONCERNS around Saudi Arabia's oil fields have pushed the price of Brent crude above the \$70-per-barrel mark, the first time since the pandemic broke.

Why are crude oil prices spiking?

Saudi Arabia, one of the largest producers of crude oil, announced on Sunday that Ras Tanura, the world's largest crude oil exporting facility, was attacked by a drone from the sea with a missile landing close to a residential complex near the storage facility. The attack by Houthi rebels did not impact oil supplies, with Saudi Arabia reporting no damage to property. However, the price of Brent crude, which has already been rising since October, increased further to \$70.7 per barrel amid concerns about the security of

the country's crude oil supplies.

How does this impact India?If prices persist at over \$70 per barrel,

In prices persist at over 370 per barrer, Indian consumers — who are already facing record prices for petrol and diesel — will likely have to face another round of price hikes. The retail selling price of petrol and diesel in India is determined based on the international prices of the fuels as well as state and central taxes.

Oil marketing companies have hiked the prices of petrol and diesel by about Rs 10 per litre and Rs 11 per litre respectively since the beginning of November, with the price of petrol crossing the Rs-100-per-litre mark in some parts of India as a result of crude oil prices rising from about \$40 per barrel to about \$66 per barrel at the end of February.

While oil marketing companies (OMCs) have kept prices unchanged for nine days — the longest such period in a year that has



Petrol price has risen by Rs 10 per litre since early November. Express Archive

seen 26 price hikes in just over three months

— OMCs will likely have to hike prices once
again if crude oil prices remain elevated.

How do prices in India compare with those in other countries?

facing the impact of crude oil prices recovering to pre-Covid levels, Indian consumers are also bearing the brunt of elevated taxes leading to record high prices.

The Centre had in 2020 increased taxes

vyniie consumers around the worid are

on petrol by Rs 13 per litre and on diesel by Rs 16 per litre to boost revenues during the Covid-19 related lockdown. Several states also increased sales taxes during the period, pushing prices up further.

While some states including Rajasthan,

West Bengal, Meghalaya and Assam have cut state taxes to reduce the burden of rising prices on consumers, the Centre has not yet indicated that it will cut excise duties on the two fuels. Central and state taxes currently account for around 162% of the base price of petrol and 125% of the base price of diesel in the national capital.

In recent controversies, IIMs and the question of autonomy

RITIKA CHOPRA NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

THE INDIAN Institutes of Management (IIMs), for decades the brightest jewel in the country's higher education set-up, are going through a phase of turmoil.

Last week, the Board of Governors of one of the older IIMs (Calcutta) stripped its Director of important powers, and The Indian Express reported that the Director of another old IIM (Ahmedabad) had pushed back against the government last year, refusing to comply with a request to submit for scrutiny a PhD thesis that a BJP MP had taken offence to.

Although very different from each other, at the heart of both incidents is the question of the powers of the Director of the IIM, and the degree of autonomy that they, and the institutes themselves, enjoy.

How does the question of autonomy impact their functioning, and how important is the ability to take independent decisions to the institutional excellence that they have a reputation for?

What is the controversy at IIM-

Ahmedabad? At the hear

At the heart of the controversy at IIM-Ahmedabad is a PhD dissertation with three essays on electoral democracy. About a year ago, the Ministry of

Education asked the Institute for a copy of the thesis after Rajya Sabha MP Subramanian Swamy had sent a letter to the Prime Minister alleging that the dissertation describes the BJP and BSP as "ethnically constituted" parties. And that the BJP is "a pro-Hindu upper caste party".

Swamy had urged the government that IIM-Ahmedabad should be directed to have the thesis "re-examine[d]" by independent professors, and that the PhD be kept on hold until that review was complete.

When asked to share a copy of the thesis, however, IIM-A Director Prof Erol D'Souza pushed back. In his reply to the Ministry, he wrote that the government was not an arbiter of complaints regarding a PhD thesis, and that there were appropriate academic forums within the Institute to flag complaints.

And what is the case at IIM-Calcutta?
What's happening at IIM-Calcutta is a

What's happening at IIM-Calcutta is a first in the history of the IIMs.

The Institute's Board and the Director, Anju Seth, are locked in a turf war, with Seth accusing the Chairman of the Board of infringing on her executive powers and the Board, in turn, accusing her of improper conduct.

The confrontation snowballed into a full-blown crisis last week after the Board passed a resolution against Seth and stripped her of the key powers of making appointments and taking disciplinary action.

Historically, how autonomous have the IIMs been?

"Before the enactment of the [IIM] Act [in 2017], when the IIMs functioned as Societies, they had a fair amount of autonomy in academic matters and other issues such as the fixing of fees. Because of the latter power, the older IIMs (Ahmedabad, Calcutta, Bangalore, Lucknow, Kozhikode, Indore) were not dependent on the government for funds, and were in a better position to assert their autonomy," said a senior government officer who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"However, the appointment of Directors and Chairmen remained in the government's hands, and it often used this leverage to influence the IIMs," the officer said.



Incidents at IIM Calcutta and IIM Ahmedabad (above) have thrown the spotlight on the question of autonomy. Nirmal Harindran

However, this "autonomy" was only a product of convention, and "functioned as long as both sides respected it", the officer said. "When this respect was compromised, friction occurred."

What the IIM Act did was to "cast autonomy in stone", the officer said. "The government cannot reduce it or pass orders which

are not in consonance with the Act. The only way to undo anything is through an Amendment passed by the legislature," the officer said.

Are there any instances of friction between an IIM and the government on a question of policy?

The IIMs have been protective of their autonomy, and have tended to oppose any perceived attempt by the government at curtailing their freedom.

A well-known example is from 2003-04, when the then HRD Minister Murli Manohar Joshi issued an order drastically reducing admission fees at the six IIMs from Rs 1.5 lakh to Rs 30,000. A face-off ensued between the then NDA government and the IIMs, and the matter was resolved only after the NDA lost the 2004 general elections, and the new UPA government reversed Joshi's order.

What limits do questions of funding and administration place on the principle of autonomy of higher education institutions?

"Globally as well as in India, higher education is supported by the government in

not impact the autonomy of universities," said Ashok Thakur, who retired as Higher Education Secretary in 2014. "However, if the government of the day thinks otherwise, there is no stopping it — irrespective of whether the institutions are funded or not, as has been shown in the recent case of IIM-A, which is financially totally independent. Funding gives the extra handle to the government as Parliament and the CAG have by default the right to know the fate of the funds approved by it."

But this "interference", Thakur said,

one form or the other. Normally this should

"comes at a price, as universities that lack autonomy are less creative and therefore suffer in terms of quality and reputation".

What are the implications of the ongoing turmoil in the IIMs?

Many in the IIM community see the ongoing situations at IIM-Calcutta and IIM-Ahmedabad as stemming from the dramatic shift in power dynamics ushered in with the new IIM Act. The government has relinquished control on paper, but the implementation of the Act will face hiccups as the Board assumes greater power in the functioning of the IIMs.

15 THE WORLD



REUTERS MARCH 8

witnesses said, while shops, fac-

tories and banks were closed in the main city Yangon in protests

against last month's military coup.

ployed at hospitals and univer-

gunshot wounds to the head in

the northern town of Myitkyina,

the witnesses said. It was not im-

mediately clear who fired on the

protesters although both police

and the military were at the scene.

showed the bodies of two men ly-

ing on the street. Witnesses said

they were taking part in a protest

against the coup when police

fired stun grenades and tear gas.

Several people were then hit by

helped move the bodies, told

Reuters two people were shot in

the head and died on the spot.

armed civilians," said the wit-

ness, a 20-year-old man. "We

must have our right to protest

and two injured during a protest

in the town of Phyar Pon in the

Irrawaddy Delta, a political ac-

 $more\,than\,50\,people\,to\,quell\,the$

daily demonstrations and strikes

against the Feb. 1 coup, accord-

respond to calls asking for com-

ment on the latest incidents.

Police in Myitkyina and Phyar

A military spokesman did not

Police and military have killed

tivist and local media said.

ing to the United Nations.

At least one person was killed

peacefully."

Three people were wounded.

One witness, who said he

"How inhumane to kill un-

gunfire from nearby buildings.

Photos posted on Facebook

sities, state media said.

Security forces were also de-

Two of the victims died of

MEANWHILE

MALALA INKS DEAL WITH APPLE

Malala Yousafzai is a Nobel laureate known around the world for her activism, but she's also a cartoon fan, and is taking her love of TV and film to Apple TV+. Yousafzai, 23, who graduated from Oxford last June, announced Monday that she has partnered with Apple in a multi-year deal to develop dramas, documentaries, comedies, animation and series for kids.

Three more protesters

TOPOFTHE WORLD



At a protest against the killing of George Floyd. File

Trial in George Floyd death starts with jury selection

THE TRIAL of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin for the death of George Floyd was due to begin on Monday with the screening of jurors to weigh murder and manslaughter charges in a case seen as a referendum on police violence against Black Americans. The judge has set aside three weeks for jury selection alone, mindful of the difficulties finding impartial Minneapolitans in a case that has convulsed a nation and in which an image of the victim – a selfie of Floyd faintly smiling – has fast become an international icon of racial **REUTERS**

EQUATORIAL GUINEA 20 dead, several injured in blasts at military base

A SERIES of explosions attributed to mishandled explosives at a military base rocked a city in the central African nation of Equatorial Guinea on Sunday, killing at least 20 people and injuring more than 500, the authorities said. President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo said that fires on farms neighbouring military barracks in the city of Bata had detonated dynamite and other munitions being stored there. He blamed "negligence and carelessness" of the unit in charge of the explosives

THAILAND

Activists charged with sedition, royal insults

PROSECUTORS IN Thailand charged 18 pro-democracy activists with sedition on Monday, while lodging additional charges of insulting the monarchy against three of them. The sedition charges, which carry a maximum penalty of up to seven years in prison, stem from an antigovernment rally in September, though details on the alleged offenses were not immediately clear. Three activists were charged with violating the lese majeste law. which outlaws criticism of senior members of the royal family. A court denied bail for all three.

EAGERLY ANTICIPATED INTERVIEW WITH OPRAH AIRED IN U.S.



Britain's Prince Harry and Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, are interviewed by Oprah Winfrey. Reuters

Meghan says life with UK royals drove her to contemplate suicide

Says members of royal family expressed concern about her son's skin colour

MARK LANDLER MARCH 8

A YEAR after Meghan Markle married Prince Harry in a fairytale wedding, she said in an extraordinary interview broadcast on Sunday night, her life as a member of the British royal family had become so emotionally desolate that she contemplated suicide

At another point, members of the family told Harry and Meghan, a biracial former actress from the United States, that they did not want the couple's unborn child, Archie, to be a prince or princess and expressed concerns about how dark the colour of the baby's skin would be.

An emotional but self-possessed Meghan said of her suicidal thoughts: "I was ashamed to have to admit it to Harry. I knew that if I didn't say it, I would do it. I just didn't want to be alive

Meghan, 39, made the disclosures in an eagerly anticipated, and at times incendiary, interview on CBS with Oprah Winfrey that aired in the United

KEY QUOTES FROM THE INTERVIEW

MEGHAN

- ■"I just didn't want to be alive anymore. And that was very clear and real and frightening." – On the suicidal thoughts she had after joining the royal family
- ■There were "concerns and conversations about how dark his skin might be when he's born." — On the royal reaction to her son Archie.
- "I left my career, my life. I left everything because I love him. Our plan was to do this forever." - On allegations that she schemed from the start to pull Harry from his family.

States in prime time. In describing a royal life that began as a fairy tale but quickly turned cruel, her blunt answers raised the combustible issues of race and privilege in the most rarefied echelon of British society.

HARRY

- "I wouldn't have been able to, because I myself was trapped as well." - On whether he would have stepped down from his royal duties had he never met Meghan.
- "I think she would feel very angry with how this has played out. And very sad..." - On his late mother, Princess Diana.
- "I've never blindsided my grandmother. I have too much respect for her." - On if he failed to prepare the Queen for the news he was stepping down from royal duties.

For an American audience that has lapped up the palace intrigue depicted in the popular TV series The Crown, it was the equivalent of an explosive bonus episode,

For the royal family, already preoccupied by the hospitalisa-

ings are aimed at only

tion of its patriarch, Prince

"I couldn't just call an Uber to the palace," she said.

Meghan did not say which "what?" from Winfrey.

closed that their second child, due

Philip, it was both an embarrassing airing of dirty laundry and a painful reminder, a year after Harry and Meghan turned their backs on royal life, that the wounds from that rupture had yet to heal.

Meghan said that while her husband was deeply concerned about her emotional fragility gripping her hand tightly at public events — her efforts to seek medical help were rebuffed by palace officials, who worried about the effect on the monarchy. She described herself as sort of a prisoner in Kensington Palace.

family member had raised questions about her baby's skin colour, nor did she fully explain why the royal family had not automatically planned to confer a royal title, which would have provided security for the child. But the lack of detail did not rob the moment of its power: Her reference to her child's skin tone provoked a stunned

Harry and Meghan also disthis summer, will be a girl. NYT

killed in Myanmar; shops, factories closed Security forces deployed at hospitals and universities THREE DEMONSTRATORS were killed in Myanmar on Monday,

Local residents flash a three-fingered sign of resistance as the protesters march on a main road during a

demonstration in Mandalay, Myanmar, Monday. Reuters

Pon also did not respond to calls. Myanmar has been in turmoil since the army overthrew

the elected government of longtime democracy champion Aung San Suu Kyi and detained her and other political figures. The generals say they acted because an election in November which saw Suu Kyi's National

League for Democracy (NLD) secure a big victory was marred by fraud - a claim rejected by the electoral commission.

They have promised to hold another election, without giving a date. In the meantime, security forces have cracked down hard on widespread pro-democracy protests in a country that has a history of military rule and crushing of dissent.

On Monday, thousands of people took to the streets of Myanmar's biggest city in defiance of a night curfew on Monday, chanting in anger after security forces besieged hundreds of young anti-coup protesters in one neighbourhood.

Western embassies appealed

to the junta to allow the protesters to leave Sanchaung, where they were cornered at the end of another day of bloodshed in Myanmar.

"Free the students in Sanchaung," people chanted in the streets in districts across the former capital. In some areas, police used

stun grenades and fired shots to try to disperse protesters, witnesses said. Live video from Sanchaung

on social media showed protesters running between the houses as stun grenades detonated. "Almost 200 young protesters are still blocked by the police

and soldiers there. Local and international community needs to help them now! Please," one protest leader, Maung Saungkha, said on Twitter. The US Embassy said in a statement: "We call on those se-

curity forces to withdraw and allow people to go home safely." The United Nations office in Myanmar and the British Embassy made a similar appeal.

MacKenzie Scott

US CDC says fully vaccinated people can gather without masks

MIKE STOBBE NEW YORK, MARCH 8

FULLY VACCINATED Americans can gather with other vaccinated people indoors without wearing a mask or social distancing, according to long-awaited guidance from federal health officials.

The recommendations also say vaccinated people can come together in the same way with people considered at low-risk for severe disease, such as in the case of grandparents visiting healthy children and grandchildren.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced the guidance Monday.

The guidance is designed to address a growing demand, as more adults have been getting vaccinated and wondering if it gives them greater freedom to visit family members, travel, or do other things like they did before the Covid-19 pandemic swept the world last year.

"With more and more people vaccinated each day, we are starting to turn a corner," said CDC Director Dr Rochelle Walensky.

Proceeding with caution

THE ADVICE from the CDC comes with caveats and leaves room for changes as new data comes in. It also calls on everyone to follow distancing measures in public, and stresses that the relaxation in restrictions for private gather-

those for whom two weeks have elapsed since getting the last required dose of a vaccine. The CDC did not rule out the possibility that vaccinated people may get asymptomatic infection and spread it to others.

During a press briefing Monday, she called the guidance a "first step" toward restoring normalcy in how people come together. She said more activities would be allowed for vaccinated individuals once caseloads and deaths decline, more Americans are vaccinated, and as more science emerges on the ability of those who have been vaccinated to get and spread the virus.

The CDC is continuing to recommend that fully vaccinated people still wear well-fitted masks, avoid large gatherings, and physically distance themselves from others when out in public. The CDC also advised vaccinated people to get tested if they develop symptoms that could be related to Covid-19.

About 31 million Americans – or only about 9% of the US population — have been fully vaccinated with a federally authorized Covid-19 vaccine so far, according to the CDC. The guidance was "welcome

news to a nation that is understandably tired of the pandemic and longs to safely resume normal activities." said Dr Richard Besser. CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and a former acting director of the CDC.

role on the board of Dassault due

to his political role to avoid any

of founder Marcel, was once

considered favoured to succeed

Serge at the head of the family

holding, but that role went to

former Dassault Aviation CEO

"Great sadness at the news of

Olivier, seen as the favourite

conflict of interest.



7TH DAY OF STREET PROTESTS IN LEBANON

A protester stands near a fire blocking a road in Zouk, Lebanon, on Monday. Lebanon's president told security forces to prevent roadblocks after protesters shut main roads across the country for a seventh straight dayin anger at more than a year of economic crisis and months of political paralysis. Since the Lebanese pound, which has lost 85% of its value, tumbled to a new low last week, protesters have blocked roads daily. Reuters

US commits to Saudi defence after Houthi attacks on oil heartland

REUTERS DUBAI, MARCH 8

THE UNITED States said on Monday it is committed to defending Saudi Arabia following drone and missile strikes claimed by Yemen's Iranaligned Houthi movement, including on a Saudi facility vital to oil exports.

Saudi authorities said there were no casualties or property losses from Sunday's attacks targeting an oil storage yard at Ras Tanura, site of a refinery and the world's biggest offshore oil loading facility, and a residential compound in Dhahran used by state-controlled oil giant Saudi Aramco.

The attacks, which drove Brent crude prices above \$70 a barrel to their highest since January 2020, come at a time of friction in the decades-old alliance between Saudi Arabia and $the\,United\,States\,as\,President\,Joe$



The site of Saudi-led air strikes in Sanaa, Yemen, on Sunday. The Houthis have been battling a Saudi-led coalition in Yemen for six years. Reuters

Biden puts pressure on Riyadh over its human rights record and the ruinous Yemen war.

"The heinous Houthi assaults on civilians and vital infrastructure demonstrate lack of respect for human life and disregard for peace efforts," the U.S. embassy in the kingdom said in an Arabiclanguage Twitter post.

"The United States stands by Saudi Arabia and its people. Our commitment to defend the Kingdom and its security is

The Houthis have been battling a Saudi-led coalition in Yemen for six years in a conflict largely seen as a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran.



MacKenzie Scott

marries school

teacher after

Bezos divorce

NICHOLAS KULISH

& KAREN WEISE

site of the philanthropy nonprofit organisation the Giving Pledge on Saturday, Dan Jewett, a science teacher at the prestigious Seattle school attended by her children, said that he was "grateful for the exceptional privilege it will be to partner in giving away assets with the potential to do so much good when shared".

What might otherwise be a wholly private, personal decision, takes on unusual significance in light of the resources at Scott's disposal — \$53 billion according to Forbes's most recent estimate and her stated intention to give the majority of it away.

In addition to the note on the website of the Giving Pledge, Scott, a published novelist, changed her author page on the Amazon website to read. "She lives in Seattle with her four children and her husband, Dan."

The Giving Pledge was started by the software mogul Bill Gates, his wife, Melinda, and the billionaire investor Warren Buffett in 2010. Signatories agree to give

away the majority of their wealth. Scott occupies a unique place in the world of mega-philanthropy. Through the sheer speed and scale of her donations, Scott managed to help shift the debate about the direc-

tion of the field.

French billionaire politician Olivier Dassault killed in helicopter crash

PARIS, MARCH 8

tive politician.

FRENCH BILLIONAIRE Olivier Dassault was killed on Sunday in a helicopter crash, a police source said, with President Emmanuel Macron paying trib-

Dassault was the eldest son of late French billionaire industrialist Serge Dassault, whose namesake Dassault Aviation, builds the Rafale war planes and owns Le Figaro newspaper.

ute to the 69-year old conserva-

"Olivier Dassault loved France. Captain of industry, lawmaker, local elected official, reserve commander in the air



force: during his life, he never ceased to serve our country, to value its assets. His sudden death is a great loss. Thoughts on his family and loved ones," Macron said on Twitter.

The private helicopter crashed on Sunday afternoon in Normandy, where he has a holiday home, according to a police source. The pilot was also killed.

A lawmaker for the conservative Les Republicains party ers and sister, with wealth of

He was the eldest son

billionaire industrialist

Serge Dassault, whose

namesake Dassault

Aviation, builds the

Rafale war planes

of late French

since 2002. Dassault was considered the 361st richest man in the world alongside his two brothabout 6 billion euros (\$7.15 billion) mostly inherited from his father, according to the 2020 Forbes rich list.

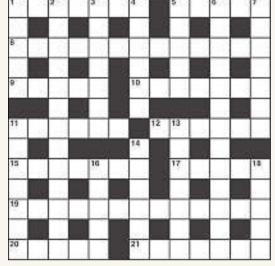
He stepped down from his

Charles Edelstenne. the sudden passing of Olivier Dassault." Valerie Pecresse, a conservative politician who is president of the Paris region, said on Twitter.

"A businessman, but also a renowned photographer, he had a passion for politics in his blood, rooted in his department of Oise. My warm thoughts to his family."

CALENDAR

CROSSWORD 4373



ACROSS

- Refuse to weaken
- 5 Is violent and ruins the gears
- Religious split? (6,2,5)
- Her calling is a dangerous one
- 10 Iris lends colour to it
- 11 Composer from Harlem
- 12 Architectural highlight
- 15 Fear of redundancy drove him to breaking point
- 17 Only support a starving artist
- 19 A man whose career lies in ruins (13)
- 20 Little Diana, modest but very attractive
- 21 Train to follow the king (7)

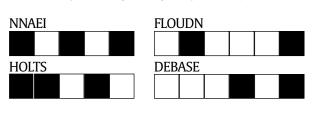
DOWN

- 1 Number with odd bets needing to be settled
- 2 Put the cards away and get ready for action
- 3 Its use in a low church service certainly would
- 4 Eaten away in fact or deed
- perhaps (6) To sack or to fire (5)
- 6 Get in to obtain a confession
- (4,9)
- 7 Learned adult or learning
- youngster (7)
 11 Mother left fat on the duck
- 13 One up to making you become communicative (4,3)
- 14 It may be rude to make a digression(6)
- 16 Laity out abroad (5)
- 18 Drunk, he becomes athletic (5)

Solutions Crossword 4372: Across: 1 Cloth, 8 Pastoral, 9 Twain, 10 Outgoing, 11 Banns, 12 Pea, 16 Mealie, 17 Prisms, 18 Get, 23 Screw, 24 Reporter, 25 Posse, 26 Spanking, 27 Bends. Down: 2 Low water, 3 Triangle, 4 Nature, 5 Stage, 6 Train, 7 Bligh, 12 Peg, 13 Apt, 14 Disclose, 15 Immersed, 19 Exeunt, 20 Brest, 21 Appal,

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 guip. _, I should get a free dog. - Wendy Liebman (5,5)



ADDITION: INANE; SLOTH, UNFOLD, SEABED Set a free dog. - Wendy Liebman

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson







MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



Difficulty Level 5s

To solve a Sudoku puzzle,

must appear in each of the

each of the nine horizontal

nine vertical columns, in

rows and in each of the

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy;

3s = Medium; 4s = Hard;

5s = Very Hard; 6s =

Difficulty Level

every digit from 1 to 9

Instructions





SOLUTION SUDOKU 4405

5 9

3 4

5

6

7 6

7 5 8 9 4 1 2 6 3

2 6 4 8 5 3 9 7 1

1 3 9 7 2 6 4 5 8

6 7 5 4 1 8 3 2 9

8 9 3 6 7 2 1 4 5

9 4 1 5 6 7 8 3 2

3 2 6 1 8 4 5 9 7

5 8 7 2 3 9 6 1 4

1 2 3 9 5 7 8 6

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23) The overall picture

becomes just that extra bit uncertain but largely because the range of choice is now increasing. Although the solution to today's questions could be financial, take a look at your rights and make sure you're on solid ground.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23) It will be difficult for you to continue to



ignore all those warning signals, mainly because partners will get more and more emotional if they feel they are not being listened to. You could try humouring people who are upset, and waiting until the stress level drops.

DAY TODAY

Recent career

prove a trifle

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

many of you, but that's

time for looking at past

friend needs your advice. Perhaps social outings could

serious concerns.

precisely why this is a good

mistakes and making sure they

never happen again. Besides, a

offer a distraction from more

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

of your leading current

planetary cycles was known in ancient times for bringing

seclusion and meditation, so

events you'd rather ignore.

Mind you, you might have to

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

remove your doubts, the

simple reason being that

signals sent by the sub-

conscious to alert you to

you may run into a few

and remain ready to

duck and weave as

difficulties. Be true to your sign

circumstances develop and

even reliable partners change

doubts can be a very good

thing. They are the warning

hazards ahead, so take heed.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

have some good excuses ready.

hoping that

There is no point in

imminent planetary

aspects are about to

Life is full of curious

twists and turns. If

you now continue

on a straight course,

don't feel compelled to join in

You can only progress by off-

loading certain responsibilities. One BY PETER VIDAL

You're not

convinced that

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23) upheavals could still disappointing for

partners know what they are doing, especially at home. However, bearing in mind that this is a moment to try out new ideas and experiment with domestic arrangements, be patient. You might even join in. At least you can offer constructive support.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

The Moon is still in a relatively supportive relationship with your sign, which means that the highs should be higher and the lows briefer than usual. You should pay special attention to all creative ventures, searching out ways

to express your unique talents SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

The accent is clearly on personal matters, and if you should suddenly discover masses of things to do outside the home, it could be that you're not facing up to reality.

may be staring you in the face. CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20) Place your own comfort and

Actually, the solutions may be

very simple. In fact, the answer

security above all else, because ultimately, unless you have a firm base, you won't feel free to develop your more adventurous schemes. And right now that's just what you should be doing. It may help to talk to people who have a more intuitive approach than you.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21- Feb 19) Sometimes it takes an enormous amount of effort to

get yourself out of a rut. Yet that's precisely what you should be doing at the moment. The trap you're in, though, is almost entirely to do with your low self-esteem, and you must understand the ways in which this stops you doing your best.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20) Press on as hard as you can, realising that it is rare that insight and energy

combine to such a high degree. However, there seem to be a lot of business matters to sort out, papers to sign and decisions to take, all of which could obscure your vision.

NOTICE Form No. CAA.2

[Pursuant to Section 230(3) of Companies Act, 2013 and Rule $\boldsymbol{6}$ and 7 of Companies (Compromises, Arrangements and Amalgamations) Rules, 2016]

BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL MUMBAI BENCH

Company Application No 1119(MB)/2020

In the matter of the Companies Act, 2013;

In the matter of Sections 230 to 232 of the Companies Act, 2013; AND

of Scheme of Arrangement under sections 230 to 232 between Electronica Hitech Machine Tools Private Limited having CIN U29210PN2011PTC139073 (Demerged Company) and Kaskhediker Services Private Limited having CIN U74110PN2019PTC183424 (First Resulting Company) and Dharmadhikari Services Private Limited having CIN U24100PN2019PTC183211 (Second Resulting Company) and their respective Shareholders

Electronica Hitech Machine Tools Private Limited

.....Applicant Company ADVERTISEMENT OF NOTICE OF MEETING OF EQUITY SHAREHOLDERS

Notice is hereby given that by an order dated the 16th day of February, 2021, the Mumbai Bench of the National Company Law Tribunal ("NCLT") has directed a meeting to be held of the equity shareholders of Electronica Hitech Machine Tools Private Limited for the purpose of considering, and if thought fit, approving with or without modification, the proposed Scheme of Arrangement of Electronica Hitech Machine Tools Private Limited ("Applicant Company" / "Demerged Company") and Kaskhediker Services Private Limited ("First Resulting Company") and Dharmadhikari Services Private Limited ("Second Resulting Company") and their respective Shareholders.

In pursuance of the said Order and as directed therein, further notice is hereby given that separate meeting of equity shareholders of the said Applicant Company will be held as under in which the equity shareholders of Electronica Hitech Machine Tools Private Limited are

Name of the Company - Electronica Hitech Machine Tools Private Limited

	Class of Meeting	Date of Meeting	Time	Place of Meeting
1	Equity Shareholders	08 April 2021		44, Elektra Chambers, Mukundnagar, Pune - 411 037, Maharashtra, India

Copies of the said Scheme of Arrangement and the statement under Section 230 can be obtained free of charge at the Registered Office of the Applicant Company and / or at the office of its Advocate, M/s. Hemant Sethi & Co., 1602, Nav Parmanu, Behind Amar Cinema, Chembur, Mumbai - 400071. Persons entitled to attend and vote at the meeting, may vote in person or by proxy, provided that all proxies in the prescribed form, duly signed or authorized by the said person, are deposited at the Registered Office of the Applicant Company at 44, Elektra Chambers, Mukundnagar, Pune - 411 037, Maharashtra, India, not later than 48 hours before the meeting.

Forms of proxy can be obtained from the Registered Office of the Applicant Company.

The Tribunal has appointed Mr. Sujit Sharad Natekar, Director of the Company failing whom Mrs. Mugdha Rahul Kaskhedikar, Director of the Company, failing whom Ms. Priya Adwait Dharmadhikari, Director of the Company, failing whom Mr. Deepak Taware, Authorised Representative of the Company as Chairperson of the said meeting. The above-mentioned Scheme of Arrangement, if approved at the meetings, will be subject to the subsequent approval of the Tribunal.

Date: 8th March, 2021 Chairman Appointed for the Meeting Place: Pune

NOTICE Form No. CAA.2

[Pursuant to Section 230(3) of Companies Act, 2013 and Rule 6 and 7 of Companies (Compromises, Arrangements and Amalgamations) Rules, 2016]

BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL MUMBAI BENCH

Company Application No 1119(MB)/2020

In the matter of the Companies Act, 2013; AND

In the matter of Sections 230 to 232 of the Companies Act, 2013; AND

3

9 6

7

2

9

sections 230 to 232 between of Electronica Hitech Machine Tools Private Limited having CIN U29210PN2011PTC139073 (Demerged Company) and Kaskhediker Services Private Limited having CIN U74110PN2019PTC183424 (First Resulting Company) and Dharmadhikari Services Private Limited havina CIN U24100PN2019PTC183211 (Second Resulting Company) and their respective Shareholders

...Applicant Company

Dharmadhikari Services Private Limited

ADVERTISEMENT OF NOTICE OF MEETING OF EQUITY **SHAREHOLDERS**

Notice is hereby given that by an order dated 16th day of February, 2021, the Mumbai Bench of the National Company Law Tribunal ("NCLT") has directed a meeting to be held of the equity shareholders of Dharmadhikari Services Private Limited for the purpose of considering, and if thought fit, approving with or without modification, the proposed Scheme of Arrangement of Electronica Hitech Machine Tools Private Limited ("Demerged Company") and Kaskhediker Services Private Limited ("First Resulting Company") and Dharmadhikari Services Private Limited ("Applicant" Resulting Company") and their respective Shareholders.

In pursuance of the said Order and as directed therein, further notice is hereby given that separate meeting of equity shareholders of the said Applicant Company will be held as under in which the equity shareholders of Dharmadhikari Services Private Limited are requested to attend.

Name of the Company – Dharmadhikari Services Private Limited

1		Date of Meeting	Time	Place of Meeting
1	Equity Shareholders		03:00 pm (IST)	4th Floor, Wing C, Office No. B30+B31,Dr Herekar Park App. Bhandarkar Road Pune-411004, Maharashtra, India

Copies of the said Scheme of Arrangement and the statement under Section 230 can be obtained free of charge at the Registered Office of the Applicant Company and / or at the office of its Advocate, M/s. Hemant Sethi & Co., 1602, Nav Parmanu, Behind Amar Cinema, Chembur, Mumbai - 400071. Persons entitled to attend and vote at the meeting, may vote in person or by proxy, provided that all proxies in the prescribed form, duly signed or authorized by the said person, are deposited at the Registered Office of the Applicant Company at 4th Floor, Wing C, Office No. B30+B31, Dr Herekar Park App. Bhandarkar Road Pune-411004, Maharashtra, India, not later than 48 hours before the meeting.

Forms of proxy can be obtained from the Registered Office of the Applicant Company.

The Tribunal has appointed Mr. Adwait Dharmadhikari, Director of the Company failing whom Mr. Chandrakam Vitthalrao Nikam. Accounts Manager of the Company failing whom Mr. Nivrutti Namdev Palve, Authorised Representative as Chairperson of the said meetings. The above-mentioned Scheme of Arrangement, if approved at the meetings, will be subject to the subsequent approval of the Tribunal. Date: 8th March, 2021

Chairman Appointed for the Meeting Place: Pune

NOTICE

Form No. CAA.2

[Pursuant to Section 230(3) of Companies Act, 2013 and Rule 6and 7 of Companies (Compromises, Arrangements and Amalgamations) Rules, 2016]

BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL

MUMBAI BENCH Company Application No 1119(MB)/2020

In the matter of the Companies Act, 2013;

In the matter of Sections 230 to 232 of the Companies Act, 2013;

AND sections 230 to 232 between of Electronica Hitech Machine Tools Private Limited having CIN U29210PN2011PTC139073 (Demerged Company) and Kaskhediker Services Private Limited having CIN U74110PN2019PTC183424 (First Resulting Company) and Dharmadhikari Services Private Limited having CIN U24100PN2019PTC183211 (Second Resulting

Company) and their respective Shareholders Kaskhediker Services Private Limited

.....Applicant Company ADVERTISEMENT OF NOTICE OF MEETING OF EQUITY

Notice is hereby given that by an order dated 16th day of February, 2021, the Mumbai Bench of the National Company Law Tribunal ("NCLT") has directed a meeting to be held of the equity shareholders of Kaskhediker Services Private Limited for the purpose of considering, and if thought fit, approving with or without modification, the proposed Scheme of Arrangement of Electronica Hitech Machine Tools Private Limited ("Demerged Company") and Kaskhediker Services Private Limited ("Applicant/First Resulting Company") and Dharmadhikari Services Private Limited ("Second Resulting Company") and their respective Shareholders and their respective

In pursuance of the said Order and as directed therein, further notice is hereby given that separate meeting of equity shareholders of the said Applicant Company will be held as under in which the equity shareholders of Kaskhediker Services Private Limited are requested to

Name of the Company - Kaskhediker Services Private Limited

	Class of Meeting	Date of Meeting	Time	Place of Meeting
1	Equity Shareholders	08 April 2021		FINo.501, FPNo. 223/3B, CTS No.773/6B, Gandhkut Lane No.10, Prabhat Road, Swaroop Hotel Lane, Pune- 411004, Maharashtra,

India

Copies of the said Scheme of Arrangement and the statement under Section 230 can be obtained free of charge at the Registered Office of the Applicant Company and / or at the office of its Advocate, M/s. Hemant Sethi & Co., 1602, Nav Parmanu, Behind Amar Cinema, Chembur, Mumbai - 400071. Persons entitled to attend and vote at the meeting, may vote in person or by proxy, provided that all proxies in the prescribed form, duly signed or authorized by the said person, are deposited at the Registered Office of the Applicant Company at Fl No.501, FP No. 223/3B, CTS No.773/6B, Gandhkuti Lane No.10, Prabhat Road, Swaroop Hotel Lane, Pune- 411004, Maharashtra, India, not later than 48 hours before the meeting.

Forms of proxy can be obtained from the Registered Office of the

The Tribunal has appointed Mr. Rahul Satish Kaskhedikar, Director of the Company, failing whom Mrs. Mugdha Rahul Kaskhedikar, Director of the Company, failing whom Mr. Tukaram Phad, Authorised Representative of the Company as Chairperson of the said meeting. The above-mentioned Scheme of Arrangement, if approved at the meetings, will be subject to the subsequent approval of the Tribunal.

Date: 8th March, 2021 Chairman Appointed for the Meeting Place: Pune



Maharashtra State Agricultural Marketing Board, Pune (MSAMB)

e-Tender Notice

MSAMB invites e-Tender from reputed & experienced housekeeping agencies for Housekeeping work of MSAMB's Head Office. Estimated cost per annum is Rs. 20.21 Lakh. For details please visit www.msamb.com and http://mahatenders.gov.in.

Managing Director

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that DR. BALWANT SHANTARAM KERKAR and DR. (MRS.) GEETA BALWANT KERKAR are the holders of all that piece and parcel of land or ground admeasuring 510 sq.mtrs (as per the Revenue Record in respect thereof) bearing Survey No.55 Hissa No.4/10 situate, lying and being at Village Baner within the Registration Sub-District of Taluka Haveli, District Pune and within the limits of the Municipal Corporation of Pune and the same is bounded as follows:- On or towards East: By S.No.55/4/11, On or towards South: Internal Road, On or towards West: Internal Road. **On or towards North:** By S. No. 55/4/1 & S. No. 55/3.

By virtue of duly registered, lawful and subsisting Documents, M/S.SATYAM DEVELOPERS, a partnership firm duly registered under the provisions of the Indian Partnership Act, 1932 having its Office at 201, B.A. Gateway, Plot No.4, CTS No.1620, Baner Road, Aundh, Pune 411007 is the holder of rights of development of the said land bearing Survey No.55 Hissa No.4/10, Baner, Pune.

The said M/s Satyam Developers had entered into an Agreement with Regency Nirman Limited, a company limited by shares having its Registered Office at Regency House, Plot No.1, Sheet No.49, Section 6A, Aman Talkies Road, Ulhasnagar 421002, District Thane on 28.07.2010 for joint development of the said land. The said M/s Satyam Developers have now agreed to assign and transfer its beneficial right, title and interest in the said land bearing Survey No.55 Hissa No.4/10, Baner, Pune and/or cause the said Dr. Balwant Shantaram Kerkar and Another to sell the same in favour of our Client, with the consent and concurrence of the said Regency Nirman Limited and the said M/s Satyam Developers have represented to our Client that the title of the said Dr. Balwant Shantaram Kerkar and Another to the said land bearing Survey No.55 Hissa No.4/10, Baner, Pune and its beneficial to the same is free, clear and marketable and that there are no outstanding encumbrances on or in respect thereof. As part of investigation of title of the said Dr. Balwant Shantaram Kerkar and Another to the said land bearing Survey No.55 Hissa No.4/10, Baner, Pune and/or the beneficial title of the said M/s Satyam Developers and/or the said Regency Nirman Limited to the same, we are having this Notice published.

In the above circumstances, all persons having any claim, right, title or interest in or to the said of land bearing Survey No.55 Hissa No.4/10, Baner, Pune or any part or portion thereof by way of sale, gift, lease, tenancy, licence, exchange, partition, mortgage, charge lien, inheritance, trust, maintenance, possession, easement, agreement or otherwise howsoever are hereby required to make the same known in writing to the undersigned at the address given below within fourteen days from the date of publication hereof, failing which it shall be presumed that there is no such claim and the same, if any, shall be considered to be waived.

Date: 9 March, 2021. M/s. RAJIV PATEL & ASSOCIATES Sd/- R.V Patel, Advocate,

25, United Apartments, 1st Floor, 2407, East Street, Pune -411001. Tel: 26359111 / 26356789.

SILVER

SENSEX: 50,441.07 ▲ 35.75 (0.07%) NIFTY: 14,956.20 ▲ 18.10 (0.12%) NIKKEI: 28,743.25 ▼ 121.07 HANG SENG: 28,540.83 ▼ 557.46 FTSE: 6,658.46 ▲ 27.94 DAX: 14,102.09 ▲ 181.40

SENSEX CLOSES ALMOST FLAT AT 50,441

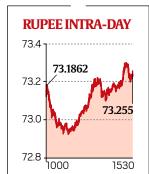
Down 23p, Re falls for third day in a row on high crude oil prices

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU

strengthening of the American currency in the overseas market.

The dollar rose to a three-anda-half month high against a basket of six currencies globally helped by passage of \$1.9 trillion stimulus package by the US Senate, positive jobs data and ris-

the local unit opened at 73.13 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 73.29 and a low of 72.93. It finally ended at 73.25 against the American cur-



rency, registering a fall of 23 paise over its previous closing. The rupee has dropped by 53 paise in three sessions to Monday due to forex outflows from capital mar-

On the domestic equity market front, the BSE Sensex ended 35.75 points or 0.07 per cent

LPG price double in 7 yrs: Pradhan

New Delhi: Price of LPG has doubled to Rs 819 per cylinder in the last seven years while the increase in taxes on petrol and diesel has swelled collections by over 459 per cent, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said in the Lok Sabha. **PTI**

higher at 50,441.07, while the broader NSE Nifty climbed 18.10 points or 0.12 per cent to 14.956.20.

Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 419.45 points, or 1.33 per cent, to 31,917.43 and the S&P 500 gained 18.75 points, or 0.49 per cent,

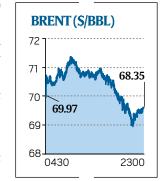
After 14 months, oil hits \$70; eases later

REUTERS LONDON, MARCH 8

OIL PRICES fell on Monday after pushing above \$70 a barrel for the first time since the start of the coronavirus crisis, with support from US stimulus and an attack on Saudi Arabian oil sites countered by global inflation fears.

Brent, which initially surged to \$71.38 a barrel — its highest since January 8, 2020 — slipped by \$1.01, or 1.5 per cent, to

US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude was down 94 cents,



or 1.4 per cent, at \$65.15, after touching its highest since

\$1.5 TRILLION:

MARKET BY FINANCIAL

RANGE VALUE OF

INDIAN RETAIL

YEAR 2030

INTERVIEW WITH CEO, NATIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

'Plan is for a demand-driven Covid vaccine registration system with hospitals nearby'

campaign against Covid progresses, ensuring a "demanddriven" registration system that allows people the option of more hospitals closer to their homes is the next target for National Health Authority CEO RS SHARMA. In an interview to PRABHA RAGHAVAN, Sharma, who heads the empowered committee for administration of Covid vaccines, discusses these priorities and efforts to protect data of vaccinated citizens from cyberattacks. Edited excerpts:

Have you seen more traction in vaccinations post direction to utilise the 100 per cent private hospital capacity and extend vaccination timings past 5pm?

(Over the first) three days (of the vaccinations for senior citizens and those with specific co-morbidities), it was more or less a 75 per cent increase (in vaccinations). So, hopefully, more and more people are coming forward and numbers will increase.

In the next 3-6 months, what is the broader plan in terms of ensuring a smooth running of the vaccination programme against Covid-19?

The system is running smoothly. It is a very good system where people have the flexibility to register, people have the flexibility to schedule (and) reschedule appointments and go there and get (vaccinations) done. That's one part. We will further finetune the timings. We will divide the timings into slots. That's also doable. It's not a problem.

But(a)demand-driven system (that is) open to citizens and covering many hospitals so that the facilities are near their place is the plan going forward. Now, with regard to the numbers, logistics - of course, this plan will be subjected to the availability of vaccines and the numbers (of) how people re-

... As of now, the policy is whatever vaccine comes, they will go into the system. (Whether a) new

While it is time-sensitive, we

(vaccine) will be accepted or not accepted, I don't know, But, hopefully (if) the Government of India approves any new vaccine, that also comes into the system (and) the distribution pattern will be similar. The only thing is we are not giving any choice to the person as to which vaccine they take. But, at the same time, we are ensuring that the first vaccine, whatever they take, is the same one as

National Health Authority CEO RS Sharma. File

How are you ensuring this, especially given the fact that supplies of some vaccines may be more limited than others?

That, we are ensuring because we have the data of everybody and we issue a digital certificate to everybody after vaccination. The policy thus far we are having is that we will continue to give the same (vaccine) to a centre. But, if one vaccine is changed to some other vaccine, then the person who (received their first shot of that vaccine) there will basically not be allowed to come to (that facility) again (for the second dose). He will be directed to a different place which is offering the first vaccine.

How will you make sure there are no glitches in the system and no room for technical error, so that everyone gets their second dose on time. given that this is a time-

sensitive exercise?

actually fix the appointment also (for the second dose). That slot is fixed after you get the first vaccine, but, ultimately, it's all voluntary. If the (person) decides not to come, what can I do? Basically, we are facilitating the fact that he will get the same vaccine (on the 29th) day. If he can't come on the 29th day, he can reschedule ... you have one week (to) 10 days' flexibility. That's what we will do. Otherwise, we will facilitate and there is no question of a technical glitch.

You earlier spoke about ensuring the safety of data on CoWIN and Aarogya Setu and making sure that the system is protected from cyberattacks. What measures are you implementing to this effect?

The data is sitting at the backend of our system, so data is not being distributed anywhere. We have to ensure safety and security of that data. There are standard methods of ensuring (this) - intrusion detection systems, intrusion prevention systems and what is called encryption. There are various kinds of firewalls. Those things are being put into place the standard practices of ensuring that there are no cyber attacks, there are no denial of service attacks ... SQL injections ... Our sys-

tem is absolutely robust.

SC: NCLT has jurisdiction to adjudicate cases solely relating to corporate debtor

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday held that the NCLT has jurisdiction to adjudicate disputes, which arises solely or relates to the insolvency of a

insolvency

corporate debtor. The top court, however, cautioned the National Company

Law Tribunal (NCLT) and its appellate tribunal (NCLAT) to ensure that they do not usurp the legitimate jurisdiction of other courts, tribunals and forum, when the dispute is not related to the insolvency of the Corporate Debtor. A Bench of Justices DY

Chandrachud and M R Shah said, "Therefore, considering the text of Section 60(5)(c) (of IBC) and the interpretation of similar provisions in other insolvency related statutes, NCLT has jurisdiction to adjudicate disputes, which arise solely from or which relate to the insolvency of the Corporate

The top court verdict came on an appeal filed by Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Ltd against a NCLAT order by which it had upheld the decision of NCLT staying the termination of Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) entered with a firm Astonfield Solar (Gujarat) Private Limited, which later went into insolvency.

Dismissing the appeal, the top court said that the institutional framework under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) contemplated the establishment of a single forum to deal with matters of insolvency, which were distributed

In the US, at 11:47 am ET the

\$68.35 by 12:20 am EST.

The 'Online+Offline' model is expected to help in addition

SHARE OF RETAIL SECTOR IN 2019-29 IN: ■ Gross domestic product: Over 35 million employees >25 MILLION:

3X Growth in Indian retail market over the last decade

convergence of retail channels and the collective evolution of

SMS scrubbing comes into effect:

MUMBAI. MARCH 8

(OTP) by banks and e-commerce firms for various services.

What is the need for NUEs? Currently, the umbrella blocked by telecom operators.

fund transfers. This affected serv-

Crucial services, OTP, were disrupted

ices across the country. The implementation was not fine-tuned. It should have been implemented carefully," said a banking source.

"I wanted to transfer some funds to my relative. But as the OTP never came, I couldn't execute the transfer." said the customer of a leading private bank.

lous telemarketers today override the stated preference of the subscriber by claiming consent that may have been surreptitiously obtained. "New regulations provide the subscriber with complete control over their consent and the ability to revoke the consent already granted, at their option. A major abuse of the current regulations would thus be stopped," the regulator had said.

tered templates for both SMS and

voice communication has been introduced to prevent deliberate mixing of promotional messages into the transactional stream. Telcos said telemarketers and businesses should comply with the standards set by Trai. A blockchain method is used to verify the content of every SMS and every unregistered SMS is blocked.

Responding to the issue, telcos said they had communicated with entities to register their content template before March 7.

"TSPs are following Trai regulations and have activated due process of content scrubbing to address the issue of unsolicited commercial communication. TSPs have sent various communications to the principle entities to register their content template with the TSPs before March 7. 2021. We request all the PEs to get their content template registered with TSPs at the earliest, and help TSPs to address the issue of unsolicited commercial communication," said SP Kochhar, director general, Cellular Operators Association of India

Tata Motors shareholders give nod to hiving off passenger vehicle biz

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU MUMBAI. MARCH 8

TATA MOTORS shareholders have approved hiving off its passenger vehicle (PV) business into a separate entity.

On March 5, the shareholders of the company voted to consider and approve the transfer of the passenger vehicles business unit to TML Business Analytics Services Ltd. A total 215.41 crore votes were polled out, of which 215.32 crore votes were in favour of the resolution, translating into 99.958 per cent of the total votes, while 8,99,098 votes (0.042 per cent) were against the proposal.

It said 68.86 core votes of insti-

VALUED AT ₹9,417 CR

■The company had said its passenger vehicle business has been valued at Rs 9.417 crore.

tutional shareholders were polled with all of them in favour and none against the resolution.

The company had said its PV business has been valued at Rs 9,417 crore. The management had stated that it expects the process of hiving off its domestic PV business to be completed around May-June, although it has not yet taken a call on a partner for the business.

GUIDELINES FOR INTERMEDIARIES, NEWS PORTALS

Delhi HC to hear challenge to new norms today

will hear a petition challenging the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules. 2021. The case is listed before the division Bench of Chief Justice DN

"While rules and laws already

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

Patel and Justice Jasmeet Singh.

The petition has been filed by The Foundation for Independent Journalism, which publishes news website The Wire. This is the first legal challenge to the rules.

THE DELHI High Court on Tuesday

The guidelines for intermedi-

aries and news portals were notified last week by the Centre for regulating the content on these

exist to hold news media accountable, the aforesaid rules enable the executive government to even remove content published as current affairs or news among other things," the Foundation said in a letter written to the Ministers for Information and Broadcasting and Electronics and Information Technology. DIGIPUB News India

Foundation, a group of digital media organisations, on February 26, expressed concerns about the rules and said they appear to go against the fundamental principle of news. The Wire is a member of the DIGIPUB News India Foundation, Editors Guild of India also has urged the government to put the rules in abeyance and conduct meaningful consultation with all stakeholders.

earlier across multiple fora. It said that for the success of an insolvency regime, it is necessary that insolvency proceedings are dealt within a timely, effective and

Pune

efficient manner. PTI

NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

THE RUPEE on Monday declined by 23 paise to close at 73.25 against the US dollar, extending its losses for the third session in a row due to rising crude oil prices and

ing bond yields.

At the interbank forex market,

PRANAV MUKUL

India's tech or fi-

nancial services

ecosystem are

making a beeline

to set up new um-

brella entities

(NUEs) for pay-

ment systems -

an idea floated by

setting up NUEs.

What are NUEs?

NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

FROM RELIANCE and Tata to

Amazon and Paytm, compa-

nies with any presence in

the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)

to create an alternate mecha-

nism to the existing National

Payments Corporation of India

(NPCI). The RBI has set a dead-

line of March 31 for firms to

submit their applications for

As envisaged by the RBI, an

NUE will be a non-profit entity

that will set up, manage and

operate new payment sys-

tems, especially in the retail

space such as ATMs, white la-

bel PoS, Aadhaar-based pay-

ments and remittance serv-

ices. In addition to this, they

will develop new payment

methods, standards and tech-

nologies and operate clearing

Which players are planning

owned and controlled by Ind-

ian citizens with at least three

years of experience in the pay-

ments segment can become

Only those entities that are

and settlement systems.

to set up NUEs?

SECTOR WATCH

PAYMENT SYSTEMS

Why private cos

are queueing up

to set up NUEs

EXPLAINE

kets due to rising US bond yields.

'Online+Offline retail may add

of 12 million new jobs and \$125 billion in retail exports, a report by Nasscom-Technopak said.

Expected new jobs that will be added to retail market by financial year 2030

Platforms - are planning to apply as a consortium. Further, saltto-software conglomerate Tata Group has joined hands with HDFC Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, MasterCard and Bharti Airtel. Among global players, e-commerce firm Amazon has tied up with Visa, ICICI Bank, Axis Bank and fintech startups BillDesk and PineLabs for the NUE licence. Lastly, Softbank portfolio com-

promoters of NUEs. Also, for-

eign investment is allowed in

NUEs as long as they comply

eral companies have either

tied up banks or major tech

According to reports, sev-

players to apply for NUEs, Reliance

Industries, along

with Facebook

and Google -

which have in-

vested in Jio

with existent guidelines.

ply for the NUE.

panies Paytm and Ola too have

reportedly joined hands to ap-

entity for providing retail payments system is NPCI, which is a non-profit entity, owned by banks. NPCI operates settlement systems such as UPI, AEPS, RuPay, Fastag, etc. Players in the payments space have indicated the various pitfalls of NPCI being the only entity managing all of retail payment systems in India.

Full report on www.indianexpress.com

12 mn new jobs, \$125 bn exports'

■ Total workforce:

What is Retail 4.0?: The Retail 4.0 model is a result of their capabilities via technology-enabled collaborations

Source: Nasscom & Technopak/PTI

Hiccups for banking, e-comm ops

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU

THE FUNCTIONING of banks and e-commerce firms were hit on Monday as telecom service providers (TSPs) started implementing the second phase of SMS regulation. The move disrupted several crucial services, especially sending of one-time password

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) guideline that the verification process of every SMS content will have to be done before it is delivered known as scrubbing - was implemented on Monday after several delays. As result, unverified and unregistered SMS messages were

However, the implementation of the SMS regulation hit the process of sending OTP for various payment services. "Banks were flooded with complaints from customers who didn't get OTPs for

especially sending of

According to Trai, unscrupu-

Trai said the concept of regis-

BRIEFLY —

GSTe-invoicecap

New Delhi: The government Monday notified reduction in threshold for mandatory e-invoice to Rs 50 crore from April 1. It had earlier rolled out mandatory e-invoicing for turnover threshold of over Rs 500 crore from last October, which was then extended to entities with threshold of Rs 100 crore and above from this January. ENS

Managing debt

New Delhi: 15th Finance Commission Chairman NK Singh called for setting up a Fiscal Council-like body to manage debt trajectory.

UCC, PAN norms

New Delhi: Sebi has tweaked provisions on Unique Client Code (UCC) and mandatory Permanent Account Number (PAN) requirement for members of bourses with commodity derivatives. PTI

PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION BILL

'No data is permanently anonymised': Experts warn of re-identification risks

An example of re-identification is companies

behaviour of individual users on the internet

using browsing history to identify and predict the

SHRUTIDHAPOLA& **AASHISHARYAN** NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

THE INCLUSION of certain clauses related to non-personal data sets in the Personal Data Protection (PDP) Bill carries a very high risk of re-identification and may lead to legal complications for stakeholders, public policy experts and senior industry executives said.

"High value data-sets that have been created using personal data by anonymising it continue to carry risks with them. There is a very very clear danger of reidentification and that's a danger that keeps compounding. It is not too much to claim that there is no anonymised data set that is permanently anonymised," a senior industry executive, who did not wish to be named, said.

For instance, Section 91 of the latest version of the PDP Bill - which gives the central government powers to direct data fiduciaries and processors to grant access to all anonymised or

non-personal data — runs a high

risk of re-identification. As technology, including mathematical algorithms, evolve and improve, the re-identification science will also get better, adding to the risk of de-anonymisation of the data-set, experts said.

"Anonymised data is often easily re-identified and it causes significant privacy harms. Establishing standards for anonymisation and providing more clarity on how various stakeholders will have to collect and store data to avoid regulatory arbitrage will help," said Kazim Rizvi, founder of

public policy group The Dialogue.

anonymised data sets, another issue likely to crop up over time is that every time a new data set is released by companies and other point for privacy

ation happens, companies would be held liable under the upcoming Data Protection Bill, thereby landing them in trouble for little to no fault of theirs. The lack of a clear definition of what constitutes non-personal data is another concern, experts said.

Apart from problems related re-identification

stakeholders, it can be overlaid with previously available data sets, which then becomes a pain As and when such re-identific-

"The last draft that we saw in

2019 didn't really give us any detail about what kind of non-personal data, the process the government will have to follow, whether there will have to be compensation. how consent and anonymisation will work. None of those things are dealt with. I think it largely leaves the framework for how that will happen in a subsidiary legislation," Udbhav Tiwari, public policy advisor, Mozilla, told indianexpress.com over a call. The risks and obligations that

accompany transfer of personal data and government asking for non-personal data sets will negatively impact both companies and individuals, another senior public policy executive said. One of the best examples of re-identification, Tiwari said, was companies using browsing history to identify and predict the behaviour of individual users on the internet. Full report on

www.indianexpress.com

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WTC FINAL IN SOUTHAMPTON: GANGULY

India will play their inaugural World Test Championship final against New Zealand at Southampton's Ageas Bowl from June 18-22, BCCI president Sourav Ganguly confirmed. Initially, the final was supposed to be held at Lord's but Southampton, with a five-star facility inside the stadium, will make it easier for both the ICC and the England and Wales Cricket Board to create a bio-bubble for the two teams.

BRIEFLY

In Rome, Bajrang wins gold, bronze for Kaliramana

ROME:Olympic-bound wrestler **Bajrang Punia** pulled off a two-pointer in the last 30 seconds of the gold medal bout



to defend his title at the Matteo Pellicone Ranking Series event, a result that propelled him back to world number one rank. Up against Mongolia's Tulga Tumur Ochir, Bajrang was trailing 0-2 till the final moments of the 65kg final but managed to level the scores, 30 seconds from the final whistle. Since the last scoring point came from the Indian, he was declared the winner on criteria on Sunday night.

Bajrang's leg defence seemed to be a particularly improved aspect of his game in the one-year break, forced by the coronavirus pandemic. The 27year-old though said he needs to work more on his defence as he is eyeing a medal at the Tokyo Games. "I found that my leg defence has improved compared to where it was before the break. I have got better but it still needs more work. I also need to be better on my attacking moves," Bajrang told PTI. Vishal Kaliramana too impressed in the non-Olympic 70kg category by winning a bronze with a 5-1 win over Syrbaz Talgat from Kazakhstan.

Laporta elected FC Barcelona's president

BARCELONA: Barcelona members



elected **Joan Laporta** as club president on Sunday, turning to the man who oversaw one of

their most successful periods to lead them out of an institutional and financial crisis, Laporta, who was Barca president between 2003 and 2010, won a resounding 54.28% of total votes, while Victor Font came second with 29.99% and Toni Freixa was third with 8.58%.

Laporta, 58, succeeds Josep Maria Bartomeu, who resigned as president in October to avoid facing a vote of no confidence from members who turned on him after Lionel Messi tried to leave the club last August and the team were beaten 8-2 by Bayern Munich in the Champions League. Messi was among several Barca players to vote in the election a day after winning 2-0 at Osasuna to go second in La Liga. Barca said 51.765 out of 109.531 eligible members had voted in the election, which was postponed from January due to coronavirus restrictions in

Atanu, Deepika in Archery team for Olympics

NEW DELHI: Seasoned Atanu Das and Tarundeeep Rai among men and Deepika Kumari in the women's section will headline the Indian recurve archery contingent during this year's Tokyo Olympics. After the final selection trials (Trial 3) at the Army Institute of Sports in Pune, a sixstrong squad which has three male and equal number of female archers was selected for the quadrennial extravaganza. Besides Atanu and Tarundeep, the other archer in the Indian men's team is Pravin Jadhav, while Ankita Bhakat and Komolika Bari complete the women's squad. "The selection for the Olympic team on a points system took into consideration the scores of Trial 2 that took place in November 2020, the scores . of this trial and whether the archer had won an Olympic quota," a release issued by the Sports Authority of India stated. AGENCIES

Don't worry about Kohli

Skipper hasn't scored a ton in a long time, but his wristy play in recent games hints that a big one is round the corner

SRIRAM VEERA MUMBAI, MARCH 8

THERE HAS been some kerfuffle about Virat Kohli's form. Apparently, he is struggling to get hundreds. His last Test ton came in November 2019, and the last one in ODIs came in August that year.

But there's no reason to fret too much as Kohli has been not just in great touch in nearly all the recent games, but scoring pretty consistently. Even in the ODI and T20 series in Australia, he racked up a couple of 80s. But it's to his last few Tests that one has to zoom into to see how solid he has been.

It's the wrists that reveal the health of Kohli's batting. At times, he even wrists his extra-cover drives, especially against spinners, and his straight drives too have a lot of wrist in them. In the last few Tests, his wrists have kicked in a lot in his defensive game.

Like in the first innings of the pinkball game in Adelaide, where Kohli was India's most serene and solid batsman. He was largely hassle-free against seamers, moving forward and back precisely, and his game against Nathan Lyon stood out for the clarity of thought. The angle at which the bat comes down helps and Kohli also trusts his hands to flow well ahead of his pads. Combined with his wristy bottom hand, it allowed him to work the ball to midwicket. Another factor is that Kohli rarely allows himself to be caught on the crease.

Stalwarts impressed

England legend Graham Gooch raved about Kohli's back-foot play in the second Test in Chennai, where he made a splendid 62 in 200 minutes of masterful defensive play. "Just how wonderfully he played off the back foot! The most important element is to have to the ability to play spin off the back foot. All good players do that. Did you see how he tackled Moeen Ali from an off-stump guard and combined it with his back-foot play? Against [left-arm spinner] Jack Leach too, he pressed back often," Gooch told this newspaper.

It's the wrists that allow Kohli to trust his back-foot play. Even as the ball is climbing, he makes his own length by pressing back, and then if the ball turns sharply towards his hips, he rides the bounce with his wrists. "Some batsmen can be all arms in their defensive play, they push too hard and you can't do that," Gooch says. Sunil Gavaskar too was enamoured by Kohi's back-foot play in the same knock. "Back



Virat Kohli's supple wrists reveal the health of his batting. AP

foot means you are actively pressing back, gaining time and distance to manoeuvre the ball by creating your own length. Not just standing back. Kohli did that. He used the depth of the crease absolutely brilliantly," Gavaskar told this newspaper.

At home on both feet

In Adelaide, Kohli showed impeccable control on the front foot to spin, and did so off the back foot in Chennai. In the third Test at Motera, Kohli again displayed his back-foot play.

In the last Test, he again fell feeling for the ball on a lifter. Even here, the way his wrists came into play was revealing. It was a nasty delivery that kicked up from short of a length and as his hands started to betray him by moving towards the projectile away from the body, Kohli made one last-instant attempt to salvage the wreckage with his wrists. He took the bottom hand off and tried to flip the top hand up and over with

a wristy snap, but the ball was too quick and rising for him to keep it down.

The only times Kohli disappointed was when he got slightly ahead of himself, with a predetermination to attack. The first came in the second innings in Adelaide during the 36 all out. Seeing the procession of wickets, he decided to be positive but ended up chasing a wide one from Pat Cummins to edge it to gully. The second came in the first innings of the second Test in Chennai when he seemingly pre-decided to attack from the start and fell trying an expansive cover drive against the turn to a ball from Moeen that darted in from the rough.

The wrists have it

In the book, Virat Kohli, the making of a champion, the authors write about a fascinating phase when he was about 11 involving his childhood coach Rajkumar Sharma. "It was for playing the flick shot that I scolded him the most. This was because he used to play the flick early in his innings without pulling his leg towards the leg stump. The boy was trying to flick balls from the middle-and off-stump. He was getting out LBW a lot in the early days, but mastered that shot," coach Sharma is quoted in the book. The flick shot from middle stump was banned for a month when they worked on feet movement. "He worked really hard on it. Earlier, he was not going forward full length to approach the ball, but slowly that was changing too."

Once Kohli ironed out the flaw, the flick shots started to flow as the wrists kept whipping the balls, something he continues to do to this day.

When Kohli's wrists are kicking into his shots, all is well with his world. Considering there has been lots of wristy play in the Tests, it won't be a surprise if he makes England bleed runs in white-ball

VIJAY HAZARE

Padikkal's 4th successive ton propels K'taka into semis

New Delhi: Young opener Devdutt Padikkal sent a strong message to the national selectors before England ODIs as he slammed his fourth consecutive List A ton as Karnataka beat Kerala by 80 runs in a quarter-final game of the Vijay Hazare Trophy on Monday.

Karnataka rode on skipper Ravikumar Samarth's knock of 192 off 158 balls and a stroke-filled 101 by 20-year-old left-handed Padikkal (off 119 balls) to post an imposing 338/3 and then bundled out the opposition for 258. Kerala's decision to put Karnataka into bat at the Air Force ground backfired badly, as Samarth and Padikkal toyed with their attack with a massive 249-run partnership for the first wicket. Samarth, a 28-year-old right-hander, hammered 22 boundaries and three sixes in his 158-ball knock. He completed his century in 112 balls and was aggressive right from the start, while Padikkal hammered 10 boundaries and two maximums.

It was a Samarth-Padikkal show as Karnataka were going strong at 196/0 after 35 overs having laid the foundation for a mammoth total. While Padikkal continued his fabulous show in the national ODI tournament and in the process scored his 4th consecutive List A century and became the first Indian to do so, Samarth surpassed veteran Wasim Jaffer's unbeaten 170 to register the highest score in a Vijay Hazare knock-out match.

After Padikkal fell in the 43rd over, Samarth upped the ante while Manish Pandey (34 not out) played his role to perfection. Samarth fell in the 49th over but had ensured that his side went past the 315-run mark. For Kerala, right-arm medium pacer Basil NP (3/57) was the pick of the bowlers, while others had an off-day.

BRIEF SCORES: Karnataka 338/3 (Ravikumar Samarth 192, Devdutt Padikkal 101; Basil NP 3/57) beat Kerala 258 (Vathsal Govind 92; M Azharuddeen 52; Ronit More 5/36, Shreyas Gopal 2/64) by 80 runs.

PURPLE PATCH



Devdutt Padikkal in the ongoing Vijay Hazare Trophy. 152 (140) vs Odisha 126* (138) vs Kerala 145* (125) vs Railways

With help from Ali & Rocky, Kaushik defeats mental block to win gold During rehab, the focus was to let his body

NITIN SHARMA

BY LAST December, Manish Kaushik was physically ready to rejoin the camp after the surgery on his right bicep. But there was a mental block, and coaches CA Kuttappa and Santiago Nieva could sense the fear. The coaches had a sit-down with the 25-yearold, who opened up over the next few sparring sessions.

"The injury meant that I had a mental block in terms of international competition as well as fear of injuring the bicep again initially," says the 25-year-old. "But once the coaches and I realised that I was playing without the fear, it was about executing the plans in Spain."

The plans paid off as the light-welterweight boxer struck gold at the Boxam International Tournament in Spain in his return to competition in over a year. "To have wins against boxers like world number four Safiullin Zakir and other European boxers in Spain has put me in a perfect mental shape ahead of the Olympics," Kaushik said.

In March last year, the Worlds bronze medallist had become the ninth Indian boxer to secure an Olympic quota at Jordan, where

he scored a 4:1 win over CWG champion Harrison Garside of Australia. During the bout, the Haryana boxer suffered a right bicep injury after a hit from Garside's elbow. A week after the contingent's return to India, the nation-wide lockdown due to Covid-19 meant that Kaushik remained confined to his home at Devsar village near Bhiwani.

"Initially, I thought it was just swelling and played the bout against Garside with it as it was my chance to qualify for the Olympics. Under the lockdown, I could only do shadow boxing and fitness drills at home and when the swelling and pain did not subside, I informed the coaches and the bicep tear was diagnosed," says Kaushik.

After three months at home, Kaushik's injury was diagnosed in Mumbai by Dr Dinshaw Pardiwala, who recommended immediate surgery.

Weeks later, Kaushik shifted base to Army Sports Institute (ASI) at Pune, where he underwent rehabilitation under ASI staff, Olympic Gold Quest (OGQ) and Sports Authority of India.

"Like any athlete, I faced some fear of operation and whether I will be able to make a comeback or not. Dr Pardiwala made sure that he had regular sessions with me and my physio Aalaap would regularly update him



Manish Kaushik (left) struck gold in his first competitive outing in a year.

and coaches about the rehab process," says Kaushik.

It was only in September that the boxer could return to training under national coach

Subedar Jai Singh Patil. "The lockdown meant that Manish remained at home for more than three months and his weight increased from 62-63 Kg to close to 75 Kgs.

recover but once that happened, we reduced his fat intake," says Patil. While the fellow boxers and national

coaches would train in Patiala or Bellary, coach Patil made sure that his ward remained positive under a strict lockdown in "My family stays in Pune and I did not

meet them even once during those four months as I did not want to let Manish stay alone," says Patil.

"We would make him watch the Rocky movies, gave him books on Muhammad Ali and talk about his old bouts. We knew that Manish could not spar so we made him punch against a Swiss ball against my

And when Kaushik returned to the national camp, Kuttappa and high-performance director Nieva made him spar with lower weight boxers like Sachin Siwach and Kavinder Bisht and gradually against heavier boxers including Duryodhan Negi prior to the trip to Spain.

'Manish reminded of his old self in Spain," says Nieva. "The win against Kazakh boxer, who was trying to impose himself, showed that Manish's movement and longdistance punches were back to best."

How the offside rule in football could change because of Wenger's proposal

MIHIR VASAVDA NEW DELHI, MARCH 8

IN NOVEMBER 2019, the phrase 'armpit offside' entered football vocabulary.

In an English Premier League match that season, Liverpool's Roberto Firmino scored a goal against Aston Villa but it was disallowed by the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) after the forward was ruled offside. So close was the call that the Premier League wrote on its official Twitter handle: "...his armpit, which was marginally ahead of the last Villa defender." The decision led to a furore over offside laws and the role of the VAR.

However, such decisions could soon be a thing of the past. World football's governing body FIFA will be trying a new offside law, proposed by legendary football manager Arsene Wenger, in what is said to be the biggest change to the rule for a century.

Wenger's proposal

Wenger, who is called 'The Professor' for his ideas and managerial abilities, proposed a change to the existing offside rule in October last year.

According to his theory, a player should be judged offside only if any part of the body with which he can score a goal is past the last defender.

"I would like it to be that there is no offside so long as a [single] body part which a player can score with is in line with the defender. This could be too much of an advantage for an attacker because that obliges the defenders to play higher up," Wenger told

After a meeting of the International Football Association Body (IFAB), which forms the laws of the game, FIFA said they would try this rule in a Chinese league. Based on the reports of the trials, they would decide if it can be applied globally.



Currently if a player even has a part of an arm past the last defender, it is an offside. Wenger wants an off side decision only if a body part with which a goal can be scored is past the defender. Suvajit Dey

The current rule

While FIFA has tinkered with a lot of other rules of football, the offside law has one of the most controversial ones. If Wenger's proposal is accepted, it

would be the biggest change to the offside rule since 1925. That year, the number of defenders, including the goalkeeper, that had to be between the attacker and the goal was changed from

In 1990, the rule was amended to specify that if the attacker was level with the last defender (outfield player

three to two

and not goalkeeper), when the ball was played forward, he would not be offside. There are a couple of other points with regards to the current offside rule: A player cannot be offside if he is in his own defensive half of the field or if the game starts with a throw-in. It becomes one (in case of a throw-in) only when the partic-

by and large been untouched despite being ular player is involved in the move.

Impact of the proposed rule

If Wenger's idea is made a rule, it would simplyfy the offside rule to some extent. The criticism of VAR is it has started to flag situations where even millimetres of toes and fingers that stray beyond the last defender – or armpit, in Firmino's case – as offside.

However, that could change going forward. For instance, if the majority of a players' body is in an

offside position when the ball is passed to him but his foot, head or shoulder are in line with the last defender, then he would not be considered offside and the goal, if scored, would stand.

As Wenger pointed out in his interview with L'Equipe, the rule would also make the game a lot more attacking as it would give the forwards a lot of leeway when they attempt to sneak behind the defence line to score goals.

How would it have impacted games

If the 'Wenger Law' would be applied to the 2006 Champions League final, then the controversial goal Samuel Eto'o scored for Barcelona against Wenger's Arsenal would have been disallowed.

With Barcelona trailing by a goal, Eto'o received a pass from Henrik Larsson and slotted it past the Arsenal goalkeeper. Replays, however, suggested Eto'o was offside. Wenger has pointed out several times that if VAR existed back then, the goal would have been disallowed. Even with his own theory, the goal would not have stood since Eto'o would be ruled offside as his leg was marginally past the last defender.

Firmino's 'armpit offside', though, would not have stood if this rule was applied, leaving the football lexicon that much poorer -

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