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EXPRESS investigation

Ministry's special fund is for top athletes, bureaucrats dip into it to upgrade their own sports facilities

Official panel disbursed National Sports Development Fund money to build, refurbish sports facilities in showpiece New Delhi residential complex for bureaucrats. Funds also went to Civil Services Officers' Institute

Mihir Vasavda
New Delhi, Mumbai, May 13

Tucked inside New Moti Bagh, an upscale residential complex in Lutyens' Delhi where many of India's top bureaucrats live, children slice through the water in a temperature-controlled pool beneath a transparent canopy. Nearby, a teenager drills forehands on a gleaming tennis court. The facilities look public, but guards at the gate decide who gets in.

About 3 km away, a squash court at the Civil Services Officers' Institute (CSOI) sits empty on a mid-week afternoon. Scuff marks on the side walls hint at an evening rush. Outside, a signboard declares the rules of entry: No ID, no access.

AN INVESTIGATION by *The Indian Express* has found that the money used to build, or refurbish, these world-class facilities meant for some of the country's top bureaucrats came from the National Sports Development Fund (NSDF)—a fund created to train athletes and build sporting infrastructure, and allotted by a committee of bureaucrats. *The Indian Express* investigated five years of official records and data obtained under the RTI Act, and interviewed current and former Government officials, to find that while a chunk of these funds was indeed allotted for sports facilities, a slice of the pie was also channelled into civil services institutions and the Delhi colony



This temperature-controlled swimming pool at the New Moti Bagh clubhouse in New Delhi is one of the sports facilities funded by a Rs 2.2-crore NSDF grant in 2024. MIHIR VASAVDA

Parliament panel's red flag: Fund is shrinking, use it responsibly

Mihir Vasavda
Mumbai, May 13

CONTRIBUTIONS TO the National Sports Development Fund (NSDF) have more than halved in three years — from Rs 85.26 crore in 2023-24 to Rs 37.02 crore in 2025-26, records obtained by *The Indian Express* under the Right To Information (RTI) Act show.

The slide prompted a Parliamentary panel to raise the red flag last August, linking the decline to waning corporate faith in the Sports Authority of India (SAI) and a growing preference among donors for privately run sports organisations.

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

NSDF: Dipping contributions



Fund managed by 12-member council, grants okayed by panel of six officials

Mihir Vasavda
Mumbai, May 13

What is the National Sports Development Fund (NSDF)?

The NSDF was established in 1998 under the Charitable Endowments Act, 1890. It is funded by donations from the public and private sectors, Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), and charities or non-profits, with contributions from the Government.

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AMID PRIME MINISTER'S CALL FOR AUSTERITY MEASURES

Gold, silver import duty raised to 15% in bid to secure forex

Officials say move intended to curb non-essential imports, support rupee

Aanchal Magazine
New Delhi, May 13

INSIDE PAGE 5 GOVT BANS SUGAR EXPORT

TO PRESERVE foreign exchange, the government Wednesday hiked the customs duty on gold and silver imports from 5% to 10%, and Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess (AIDC) from 1% to 5%, taking the total effective import duty to 15%.

This may be the first of a

series of measures to bring stability to the capital account and prevent the rupee from further depreciation. It closed at 95.71 to a US dollar on Wednesday, losing almost 5 per cent since

the beginning of the West Asia conflict. There are discussions already in the government about hiking petrol and diesel prices with global crude oil sizzling at over \$100 a barrel and state-owned oil marketing companies suffering losses of almost Rs 1,000 crore to Rs 1,200 crore a day.

The import duty hike on gold comes in the wake of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for austerity measures and appeal to citizens to reduce petroleum consumption, avoid non-essential foreign travel and gold

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Diljit Dosanjh's last Indian passport was issued in 2018; got US citizenship in 2022

Dosanjh no to politics may have another reason: he's now US citizen

Varinder Bhatia
Chandigarh, May 13

LEADING PUNJABI singer and Bollywood actor Diljit Dosanjh, who has turned down an appeal to enter politics in Punjab, is not an Indian citizen. Not for a while now.

Dosanjh, whose signature, pride-filled declaration *Main Hoon Punjab* (I am Punjab) serves as a powerful affirmation of his cultural identity and roots, acquired US citizenship in 2022, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

He has been travelling on a US passport since September 1, 2022. His last Indian passport was issued in Mumbai in 2018. Prior to that, his Indian passport was issued in Zambia.

Dosanjh's spouse Sandeep Kaur too is a US national. At the time of acquiring US citizenship, he had shown his residential address — a 5-bedroom, 3107sqm bungalow — in an upscale locality of California.

He used his US passport to

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

NEET whistleblower first went to police, no FIR, so wrote to testing agency

Hamza Khan
Sikar, May 13

AT AROUND 1:30 am on May 4, several hours after the NEET (UG) 2026 examination had wrapped up, a teacher with a prominent coaching centre in Sikar reached the district's Udyog Nagar police station with a bunch of pages in his hand.

"He had brought a stack of papers with him, alleging ir-

regularities in the just concluded NEET paper," Udyog Nagar SHO Rajesh Kumar told *The Indian Express*.

"The staff present at the police station heard him and handed him a blank sheet of paper, asking him to submit a written complaint. However, he simply left," claimed the

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Karnataka scraps hijab ban order, students can wear limited faith symbols

Kiran Parashar
Bengaluru, May 13

FOUR YEARS after the then BJP-led government banned the wearing of headscarves including the hijab in government and government-aided education institutions in the state, the Karnataka government Wednesday withdrew the order, and allowed students to wear limited religious or faith-based symbols along with the prescribed uniform.

The February 5, 2022 order had led to protests and

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CORRECTION & CLARIFICATION

PAGE 13, 12.05.2026
 The closing figure for the Sensex on May 11, 2026 was inaccurately mentioned in the market dashboard. The correct closing figure was 76,015.28. The error is regretted.

NIA arrests narco-terror kingpin Shera after Portugal extradition

Express News Service
 New Delhi, May 13

CALLING IT a major victory against Pakistan-backed narco-terrorism, the NIA on Wednesday arrested fugitive Iqbal Singh alias Shera at IGI Airport Delhi, hours after securing his extradition from Portugal.

Shera allegedly masterminded a Punjab-based network smuggling heroin from Pakistan, channeling drug proceeds via hawala network to Hizbul Mujahideen operatives in Kashmir and Pakistan for terror activities. "Shera, a key conspirator in the Hizbul terror financing case, had fled to Portugal in 2020 following a non-bailable warrant against him. An Interpol Red Notice had been active since June 2021," an NIA said.

"He had coordinated and overseen the trafficking and distribution of the smuggled drugs, and channelled the proceeds through hawala networks," the spokesperson further added.

31 killed as storm, heavy rain pound several districts of UP

Press Trust of India
 Bhadohi, Fatehpur (UP), May 13

AT LEAST 31 people were killed on Wednesday after a powerful storm accompanied by heavy rains caused widespread damage in Bhadohi, Budaun, Fatehpur and Sonbhadra districts of Uttar Pradesh, officials said.

The officials said at least 16 persons have lost their lives in Bhadohi, nine in Fatehpur, five in Budaun and one in Sonbhadra district.

In Bhadohi, Additional District Magistrate Kunwar Virendra Kumar Maurya said reports were coming from several areas about uprooted trees, electricity poles and damaged houses.

He said restoration and rescue operations faced difficulties because mobile networks were disrupted due to the storm.

Maurya said sub-divisional magistrates, tehsildars, other district officials and police were inspecting and carrying out relief work across all three tehsils of the district.

In a post on X, Bhadohi police said that 16 people died in separate incidents in the district due to a dust storm, while six were injured, of whom two were serious.

In Fatehpur, nine persons were killed, and 16 were injured in storm-related incidents.

Additional District Magistrate Avinash Tripathi said,



Rescue work underway after a tree fell on a road during a dust storm in Prayagraj on Wednesday. ANI

"Eight persons, including five women, were killed in Khaga tehsil, in Sadar tehsil, one woman was killed due to a house wall collapse. A total of nine deaths have been reported in storm-related incidents, while 16 people were injured."

In Budaun, five persons, including two minor girls, were killed and as many were injured in separate incidents caused by a severe dust storm and rain.

In Siddhpur Kaitholi village under Bisoli police station limits, two girls — Mausami (10) and Rajni (9) — died after a mud wall of a hut collapsed on them during the storm, police sources said.

The girls, along with two women identified as Kallo and Neha, had taken shelter in the

hut after strong winds began. The wall collapsed in the storm, leaving all four trapped under the debris. While the two girls died on the spot, the women sustained serious injuries, officials said.

In another incident in Tark Paroli village under Faizganj Behta police station area, a woman identified as Laxmi (40) died after a tree fell on a tubewell room where several people had taken shelter from the storm. The roof of the structure collapsed, injuring three others, including a woman named Geeta, whose condition is stated to be critical.

In a separate accident near Bilsi Road in Bisoli area, truck driver Yogesh (32) died after a eucalyptus tree uprooted and

fell on his vehicle, police said. Another youth, Anshul Sharma (22), a resident of Sahukara locality in Bisoli, succumbed to injuries after a tree fell on him during the storm when he was on his way to deliver food to his father, they said.

Additional Superintendent of Police (Rural) Hridesh Kumar Kataria said five people have died in storm-related incidents in Bisoli and Faizganj Behta police station areas, while around five others were injured.

In Sonbhadra, one person, identified as Madhav Singh (38), died after a tree fell on him when he stopped to take shelter under it. The incident took place in the Punnaganj police station area, police said.

SABARIMALA REFERENCE

'Constitution entrusts religious reform to legislature not courts'

Ananthkrishnan G
 New Delhi, May 13

THE CONSTITUTION "did not create a secular court as the reformatory overlord of the religious traditions of 1.4 billion citizens" and entrusted the mechanism of religious reform to the legislature "to be exercised at the pace at which a democratic society arrives at consensus", the Centre told the Supreme Court on Wednesday, pitching for denotation status for devotees of the Sabarimala temple deity Lord Ayyappa.

"If courts may reform religion in the absence of legislation, whenever they determine that a practice offends the Constitution, there is, in practice, no limit on the judicial reformation of religious traditions. Every denomination's internal discipline, every temple's mode of worship, every faith's institutional arrangements become permanently available for constitutional challenge. This consequence is not hypothetical; it has occurred in the Sabarimala case," the Centre stated.

These submissions are part of Solicitor General Tushar Mehta's rejoinder to the arguments made by parties defending the SC intervention in allowing women to enter the Sabarimala temple.

Mehta, appearing for the Centre before a nine-judge bench hearing the Sabarimala reference, said the Constitution had instead "created fundamen-

“If courts may reform religion in the absence of legislation, whenever they determine that a practice offends the Constitution, there is, in practice, no limit on the judicial reformation of religious traditions.”

CENTRE TO SUPREME COURT

tal rights on religious freedoms, with a specific and democratic mechanism of reform" vested in the legislature. Courts could intervene when something was contrary to public order, health, or morality, he said, "but not as a part of reform".

The bench presided by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and also comprising Justices B V Nagarathna, M M Sundresh, Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Aravind Kumar, A G Masih, Prasanna B Varale, R Mahadevan and Joyimalya Bagchi, is considering questions arising from petitions seeking review of the SC's September 28, 2018, judgment striking down age restrictions on entry of women to the Sabarimala temple in Kerala.

Mehta argued that Article 25(2)(b), which provides for legislation for social welfare and reform, consciously entrusted reform to the legislature, to ensure that "such reform and welfare

emanate from a constitutional body reflecting the will of the people". Reform and welfare measures, he said, "must emanate from within the people to be acceptable and long-lasting".

During the hearing, Justice Amanullah sought to disagree with the argument and said: "Saying leave it to the legislature may not be tentatively acceptable as it would mean... majoritarianism."

Mehta said he was only arguing that if a practice is directly challenged, the court will ask those challenging it to go to the legislature, but if a law is challenged, the court must examine it.

CJI Kant also intervened and said that "the question of religious practice has nothing to do with the majoritarian principle or minority principle. Minorities can have their own religious practice, and the majority can have their own. All are protected under Article 25... We are only examining the extent of that".

Justice Bagchi also raised questions on the Centre's stand. "It's not majoritarianism that the court is bothered about. The court is bothered about majoritarianism trumping constitutionalism. And that is the Lakshman rekha. We are committed to a democracy, which is definitely a test of numbers, but we are also a constitutional democracy. So even if a majority feels that a particular thing is to be done, the courts have that role to test that decision from constitutional principles," he said.

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Gold, silver import

purchases for a year as part of measures to help the country deal with global disruptions and challenges.

The government has also increased import duty on gold and silver findings to 5% — the findings are small components such as hooks, clasps, clasps, pins, screws used to hold the whole or a part of a piece of jewellery in place. Platinum findings will attract a 5.4% import duty.

The effective import duty on platinum has also been increased to 15.4% from 6.4%.

Additionally, a 3% Integrated GST (IGST) will be payable on all imports of precious metals in addition to the basic customs duty and AIDC. All these measures will help reduce outflows of foreign exchange; since the onset of the conflict, foreign exchange reserves have been depleted by almost \$38 billion.

Managing the current account credibly, financing it, and preventing further currency depreciation are the central macroeconomic imperatives of FY27, Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran had said on Tuesday. This imperative comes in the wake of concerns that even a current account deficit of 1% of GDP has been difficult to finance in recent years due to a confluence of factors leading to persistent weakness in the exchange rate, said analysts.

Officials said the move is a "carefully calibrated and proportionate intervention" to "encourage moderation in non-essential imports at a time when external vulnerabilities remain elevated".

"The government has increased the customs duty on imports of precious metals, including gold, gold dore, silver, silver dore, platinum, etc., as a policy measure aimed at safeguarding macroeconomic stability, conserving foreign exchange, and

moderating non-essential imports during a period of heightened global uncertainty arising from the ongoing West Asia crisis," an official said. The increase in customs duty on precious metals, the official said, is intended to moderate avoidable import demand and ease pressure on the external account.

Impact on current account deficit

Gold constitutes the second-biggest item in India's import bill after crude oil imports. In FY26, the country's gold imports jumped by 24.1% to \$71.97 billion compared to \$58 billion in the previous financial year.

This was largely due to the value of gold prices, with gold imports falling to 721.04 tonnes in FY26 as against 757.09 tonnes in the previous financial year, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Gold prices have surged over 40% in the last year, inflating the import bill.

The current geopolitical situation has created significant volatility in global crude oil markets and international shipping routes, officials said, adding that as a large importer of crude oil, India remains vulnerable to elevated energy prices and supply-side disruptions, which can increase the import bill, exert pressure on inflation, and the CAD.

"In such circumstances, prudent management of the country's external sector becomes essential. Historically, customs duty adjustments have been used as one of several policy instruments to support macro-economic stability and effectively manage CAD-related pressures during periods of global volatility," the official said.

Forex conservation

A depreciating rupee is also adding to the country's import bill burden. Officials said precious metals, while culturally and financially significant, are "predominantly consumption and investment driven" in nature and such imports involve "substantial outflow of foreign exchange".

"Precious metals occupy a unique position in the import basket because they involve significant foreign exchange outflows while being relatively less linked to productive industrial activity compared to sectors such as energy, manufacturing inputs, infrastructure, or technology," the official said.

India's foreign exchange resources, therefore, must be prioritised towards essential imports such as crude oil, fertilisers, industrial raw materials, defence requirements, critical technologies, and capital goods, the official said.

"These imports directly support economic activity, food security, infrastructure, manufacturing, exports, and national security," the official said.

The rupee hit an all-time low Tuesday, falling to as much as 95.75 per dollar during the day before closing at 95.63 — the lowest it has ever ended a session. Since the war in West Asia began, the rupee has slumped by almost 5% against the US dollar and has been Asia's worst performing currency so far in 2026 — a period in which it has fallen by 6%. Over the last few years, India has seen significant foreign exchange outflows on account of higher gold imports and spending on overseas travel under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS). The pressure on India's external sector has been felt amid the West Asia war with forex reserves plummeting by \$38 billion in just two months since the start of the conflict, and crude oil prices continuing to hover over \$100 a barrel.



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov, in New Delhi on Wednesday. PTI

Ties with Russia more valuable in volatile times, says Jaishankar

Shubhajit Roy
 New Delhi, May 13

AFTER MEETING the visiting Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in New Delhi on Wednesday, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said the political co-operation between India and Russia is even "more valuable in an uncertain and volatile global environment".

Jaishankar said that he and Lavrov held "productive" talks shortly after the Russian foreign minister landed in New Delhi to attend the two-day BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting starting Thursday. In a post on social media platform X, Jaishankar said, "Our conversation touched upon several aspects of the India-Russia Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership, including trade and investment, energy and connectivity, science and technology, as well as facilitating mobility of skills and talent... Other global and multilat-

eral issues of mutual interest were also discussed."

Earlier, in his opening remarks at the meeting, Jaishankar said India and Russia have a shared interest in strengthening multipolarity and could benefit through greater "de-risking".

"The last few years have seen a steady and sustained growth in our bilateral partnership. Its economic and energy dimensions have become pronounced. Our political cooperation is even more valuable in an uncertain and volatile global environment," said Jaishankar.

"We have expanded our collaboration in science and technology. The mobility of talents and skills has acquired greater salience and our interest in ensuring better connectivity is deeper," he added. Jaishankar also met Brazil's Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira and South Africa's Minister for International Relations Ozzy Lamola, who are in Delhi for the BRICS meeting.

AIMIM corporator's house where Nashik case accused 'stayed' razed

Zeeshan Shaikh
 Mumbai, May 13

THE CHHATRAPATI Sambhaji Nagar Municipal Corporation (CSMC) on Wednesday razed three structures linked to AIMIM corporator Matin Patel that included the house where Nashik TCS case accused Nida Khan allegedly stayed before her arrest. The operation, carried out amid heavy police deployment, triggered allegations by the AIMIM of selective targeting.

Among the demolished properties was the Kausar Baug house from where Khan was allegedly traced, a structure in Naregaon used by Patel as an office, and a portion of Patel's residence in Naregaon where he lived with his family. While the Kausar Baug property and office structure were completely razed, the residential premises were partially demolished. Patel's family had ap-



Demolition underway in Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar, Wednesday. ANI

proached the civic body on Tuesday, submitting documents and seeking 15 days to file a detailed response. Patel had also moved the Aurangabad Bench of the Bombay High Court seeking a stay on the demolition. The matter was posted for further hearing on May 18.

AIMIM state president Imtiaz Jaleel accused the authorities of acting in haste despite

assurances allegedly made before the court. "During Tuesday's hearing, the CSMC's lawyer orally assured the court that no action would be taken for seven days. The corporation pasted a 24-hour notice that was to expire at 12 pm on Wednesday and then carried out the demolition even before that deadline ended. This is a mockery of justice," Jaleel told *The Indian Express*.

BITS Pilani Goa PhD student dies by suicide

Express News Service
 Panaji, May 13

A 26-YEAR-OLD student pursuing PhD at BITS Pilani's Goa campus allegedly died by suicide at his rented accommodation here outside the college campus on Wednesday.

According to the police, the incident took place on Wednesday morning. A purported suicide note recovered from the spot stated that no one was responsible for his death, said police, adding that they have initiated inquest proceedings.

Six student deaths have been reported at the BITS Goa campus since December 2024. In the aftermath of the suicide cases at the institute in September last year, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant had announced an inquiry by a district-level monitoring committee. The committee conducted an assessment of the institutional ecosystem, student support mechanisms and mental-health response framework

at the campus, and submitted its report to the government on February 2.

In a statement to the press on Wednesday, the district administration said the committee observed that "suicide is a complex and multi-dimensional issue" and "cannot be attributed to any single reason or isolated circumstance".

In its report, the committee flagged "the possibility of a 'suicide contagion' or 'cluster effect', a phenomenon recognised in psychological and public-health literature wherein repeated exposure to suicide-related incidents may increase vulnerability among at-risk individuals, particularly young persons".

"Studies indicate that repetitive sensational or emotionally amplified reporting and circulation of such incidents can unintentionally contribute to emotional distress, identification with the deceased, and imitative behaviour among vulnerable individuals," the committee said.

NEET whistleblower

SHO, denying claims that the police turned him away.

It was on the evening of May 3 that the teacher had received the handwritten 'guess paper' from his landlord in Sikar, asking if it was indeed genuine. The landlord, in turn, had received it from his son in Kerala.

Once he cross-checked the paper, the teacher found that the 'guess paper' indeed had questions that appeared in the actual NEET examination and decided to approach the police.

For the next few days, he contemplated the magnitude of what he had just come across and was apprehensive about how to proceed. "He had also approached journalists before approaching the police, but considering the unusual

circumstances, his allegations did not receive much interest from them," officials said.

"It was because of the backing by the owner of his coaching centre that he eventually decided to write to the National Testing Agency (NTA)," a top official told *The Indian Express*.

Sometime after 9:30 pm on May 7, he finally sent his complaint to the NTA. In his complaint, he said that it is a pdf file of approximately 60 pages and appears to be a handwritten document, having 90 questions of chemistry and seven-eight pages of biology questions, it is learnt. "I am willing to submit my mobile for forensic investigation and have full proof, considering the magnitude and importance of the NEET

examination and the impact of such acts that may have on the lives of the students," he wrote in his complaint, accessed by *The Indian Express*.

"This matter requires investigation by an independent agency. The circumstances show that it involves unlawful access, circulation and transmission. So I most respectfully request that an immediate inquiry be initiated into the alleged paper leak," it stated.

Sources said that after an initial investigation, he was cleared of any wrongdoing, especially since he had received the 'guess paper' only after the completion of the examination.

It was the teacher's letter that led to the NTA alerting the central agencies, with the matter eventually leading to an investigation by the Special Operations Group of Rajasthan and then the CBI.

Hijab ban

heightened communal tensions in several parts of Karnataka. As the row escalated, the matter went to the courts. While the Karnataka High Court upheld the ban order, a Supreme Court bench delivered a split verdict and asked that the matter be referred to a larger bench.

On Wednesday, Karnataka School Education and Literacy Minister Madhu Bangarappa said the 2022 order related to religious attire in education institutions had been withdrawn, and a new order would allow students to wear "limited traditional and practice-based symbols" along with the prescribed uniform.

Citing an incident in which three students, appearing for the Karnataka Common Entrance Test (CET) on April 23, were made to remove the sacred thread (janu/yajnopaveetha),

Bangarappa said that while education is the prime focus, students will be allowed to practise their religious identity and there should be no discrimination.

Asked if there was a demand for a new dress code, he said there were demands and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had directed that these be looked into.

The new rules, he said, are intended to respect all religions and castes, ensuring "when children come to school for education, they don't face any kind of hardship."

The new order mandates that all government schools, aided institutions, private schools, and pre-university colleges continue to prescribe and enforce uniforms. However, it now permits students to wear limited religious or faith-based symbols in addition to the prescribed uniform, provided such symbols complement the uniform and do not replace, alter or undermine its purpose.

The order specifically lists symbols that students are commonly known to wear, including the petta or turban, janivara or sacred thread, Shivadara, Rudrakshi, headscarf or hijab, and other similar religious or faith-based markers, stating that these shall be permitted. It, however, adds that these must not pose a threat to discipline, safety, or student identification.

The order states that no student shall be denied admission, academic progress, examination access or participation in any educational activity solely on the grounds of wearing such religious symbols. Equally, no student shall be compelled to wear any such symbol.

State Health and Family Welfare Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said the aim was to stop discouraging children from practising their religion. "Won't the children feel hurt when they are asked to remove the kumkuma, hijab or a turban? It is to put an end to discrimination," he said.

Dosanjh

travel to India last month. Sources said he has been travelling to India on an e-visa since September 2022 — this means he does not hold an OCI card.

Last Saturday, a think tank of retired IAS officers, defence personnel and professionals in Punjab issued a full-page advertisement in a leading newspaper, urging Dosanjh to take over the political leadership of Punjab "brought to its knees by successive dispensations".

Dosanjh, however, declined the offer. In a post on X, he said, *Kadey v Nahi* (never). *Mera kaam entertainment karna* (My job is to entertain people). Am

very happy in my field. Thank you so much."

Even if he were to change his mind, Dosanjh cannot just jump into Indian politics. Under Section 6 of the Indian Citizenship Act, a foreign national can apply to seek Indian citizenship if he or she satisfies conditions, one of which stipulates that the applicant must have lived in India for 12 years in total before the application, including continuous residence during the immediately preceding 12 months and residence for 11 of the previous 14 years.

Multiple attempts by *The Indian Express* to contact Dosanjh for comment did not elicit a response. Phone calls and queries sent to his secretary Sonali Singh, Janamjai Sehgal (local

contact on his Indian visa application) remained unanswered.

Last week, Khalistan separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, a leader of the Sikhs for Justice banned by India, threatened Dosanjh for rebuking flag-waving Khalistan sympathisers at his concerts in the Canadian cities of Vancouver and Calgary.

Born on January 6, 1984 to Balbir Singh and Sukhwinder Kaur in Jalandhar's Dosanjh Kalan village, Dosanjh's first prominent musical album *Ishq Da Uda Ada* was released in 2004. He made his debut in Punjabi cinema in *The Lion of Punjab* (2011) and became very popular after *Jithe Mera Dil Luteya*. His role in *Uda Punjab* (2016) got him a Filmfare award in the Best Male Debut category.

Month after Noida workers' protest, NSA invoked against DU graduate, ex-journalist

Asad Rehman & Drishti Jain
Noida, May 13

EXACTLY A month since the workers' protest in Noida, which turned violent on April 13, two accused — Aakriti Chaudhary (25), a history graduate from Delhi University who hails from Durgapur in West Bengal, and a former journalist from Lucknow, Satyam Verma — have been booked under the stringent National Security Act (NSA).

"The two have been identified as active members of the Mazdoor Bigul Dasta and were found to have played a significant role in the violence, arson, and disorder during the protest," the police claimed on Wednesday, adding that they allegedly incited people in different parts of the district and attempted to disrupt public order. Meanwhile, the court reserved the orders in 31 bail applications filed by people who were arrested in connection with the violence. Additional District Government Counsel (crime) Dharmendra Jaint confirmed. The Noida police also requested a three-day police custody for some of the accused, which the court listed for hearing on May 15.

The protests and the violence that followed had prompted a police crackdown that led to 15 FIRs in which hundreds of people were booked and at least 60 put in jail. A month on, families of the accused — from a mason to a history major, from an NIT graduate to a private firm employee — say they are awaiting clarity on what happens next.

While 1,200 people had been detained in the wake of the protests, most were released in subsequent days, while around 60 remain in jail, facing charges ranging from rioting to attempt to murder. A total of 15 cases were lodged in connection with the protests and violence, Gautam Budh Nagar Additional Commissioner of Police (Law and Order)



Aakriti Chaudhary and Satyam Verma

Rajeev Narain Mishra said. Behind the stringent charges is the police claim that the riots were not organic but rather premeditated. Police have alleged that an "organised syndicate of outsiders" orchestrated the violence — a charge denied by the families of those arrested.

The family of Aakriti Chaudhary, against whom the police invoked the NSA on Wednesday, claimed she was picked up from the Botanical Garden Metro station in Noida on April 11. Police had said she was initially detained for disturbing the peace and public disorder under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, adding, "After taking her into custody, we investigated and found evidence of her involvement in organising the protest." Charges against her also include attempted murder, intent to cause death or grievous harm during the incident, endangering life or personal safety, and criminal conspiracy.

Chaudhary's father, Arun Chaudhary, works for Gana-shakti, the Communist Party of India mouthpiece. He asked how someone who was picked up on April 11 could be charged with violence that occurred two days later. "If the police are targeting certain ideologies, I myself hold some of them. What is wrong with having them? I'm proud that my daughter was raising her voice for workers' rights. She is the Bhagat Singh of today. She's still bold, and whenever we meet her in jail,

she tells me not to lose hope. There is such heavy police deployment whenever I meet her, as if our children are terrorists," he said.

Along with Chaudhary, two others — Shristi Gupta (25) of Amethi and Rupesh Roi from Bihar — were arrested on the same charges. While Roi's family was unavailable for comment, Gupta's advocate, Rajnish Yadav, said that PhD students and social workers were simply "helping out" the workers. He, too, asked why Gupta was charged for the violence that occurred two days later. "When these students and social workers heard the plight of the labourers, they came out in their support through speeches and street plays. Just like during the farmers' protests, when people came from far-off places to show solidarity, these people too showed their support," he claimed.

Lucknow-based journalist Satyam Verma, the second person against whom the NSA was invoked, was picked up from his residence. His friend, Katyayani (67), said Verma worked for 15 years as a journalist in Delhi and Lucknow in *Univarta*, and is the editor of *"Bhagat Singh aur Unke Sahityon ke Sampurna Uplabdh Dastavez"* (The Complete Available Works of Bhagat Singh and his Comrades).

He has also translated many literary works, she said.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Delhi Special Secy removed from service over corruption charge

Shyamal Yadav
New Delhi, May 13

IN A rare instance of major penalty against a serving IAS officer, the Centre has removed Padma Jaiswal, a 2003-batch AGMUT cadre officer, from service on charges of corruption. Jaiswal, who is Special Secretary in the Administrative Reforms Department of the Delhi government, faces dismissal following a long-drawn disciplinary process.

Official sources confirmed that the removal order was issued earlier this week with final approval from the President of India on the recommendation of the Department of Personnel

In her over two-decade career, Jaiswal has served in key positions in Arunachal Pradesh, Delhi, Goa, and Puducherry

and Training (DoPT) headed by the Prime Minister. In regard to AGMUT cadre officials, the DoPT takes such a decision on the recommendation of the MHA.

When contacted, Jaiswal said, "I am not aware of any such development or any dismissal order being passed."

The action stems from allegations dating back to 2007-08 when she served as Deputy Commissioner of West Kameng district in Arunachal Pradesh. A complaint filed by local residents in February 2008 had accused her of misappropriation of government revenue and misuse of official position. She was placed under suspension in April 2008. In October 2010, her suspension was revoked.

The MHA initiated disciplinary proceedings under Rule 8 of the All India Services (Discipline & Appeal) Rules. Jaiswal was served charge memoranda in 2009 and 2010. The Central Vigilance Commission and Union Public Service Commis-

sion (UPSC) were consulted, and UPSC recommended her removal from service.

However, the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) had earlier set aside the proceedings initiated by the MHA, holding that the MHA lacked jurisdiction over AGMUT cadre officers.

The Union government challenged the CAT order before the Delhi High Court, which on April 1 this year ruled in favour of the Centre.

The HC observed that the CAT had "erred" in its finding and restored the disciplinary proceedings to the stage at which they were stayed.

Following the HC verdict,

the MHA completed the process and recommended the major penalty of removal.

In her over two-decade career, Jaiswal has served in key positions in Arunachal Pradesh, Delhi, Goa, and Puducherry.

Major penalties like dismissal or compulsory retirement are imposed infrequently on IAS officers, making this action significant.

Disciplinary proceedings are initiated against officials by their cadre controlling authorities and the outcome of corruption cases are decided by the courts based on charge sheets filed by investigating agencies.

'Influencer' arrested over defamatory posts against family of Sunjay Kapur

Express News Service
New Delhi, May 13

SOCIAL MEDIA influencer Neelam Singh, who uses handle 'The Skin Doctor' across platforms, was arrested by the Delhi Police on Wednesday for allegedly posting defamatory posts against late businessman Sunjay Kapur's family, sources in the police said.

The arrest comes against the backdrop of an inheritance battle playing out in courts among Sunjay's family members.

Singh identifies himself as a "skin doctor" in his bio on social media.

The Supreme Court on Tuesday had remarked that the high-stakes family saga would make even "the Mahabharat look small".

Singh was arrested after a case under sections of defamation and IT Act, among others,



Sunjay Kapur

was registered following a complaint by Kapur's lawyers, police said.

The posts in question are from January, which are now deleted from his account.

The purported posts allegedly mentioned the nature of death of the 53-year-old, officers said. Sunjay died of cardiac arrest during a polo match in the United Kingdom on June 12, 2025. His death started a bitter family dispute over his assets, including his company Sona Comstar.

'Told he was injured, found later he died': Auto driver, 9-year-old among three killed in accident

Express News Service
New Delhi, May 13

LIKE EVERYDAY, auto driver Raju Sharma (52) left his home in North East Delhi's Karawal Nagar around 6 am on Wednesday, recalled his brother Anand. "He had been following the same routine for about a decade. But around 9 am, we got a call from the police. Officers said my brother was injured in his leg in an accident. When we reached the police station, they said he was dead. His two sons, aged 17 and 21, have lost their father," he said.

Raju and a nine-year-old were among three persons who lost their lives when the auto-rickshaw that he was driving allegedly collided with a truck.

Four others in the auto were injured. After CCTV footage was analysed, the truck was traced and seized, said officers, adding that Anil (23), a resident of Madhubani district in Bihar, the driver,



Auto driver Raju Sharma

was apprehended.

The accident happened near Shiv Mandir in Outer North Delhi's Alipur area, police said.

Anand said that officers told him that the incident happened when Raju's auto was coming down the flyover. "They said since it was a downward slope, his auto was already accelerating. So the impact of the hit was severe," said Anand.

According to the Delhi Police, the information regarding the road accident was received at 7.32 am.

A police team immediately rushed to the spot and found a damaged auto-rickshaw.

During inquiry, police found that seven persons travelling in the auto had sustained injuries. All the injured were shifted to SRHC Hospital, where doctors declared Raju, the nine-year-old girl, and the unidentified passenger dead.

The remaining four injured persons were identified as Mukesh (48), a fruit vendor and native of Ballia in Uttar Pradesh, his wife Pinki (40), their six-year-old child and another passenger identified as Chotu Pandit (28). They were later referred to LNJ Hospital for treatment.

Police said preliminary investigation revealed that Mukesh and his family were returning to Delhi from their native village in Ballia and had hired the auto from ISBT to reach Tikri village.

The driver had allegedly picked up additional passengers on the way.

A case under sections of the BNS was filed at the Alipur police station.

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TSPARSH ESPIRIT TOYOTA: BULANDSHAHR-7290095001, SIKANDRABAD-7290095001, JEWAR-7290095001, GALAXY TOYOTA: MUNDKA-9599624698, NARELA-9999534551, NAJAFGARH-9266753380, IJM TOYOTA: PATAUDI-9512295122, SOHNA-9512295122, MGF TOYOTA: FARRUKH NAGAR (NEAR ANAJ MANDI)-9599121800, MANESAR (NEAR IMT CHOWK)-9599121800, THIRTY SIX TOYOTA: HODAL (MAIN MARKET)-8199900183, HATHIN (RAJA JI MARKET)-7988274475, TIGAON (BHUPUR)-8800790130, BALLABGARH (NEAR ESCORTS MUJESAR)-8800790081

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New Delhi

AUSTERITY MEASURES IN WAKE OF WEST ASIA CRISIS

Carpool, no foreign travel, Delhi govt tells its officials

Sophiya Mathew
 New Delhi, May 13

NO OFFICIAL to go on foreign trips, whether official or personal; use of vehicles to be minimised; car pooling during inspections and office travel to be promoted; reliance on virtual meetings to be increased and a weekly 'No Car Day' — these are some of the measures that the Delhi government announced on Wednesday to reduce fuel consumption across departments, amid a broader push towards fuel conservation and electrification in the wake of the global energy disruption caused by West Asia crisis.

The measures also included promoting the use of public transport, accelerating electrification of government-owned vehicle fleets and departments

ensuring that electric vehicle charging infrastructure is set up at government offices to support the larger transition towards electric mobility.

According to the order, the directions have been issued in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal "to reduce the consumption of petroleum products and for promotion of sustainable practices in order to strengthen the spirit of self-reliance and energy security".

In a statement on Wednesday, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta urged Delhiites to make fuel conservation a people's movement, noting that greater use of Metro and buses can help reduce congestion and pollution.

Maintaining that the measures align with the Centre's push for efficiency and

accountability and are being implemented "in full spirit" across departments, PWD Minister Parvesh Verma told *The Indian Express*, "Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji's call is not just about reducing fuel consumption, it is about bringing discipline and responsibility into the system."

"Till further orders, no officer will undertake foreign visits - whether official or personal," he said, calling it a "necessary step towards accountability and prioritisation".

"This is not about limiting work, it is about aligning our priorities with the needs of the country... And that is exactly the direction we are moving in," Singh added.

The specific directions have been given to at least three departments, including the Pub-

lic Works Department (PWD), Irrigation and Flood Control (I&FC) and Delhi Jal Board (DJB), said officials.

They added that the DJB has been told to replace its self-owned fleet of nearly 200-250 tankers with electric tankers. Officials indicated that the move is in line with targets being monitored at the PMO level regarding electrification and fuel savings.

According to the order, the PWD has been asked to maximise the use of electric pumps and permanent pumping stations instead of diesel-operated tractor-mounted pumps, particularly during drainage and emergency operations. Diesel-based pumps may remain only as standby systems during power outages.

Moreover, the order said

that no official shall undertake any foreign visit and if any such proposal is sanctioned, it will be cancelled.

Further, for inspections and inaugurations, officers can travel together using electric vehicles/pooled vehicles/public transport. All PWD officials, wherever they are located, have been advised to use carpooling or public transport while commuting to office. Another measure mentioned in the order is a weekly 'No Car Day', as part of which officials are to use public transport while commuting to office.

This comes after the PM, on Sunday, called on citizens to reduce consumption of fuel and switch to public transport. He also urged people to reduce gold purchases for at least one year.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reduced his convoy size, days after he appealed for cutting down fuel consumption, among other austerity measures. ANI

Partial relief as water supply improves in Dwarka; DJB pins hope on new WTP



SEVEN CGHS SOCIETIES FACING SUPPLY ISSUES SINCE 30 DAYS, SAYS DELHI JAL BOARD. Tried to rationalise supply, 'no significant improvement observed', says DJB

Sophiya Mathew
 New Delhi, May 13

DAYS AFTER *The Indian Express* reported a severe water shortage across several sectors in Dwarka, particularly in Co-operative Group Housing Society (CGHS) pockets, residents said on Wednesday that water supply has improved over the past few days, reducing dependency on tankers in some complexes, though the crisis is far from over.

Residents had described the shortage as among the worst seen in decades, with several RWAs spending lakhs of rupees for over a month on water tankers to maintain daily supply.

While residents said Delhi Jal Board (DJB) officials have visited affected areas, uneven and low pressure supply continued to affect several societies, especially those located at the tail end of the distribution network under Command Tank 2. Earlier this week, the DJB had said that at least seven CGHS societies in Dwarka were facing short supply issues due to their location at the "tail end of distribution network in Command of CT-2 Madhu Vihar".

According to a senior DJB official, supply has improved recently following rectification work on gate valves in parts of Sector 10. "A more sustainable resolution is expected only after the upcoming 50 MGD Dwarka WTP, being built to augment supply in the sub-city and nearby areas, becomes operational," the official said.

"The plant is ready, but we are awaiting raw water supply," the official said, adding that the plant is tentatively expected to be operational by July.

At present, Dwarka's supply depends on treated water routed through existing WTPs into command tanks before it is distributed to the sectors through pipelines. This system often results in pressure drops in tail-end areas such as parts of sectors 6, 10 and 11.

The new WTP is expected to ease this burden. However, to get the additional raw water, diversion from existing sources or alternative arrangements are required. "These issues are still being worked out," said a source.

Residents, meanwhile, remain cautious. Anil Kundra, general secretary of Dwarka Forum and IDC CGHS in Sector 11, said his society's dependence on water tankers has reduced. "We have seen improvement..." he said, adding that the society had spent around Rs 1.4 lakh on water tankers for its 107 members last month.

Sudha Iyer, joint secretary of Dwarka Forum and RWA member of Shivalik Apartments in Sector 6, said that while water pressure has improved slightly, the relief is uneven. "The situation in Sector 10 continues to be bad... the request for tankers continues..." she added. Residents of Thiruvizhai Apartments and Sanskriti Apartments in Sector 10 also said they continue to depend on water tankers.

DDA executive engineer Chander Prakash recently closed a resident's grievance from Sector 11 saying, "Water supply is not reaching the tail-end distribution network and supply is being done by tankers to fill the location of underground reservoirs. Further improvement work is being carried out."

CBSE Class 12 result out: In Delhi, pass percentage slips, gender gap widens

Introduction of on-screen marking system, which reduces subjectivity, being linked to the dip in scores across the country

Sophiya Mathew
 New Delhi, May 13

WITH PASS percentages falling and the gender gap continuing to widen, Delhi fared poorer than last year in the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Class 12 examination. The overall pass percentage stood at 91.97% in 2025-26 in the Capital, a drop from 95.18% last year.

Of the 3,01,977 students who registered this year in the city, 3,00,732 appeared for the examination, and 2,76,583 candidates passed.

The Capital has two CBSE regions — Delhi-East and Delhi-West. Both recorded a decline in the pass percentage compared to last year. While Delhi-West reported a pass percentage of 92.34%, down from 95.37% last year, Delhi-East recorded 91.73%, compared to 95.06% in 2024-25.

Noida also witnessed a slip with pass percentage, declining to 79.02% from 81.29% last year.

Despite the decline, Delhi-West and Delhi-East retained their fifth and sixth positions, respectively, among the CBSE regions nationally, ranking behind Kerala's Trivandrum, Tamil Nadu's Chennai, Karnataka's Bengaluru and Andhra Pradesh's Vijayawada.

Meanwhile, the gender gap in performance widened further this year. Across India, girls outperformed boys by 6.73 percentage points.

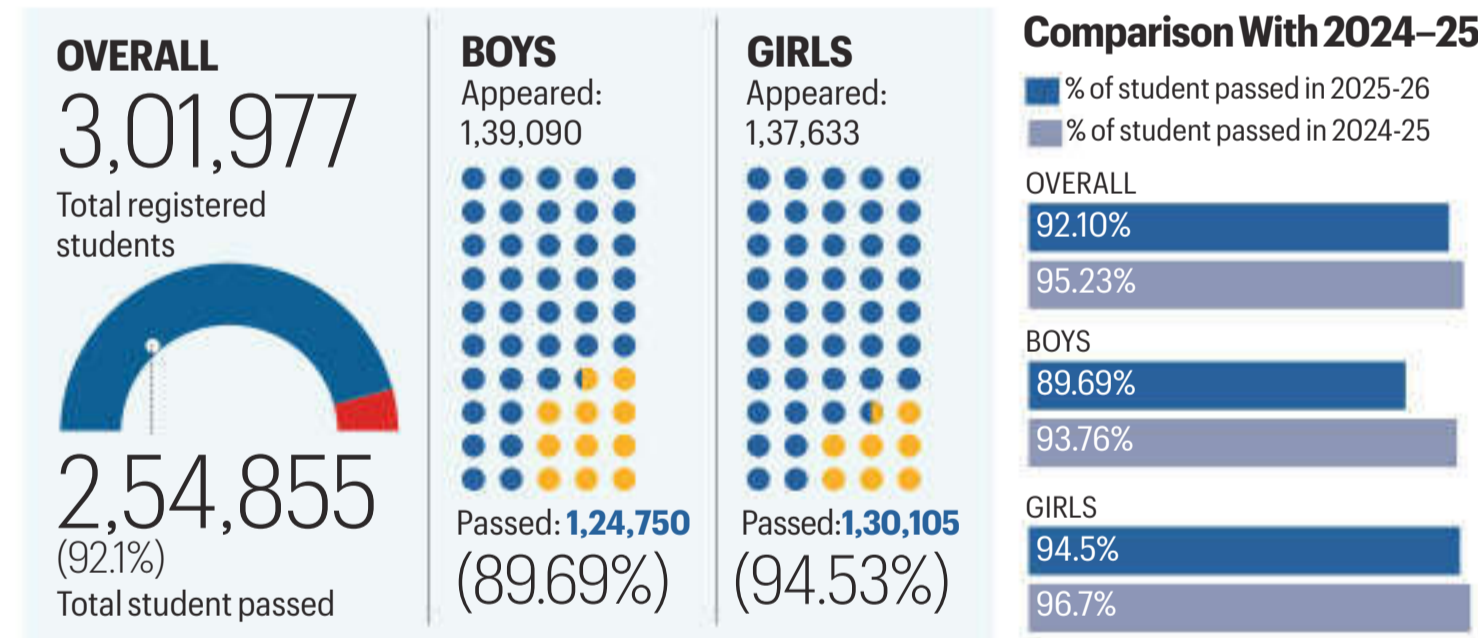
However, both groups saw a drop in pass percentages compared to last year — for girls, the pass percentage declined from 91.64% in 2025 to 88.86% in 2026 while it fell from 85.70% to 82.13% for boys.

The Capital saw a similar trend. In Delhi-East, 94.09%



Students celebrate at St Thomas' Girls Senior Secondary School after CBSE Class 12 results were announced, in New Delhi on Wednesday. AMIT MEHRA

CLASS 12 RESULT



3.13% Pass percentage declined by 3.13 percentage points from last year. Girls outperformed boys by 4.84 percentage points

girls passed compared to 89.32% boys, while in Delhi-West, 94.73% girls cleared the exam against 90.04% boys.

Last year, pass percentages were higher — 96.51% (girls) and 93.58% (boys) in Delhi-East, and 96.95% (girls) and 93.86% (boys) in Delhi-West.

A total of 1,799 schools and 842 examination centres were involved in conducting the exams in the Capital. The city also recorded the highest number of Children With Special Needs (CWSN) candidates, with over 1,900 students appearing for the exams.

Sources suggested the decline in pass percentage may be linked to the implementation of On-Screen Marking (OSM), which reduces subjectivity and ambiguity in evaluation.

In an official statement, the CBSE said it had "successfully implemented OSM for the evaluation of Class 12 answer books in the 2026 Board Examinations," calling it the largest such exercise undertaken so far.

"Using OSM, CBSE has evaluated 98,66,622 answer books," the CBSE said, adding that the system ensures error-

free evaluation by eliminating totalling and uploading mistakes, and guarantees that every answer is assessed strictly as per the marking scheme.

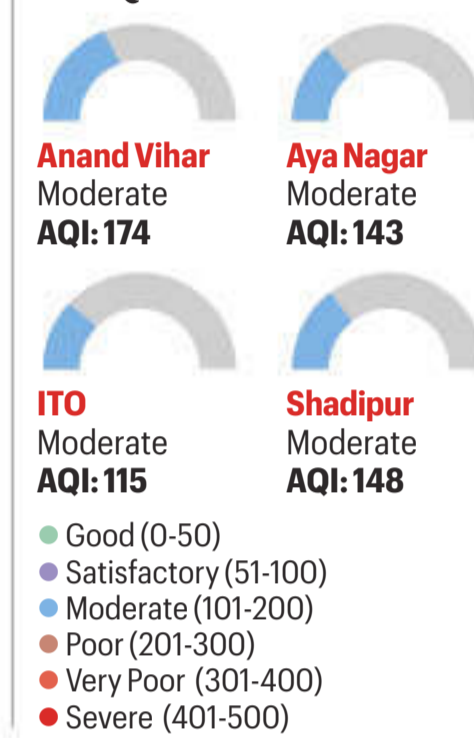
The CBSE also said the system allows evaluation from any location without physically transporting answer scripts, improving efficiency and maintaining confidentiality. It added that OSM reduces manual intervention, promotes an eco-friendly digital process, and enhances transparency and accountability in line with the reforms under the National Education Policy.

Skywatch



Forecast: May 14, 2026
 Partly cloudy sky. Very light rain with thunderstorm, lightning
 MAX: 36-38
 1.3°C below normal
 MIN: 23-25
 2.1°C below normal
 • Sunrise: 5:31 AM (May 15)
 • Sunset: 7:04 PM (May 14)
 • Moonrise: 3:56 AM (May 15)
 • Moonset: 3:27 PM (May 14)

AQI Tracker



Temperature drops by 10°C, wind gusts up to 98 kmph: Delhi hit by rain, thunderstorm

Express News Service
 New Delhi, May 13

A SUDDEN thunderstorm, accompanied by lightning, rain and strong winds swept across parts of Delhi on Wednesday evening, bringing a sharp drop in temperatures after a hot day and gusts reaching up to 98 kmph, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). Several parts of the city also saw isolated hailstorm activity during the night.

At Safdarjung, where the primary weather station is located, the temperature dropped by 10°C from 35°C to 25°C. On the other hand, Palam recorded a fall of 9°C, from 35°C to 26°C. At 11°C, Najafgarh saw the steepest drop as the temperature fell from 33°C to 22°C. Ayanagar recorded a decline of 10.1°C from 31.8°C to 21.7°C, and Narayana saw a fall of 9.1°C from 31°C to 21.9°C. Other areas also witnessed notable cooling, with Jafarpur recording an 8°C drop, Janakpuri 8.1°C, and Pusa 6.9°C. The fall was relatively lower in Pragati Maidan (5.2°C), Mayur Vihar (4.6°C), and Pitampura (2.2°C).

Strong winds accompanied the storm. Palam recorded the highest wind speed at 98 kmph. Safdarjung and Pusa recorded wind gusts up to 72 kmph.

The IMD had initially issued a yellow alert around 7 pm, forecasting light to moderate rainfall with gusty winds of 30-40 kmph across Delhi-NCR. Within half an hour, this was upgraded to an orange alert for moderate thunderstorms with



Rain hit several parts of Delhi on Wednesday. SHREYA SINGHA

THE DROP

STATION	FALL (°C)
Palam	9
Safdarjung	10
Jafarpur	8
Narayana	9.1
Janakpuri	8.1
Pusa	6.9
Pragati Maidan	5.2
Najafgarh	11
Pitampura	2.2
Ayanagar	10.1
Mayur Vihar	4.6

wind speeds of 40-60 kmph. By around 810 pm, a red alert was sounded for parts of the city, warning of severe thunderstorm activity with wind speeds reaching up to 80 kmph in isolated pockets, particularly over West and Southwest Delhi, including areas such as Dwarka, Najafgarh and Palam.

The IMD said there is a possibility of very light rain in the Capital on Thursday morning. There is no alert issued by the agency for the coming days. However, a fresh Western disturbance could affect North-west India from Friday, it said.

ECOLOGICAL PRESSURE ON ARAVALLI HABITAT, AS PER WILDLIFE INSTITUTE OF INDIA'S 10-YEAR MANAGEMENT PLAN

At Delhi's lone wildlife sanctuary, one invasive tree covers 63.48% of landscape

Sophiya Mathew
 New Delhi, May 13

AT ASOLA Bhatti, Delhi's lone wildlife sanctuary, the threat to the forest is also green.

Prepared by the Wildlife Institute of India, a 10-year management plan for Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary has found that *Prosopis Juliflora* alone covers 63.48% of the landscape, making the invasive tree one of the biggest ecological pressures on the Aravalli habitat.

An invasive tree is a non-native species that spreads rapidly and causes environmental health harm, often by disrupting ecosystems and dis-

placing native plants.

The management plan has flagged invasive species, particularly *Prosopis Juliflora* and *Lantana Camara*, as major threats to the sanctuary's ecological recovery. The plan has mentioned invasive species, encroachment, habitat degradation, cattle entry, biotic pressure, pollution and weak monitoring as among the key problems affecting the sanctuary.

The scale of *Prosopis Juliflora* dominance is stark in Asola Bhatti. A land use and land cover assessment in the management plan recorded *Prosopis Juliflora* across 18.41 sq km, accounting for 63.48% of

the sanctuary. In comparison, forest plantation accounts for 18.83%, followed by built-up area (14.07%), rock outcrop (1.55%), *Anogeissus Pendula* (0.9%), water bodies (0.76%), bare ground (0.28%) and scrub (0.17%).

"A detailed vegetation assessment carried out between April and June 2024 found *Prosopis Juliflora* to be the dominant species across all habitat types in Asola Bhatti," the plan said, adding that while vegetation recovery is evident in many areas, "invasive *Prosopis Juliflora* and human disturbance remain challenges".

It has recommended phased



The Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary. EXPRESS

reduction of the invasive species, assisted regeneration of native flora, expansion of drought-tolerant plantations and continuous ecological monitoring.

Prosopis Juliflora, a Mexican mesquite known locally as Vilayati Kikar, was introduced during colonial afforestation and created extensive monocultures on the Ridge, according to Delhi Forest department records. Biological invasion by alien species such as *Prosopis* and *Lantana* affects groundwater recharge, buffering local weather and combating desertification.

Prosopis is classified as a major ecological threat because

it suppresses native flora and alters habitat structure, but its dense canopy currently helps stabilise soil and serves as sub-optimal habitat for some wildlife, as per the Asola Bhatti Management Plan. The plan has, therefore, called for phased removal, along with intensive restoration using native flora.

The restoration plan has recommended planting soil-binding species, nitrogen-fixing species and site-specific native vegetation. Suggested species included vetiver, munja, dhauk, palash, gum acacia, salai, babul, indigo, sesban and siris.

Apart from invasive species,

the plan has flagged the large influx of Rhesus Macaques as another major stress. Nearly 20,000 macaques have been relocated to Asola Bhatti over the years, and as per the plan, the sanctuary's tropical thorn forest has limited capacity to meet their natural food requirements. As a result, artificial feeding has continued at 18 designated points, costing nearly Rs 1 crore annually.

The plan also flagged a major administrative gap in animal management, mentioning unscientific release of rescued animals, no SOPs for handling animals, inadequate staff capacity in animal hand-

ling, inadequate rescue and release infrastructure, and lack of monitoring of released animals.

Further, encroachment and settlement pressure have added to the stress. The plan says Bhatti village continues to be a critical encroachment hotspot, with unauthorised colonies such as Sanjay Colony and Sangam Vihar.

Other stresses listed in the plan included waste dumping, greywater inflow, poor sanitation in fringe settlements, illegal grazing, fuelwood collection, fire risk, weak research-based management, inadequate staff training and poor inter-agency coordination.

134-km semi high speed rail line between Ahmedabad, Dholera gets Cabinet approval



Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw in Delhi on Wednesday. ANIL SHARMA

Dheeraj Mishra
New Delhi, May 13

THE UNION Cabinet on Wednesday approved the country's first semi-high-speed rail project between Sarkhej (Ahmedabad) to Dholera in Gujarat. The 134-km double line will be constructed at a cost of Rs 20,667 crore for which a new train having operating speed of 200 kmph will be manufactured.

Dholera is being developed as India's key manufacturing centre, where an international airport, logistic hub and semiconductor chip plants are coming up. It will also provide connectivity to Lohthal National Maritime Heritage Complex. The existing fastest train on the Indian Railways network is Vande Bharat that runs at a maximum speed of 130 kmph. India is also manufacturing its own high-speed train at BEML plant in Bengaluru, whose operational speed will be 250 kmph. The Sarkhej-Dholera line will

have 13 stations and the project is expected to be completed in four years. Out of the 134-km line, 74-km will be elevated (on viaducts) and it will have three mega bridges, 39 road under bridges and two rail over bridges.

Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the project will be integrated with the Metro at Sabarmati, Gandhigram and Vastrapur stations. It will be integrated with the proposed Bullet train station at Sabarmati and have a link to a dedicated freight corridor at Maraiya near Sanand. "This is the first project of its kind. It will become the template for the other semi-high-speed projects. Vande Bharat trains will also be allowed to run on the corridor," Vaishnaw said.

The Sarkhej-Dholera line will run along the Ahmedabad-Dholera expressway. Officials said that a 30-metre-wide corridor from the expressway is available, so there will not be much difficulty in land acquisition.

Amid West Asia crisis, Centre bans sugar exports until Sep 30

ENS Economic Bureau
New Delhi, May 13

THE DIRECTORATE General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) late on Wednesday prohibited export of raw, white and refined sugar with immediate effect until September 30 amid inflation and future supply-related concerns in the backdrop of the ongoing West Asia conflict. The prohibition will not apply to sugar exports to the European Union and the US under the preferential quota, the notification said.

The prohibition on sugar exports will also not apply to the advance authorisation scheme (AAS), government-to-government exports, and consignments already in the physical export pipeline, it stated.

The decision to ban sugar exports is seen more as a precautionary move, given the finely balanced supply and stocks position.

The prohibition on sugar exports comes a day after the government hiked import duty on gold and other precious metals as a measure to curb non-essential imports and protect foreign exchange

Sugar production in the 2025-26 season (October-September) has been estimated at about 275 lakh tonnes.

With opening stocks of 50 lakh tonnes, the total availability of 325 lakh tonnes can comfortably meet the projected domestic consumption requirement of 280 lakh tonnes. It will leave the closing stocks of sugar at 45 lakh tonnes, which is the lowest

since the 39.4 lakh tonnes of 2016-17.

The government does not want to take any chances of lower production in the 2026-27 season from subnormal monsoon rains and anticipated shortfalls in fertiliser availability due to the West Asia crisis. The DGFT, which comes under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, also said that the sugar exports will be allowed if the loading of sugar on the ship has commenced before May 13 or sugar consignment has been handed over to Customs before Wednesday.

"The export of sugar shall be allowed on the basis of permission granted by the Government of India to other countries to meet their food security needs and based on the request of their governments," the notification said.

The prohibition on sugar exports comes a day after the

government hiked import duty on gold and other precious metals as a measure to curb non-essential imports and protect foreign exchange. The government is undertaking a series of measures to ensure energy availability and essential supplies in the country.

The ongoing West Asia conflict and its resultant impact on energy prices and supplies have given rise to inflation concerns as international fuel prices have doubled since the West Asia war. Scores of commercial vessels with thousands of seafarers have been stuck in the Persian Gulf since the West Asia war began on February 28 as vessel movements through the Strait of Hormuz came to a halt.

The Strait is among the world's most critical chokepoints for energy supplies, and accounts for a fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas flows.

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No. AC/RPC/MCD/2026/D-322 Dated: 05.05.2026

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- Bid submission start date 06.05.2026 from 03:00 PM onwards
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- Opening date of Technical Bids: 28.05.2026 from 03:00 PM onwards at R.P. Cell/MCD at 25th Floor, Civic Centre

For details visit MCDs website www.mcdonline.nic.in and www.etenders.gov.in Contact number: -011-23227514

Assistant Commissioner
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RO NO. 9/DPI/MCD/2026-27

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4.	Assistant Professor	Law (PG) - (For LL.M. P.G. Course)	02	ST-01, VJ-A-01

- The Application Form for the above post is available on www.despune.org in Careers section.
- The detailed information regarding number of posts, eligibility, academic and professional qualifications, experience and the terms and conditions are available on aforesaid website of the Society.
- Last date of application is 30 days from the date of publication of advertisement in newspaper.

Secretary
Deccan Education Society, Pune

MSP for kharif crops hiked

New Delhi: The Centre on Wednesday announced a hike in the minimum support prices (MSP) for 14 kharif crops for marketing season 2026-27, with jowar seeing the highest increase in percentage terms, while moong recording the lowest.

A decision to this effect was taken during the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, which met under the chairmanship of Prime Min-

ister Narendra Modi. The MSP of jowar has been fixed at Rs 4,023 per quintal for hybrid and Rs 4,073 per quintal for maldandi variety, which is over 8% higher as compared to last year's prices.

The MSP of moong shows an increase of 0.13%. The MSP of paddy, which is the biggest kharif crop in terms of area coverage, has been at Rs 2,441/quintal for common grade and Rs 2,461/quintal for Grade A. ENS

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REGISTRAR

DMK WALKS OUT

Vijay clears floor test as 25 AIADMK MLAs cross-vote

Arun Janardhanan
Chennai, May 13

TAMIL NADU Chief Minister and Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) founder C. Joseph Vijay on Wednesday comfortably won the trust vote in the State Assembly with the support of 144 MLAs, capping a week of intense political negotiations, a split within the AIADMK, constitutional uncertainty and accusations of "horse trading".

The confidence motion, moved by Vijay in the 234-member House, was passed with 144 members voting in favour, 22 against and five abstaining after the DMK staged a walk-out before the voting process. The support for the TVK came from its own MLAs and those of the Congress, CPI, CPI(M), VCK, IUML, expelled AMMK MLA S Kamaraj, and 25 rebel AIADMK legislators led by former ministers S P Velumani and C Ve Shanmugam.

The vote formally secured the position of the actor-turned-politician whose party, with 108 seats in its debut election, emerged as the single-largest force but fell short of the majority mark of 118.

As the sitting resumed Wednesday morning, Speaker JCD Prabhakar ordered the closure of the Assembly's doors ahead of the voting process and restrained members from moving from their seats during the headcount. Vijay, replying to the debate on the motion, sought to project stability and continuity amid the turbulence surrounding his government formation.

"This government will function with the speed of a horse and not indulge in horse trading," Vijay said, while also assuring that all welfare schemes of the previous DMK government would continue. He added that his administration would remain "secular".

The confidence vote, however, quickly turned into a battle over the rebellion inside the AIADMK. AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami or EPS declared on the floor of the House that all his 47 party MLAs would oppose the trust vote and accused the TVK of engineering defections by offering ministerial berths and board appointments.

"This government has been formed by luring some members with promises of ministerial posts and board appointments," Palaniswami said after the trust vote.

The situation escalated into noisy scenes inside the House after Prabhakar invited Velumani, leader of the AIADMK



Tamil Nadu CM C. Joseph Vijay speaks in the Assembly during floor test, in Chennai on Wednesday. PTI

rebel camp, to speak immediately after EPS. AIADMK legislators loyal to EPS objected strongly, while the Speaker maintained that he was empowered to allow any member to participate in the debate. Velumani then formally announced support for the Vijay government, saying the "majority of people had voted for change".

Outside the Assembly, the rebellion deepened further with Shanmugam directly challenging EPS's authority over the AIADMK Legislature Party. He, along with rebel MLAs, addressed reporters, alleging that EPS had submitted a "forged" letter to the Speaker claiming the backing of all AIADMK legislators. "He (EPS) cannot claim so as no such meeting on a resolution took place," Shanmugam said.

The rebels have also accused EPS of informally exploring the possibility of forming a government with DMK support to block

Vijay from assuming office — an allegation denied by the EPS camp but one that has acquired political sensitivity given the AIADMK's origins as an anti-DMK movement founded by former CMMG Ramachandran.

On its part, the DMK attempted to politically isolate Vijay without obstructing the formation of his government. Leader of the Opposition Udhayanidhi Stalin announced a DMK walkout during the debate, saying his party did not want to create instability but accused Vijay of betraying his promise of "clean politics" by engaging with AIADMK rebels. "What is happening now — is this change or exchange?" Udhayanidhi asked.

DMK president M K Stalin later sharpened the attack in a social media post, accusing the TVK of "purchasing" a split AIADMK despite already having adequate outside support from the DMK allies.

'Atrocious': SC stays HC's order, paves way for TVK MLA to take part in floor test

Express News Service
New Delhi, May 13

THE SUPREME Court Wednesday stayed the "effect and operation" of the Madras High Court order restraining Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) MLA R Seenivasa Sethupathi, challenging the Madras High Court order restraining him from voting or taking part in the floor test of the Tamil Nadu Assembly.

A three-judge bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta, and Vijay Bishnoi also ordered that the proceedings before the Madras High Court in the pending writ petition will remain stayed. The bench termed as "atrocious" the high court decision to entertain the writ petition even after agreeing that the appropriate remedy lay in filing an election petition. "The high court says the remedy is an election petition and still entertains the writ petition," said Justice Mehta.

On Tuesday, the Madras High Court restrained Sethupathi, who had won the Tirupattur district seat by one vote, from voting, and he subsequently moved the apex court.

The HC order came on a plea by DMK leader K R Periakaruppan, who had lost the election to



R Seenivasa Sethupathi had won the Tirupattur seat by one vote

Sethupathi by one vote, alleging irregularities and discrepancies in vote counting.

Appearing for the MLA, Senior Advocate A M Singhvi said the HC order is in blatant disregard of the law laid down by the SC.

Senior Advocate Mukul Rohatgi, representing Periakaruppan, countered the submission, saying that one postal ballot meant for his constituency had reached another constituency but was discarded, even though it was in his favour. Rohatgi contended that if it had come to the correct address, there would have been a tie. However, the bench wondered how he could have filed a writ petition for that.

Astrologer's appointment revoked

Chennai: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay on Wednesday removed astrologer Rickey Radhan Pandit Vetrivel from the post of Officer on Special Duty (OSD). CM Vijay issued the order moments after he won the floor

test in the Assembly. Vetrivel's appointment as the CM's OSD had caused a huge row.

Ahead of the elections, he projected a meteoric rise for Vijay in Tamil Nadu politics. ENS

Marked Absent

LOKSABHA Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi's participation in the recent 'Sadbhav Yatra' in Gurgaon gave some much-needed energy to the Congress cadres. But sources say that the party's Haryana unit has taken note of some senior leaders from the state who were conspicuous by their absence. Several senior leaders, including AICC appointees, were missing from the yatra and the state unit of the party is likely to seek explanations from those who missed the Rahul event.

Austere Steps

UNION SCIENCE Minister Jitendra Singh has cancelled his visit to Africa in response to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for austerity. Singh has informed High Commissioner of Rwanda to India, Jacqueline Mukangira, that he wouldn't be able to make it to the Nuclear Energy Innovation Summit for Africa next week, and agreed to address a session virtually. He has also started travelling without escort vehicles.

Heat & Water

AT A seminar on heat on Wednesday, IMD Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra went down the memory lane, reminiscing about the summer season during his childhood. He recalled how as a child he would carry drinking water for the farm workers. Talking about traditions in his home state Odisha, Mohapatra said starting with the Odia new year mid-April, people would distribute cool beverages. This, he said, was a kind of symbolic community initiative signifying the importance of hydration.

Haryana: BJP sweeps civic polls, Congress pushed to the margins

Sukhbir Siwach
Chandigarh, May 13

THE BJP on Wednesday swept the municipal elections in Haryana, securing six of the seven civic bodies, with only Uklana municipal committee chief's post going to a 23-year-old independent candidate. The BJP also delivered crushing defeats to its main rival Congress in the mayoral contests, where victory margins ranged from more than 21,000 votes to over 36,000.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the results saying it once again showed people's unwavering faith in the development and good governance policies of the BJP-led NDA government. "This victory is also a symbol of the trust that the people of Haryana have in the state's 'double-engine government,'" Modi said in a post on X in Hindi.

The polls, held on May 10, elected mayors and ward councillors in the municipal corporations of Ambala, Sonapat, and Panchkula, along with the president and councillors of the Rewari municipal council and the municipal committees of Sampla, Dharuhera, and Uklana.

For the mayor's post in Ambala, BJP's Akshita Saini defeated Congress rival Kulwinder Kaur by 21,358 votes. In Panchkula, BJP's Shyamlal Bansal defeated Congress candidate Sudha Bhardwaj by 36,252 votes. In Sonapat, BJP's Rajiv Jain trounced his Congress rival, Kamal Dewan, by 23,247 votes.

Venugopal or Satheesan? Cong to end Kerala suspense today

Manoj CG
New Delhi, May 13

AFTER NINE days of intense drama, hectic lobbying and marathon discussions, the Congress on Wednesday said its Chief Ministerial pick in Kerala would be announced on Thursday. While the party high command maintained that deliberations on the issue have concluded, the delay in announcing a decision suggests that a formula acceptable to all three contenders — outgoing Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Kerala Assembly V D Satheesan, AICC general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal and former Kerala LoP Ramesh Chennithala — was still being worked out.

The announcement came after a nearly 40-minute meeting between Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and LoP in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi. "As authorised by the members of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) in Kerala, the high command of the Congress has completed all discussions, and the decision on who the next Chief Minister of Kerala will be will be announced tomorrow (Thursday)," Congress communications chief Jairam Ramesh said.

The three contenders, mean-



V D Satheesan and K C Venugopal with other senior Congress leaders in New Delhi last week. EXPRESS FILE

while, appeared set for another long night as the party high command grappled with an unprecedented situation. In recent years, the leadership has not taken this long to decide on a CM in any state, including Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh, where competing claimants had forced the party leadership to work out compromise formulas.

While Chennithala has not given up his claim, the contest has largely narrowed down to Venugopal and Satheesan. Venugopal, though not an MLA, enjoys the backing of a majority of the newly elected MLAs and a sizeable section of state leaders. Satheesan, meanwhile, has the support of the UDF allies, par-

ticularly the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), the coalition's second-largest constituent with 22 seats. There is also a perception within the party that public sentiments favour Satheesan.

Several Congress allies and a large section of the party cadre believe the UDF's emphatic victory was shaped largely by Satheesan's aggressive leadership and sustained political mobilisation across Kerala over the past five years.

The Venugopal camp, however, argues that the party should adhere to the convention of appointing as CM a leader who commands the support of the CLP, which is likely to meet at 1 pm on Thursday.

Won't work for Muslims since they didn't vote for me: BJP MLA

Ravik Bhattacharya
Kolkata, May 13

RITESH TIWARI, the BJP MLA for the Kashipur-Belgachia constituency in Kolkata, said Wednesday that he would not work for Muslims because not a single one of them voted for him in the recent elections.

"*Ek kaam unke nahi karunga aane walein panch saal mein*" (I will not do any work for them in the upcoming five years)," the BJP MLA was seen saying in a viral video.

"In around 74 years of elections, in your area, I am the first candidate who did not get a single Muslim vote. Those who voted for me have a right over me. As for those who did not vote for me, I did not even visit their homes to seek votes. With Baba Bholenath as my witness, I say I won't do any work for them in the upcoming five years. I will not issue a single certificate for them...not a single certificate," he said while addressing a public meeting in his constituency.

Ritesh Tiwari defeated Atin Ghosh, a TMC stalwart and deputy mayor of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation, polling 68,368 votes to the nearest rival's 66,717 votes.

"This (meeting) is being aired live. But I do not care who thinks



Ritesh Tiwari became the BJP MLA from Kolkata's Kashipur-Belgachia constituency after defeating TMC stalwart Atin Ghosh

what and who says what. Modiji says *Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas* (together with all, development for all), I accept that. But in this election, he has added a few more words, *Sabka Hisaab* (everyone's account will be settled). So I will settle accounts. But not by doing what TMC did after the 2021 Assembly polls, but through democratic means, without slapping anyone, without taking one paisa from anyone," Tiwari added.

When contacted by *The Indian Express* about his com-

ments, Tiwari accepted that he made them and stood by them.

"In Hindu-dominated polling booths, I got some votes, and others got some votes. But in Muslim-dominated booths, only the TMC got votes — no one else. Consolidated Muslim votes or block votes were polled for the TMC. Those who voted for me have a right over me. I have limited resources, which I will share with those who voted for me. Why should I deprive those who voted for me of their rights for someone who did not? You may criticise me. People may talk about it, but this is my point," he said.

However, BJP state spokesperson Debjit Sarkar said he was unaware of Tiwari's remarks. "I am not aware of this. I have not seen the audio or the video. Therefore, I cannot say anything about this. You can ask the MLA," Sarkar said.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, CPI(M) central committee member Sujan Chakraborty said the BJP did not pay any heed to the spirit of the Constitution. "This is being reflected by the MLA's speech. We have heard such speeches in different states, and this has started to happen in Bengal too. People will resist such moves and mentality," he said.

Mulayam's younger son Prateek dies at 38

Maulshree Seth
Lucknow, May 13

SAMA JWADI PARTY founder and former Uttar Pradesh chief minister late Mulayam Singh Yadav's youngest son Prateek Yadav, 38, died in Lucknow early Wednesday morning.

The post-mortem examination of Prateek, half-brother of SP president Akhilesh Yadav, indicated that the immediate cause of his death was a "cardiorespiratory collapse caused by massive pulmonary thromboembolism", sources said.

The report noted six injuries on Prateek's body that were sustained before death, but are not suspected to have directly caused it. These older injuries included bruises on the chest, right arm and right forearm. One of the bruises on the forearm extended from the elbow to the



Prateek Yadav's brother, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav, arrives at the Civil Hospital in Lucknow on Wednesday. VISHAL SRIVASTAV

wrist. The newer injuries included bruises on the right forearm, right elbow and left wrist, the report noted.

"As per the opinion of the team of doctors that conducted

the post-mortem, a few injuries are suspected to be 5-7 days old while some are a day old, but one should not jump to any conclusion as none of these have been found to be the cause of death," said a senior doctor on condition of anonymity.

Sources said as per the post-mortem report, Prateek was reported "brought dead" when he was brought to the Civil hospital at 5.55 am on Wednesday. The post-mortem was conducted by a team of three doctors.

The report said samples of organs and viscera have been preserved for further examination and chemical analysis. Police maintained that further conclusions would depend on the histopathological and chemical examination reports.

Hours after Prateek's death, Akhilesh, who visited the Civil Hospital in Lucknow where

post-mortem on the body was conducted, said, "*Aaj humare beech nahi hai, bahut dukh hai. Ek bahut achha ladka, jo apne mehnat se kuchh karna chahta tha, bahut dukhad hai...*" (It is very sad that he is no longer among us. He was a very good person who wanted to achieve something through his own hard work)."

Recalling his last meeting with Prateek around two months ago, Akhilesh said, "I had told him to take care of his health and expand his business."

The SP chief also spoke about the emotional impact that financial and business setbacks can have on a person, saying, "*Kabhi kabhi financial, karobar mein jo nuksan hota hai, usake kayi bar log dukhi ho jate hain*" (Sometimes, financial and business losses leave people deeply distressed)."

EC likely to announce next phase of SIR for remaining states, UTs soon

Damini Nath
New Delhi, May 13

AFTER COMPLETING the exercise in 10 states and three Union Territories over the last year, the Election Commission is now getting ready to roll out the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in the remaining states/UTs, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

The announcement of the next phase of the SIR will be within days, according to EC sources. The enumeration form to be filled by electors is likely to be similar to the one for the second phase of the SIR that was conducted in nine states and three UTs from November 2025 to April. The form was changed after the first phase of SIR in Bihar last year. The enu-

meration of electors could be held in a phased manner, it is learnt.

The EC had written to the Chief Electoral Officers of 22 states/UTs in February, asking them to complete the preparations for the SIR since the exercise was "expected to start from April 2026". The EC then is learnt to have decided to roll out the next phase after the Assembly elections in Assam, Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, which ended with counting of votes on May 4.

On June 24 last year, the EC had ordered the SIR of electoral rolls of the country, in a break from the practice of the past two decades where the rolls have been revised annually and pre-elections through Special

UCC draft Bill to be tabled in Assam House on May 26

Express News Service
Guwahati, May 13

A DAY after being sworn in, the new Assam Cabinet in its first meeting Wednesday announced to table a proposed Uniform Civil Code (UCC) draft Bill before the newly elected state Assembly on May 26, besides rolling out a slew of austerity measures.

BJP leader Himanta Biswa Sarma was sworn in as Assam's Chief Minister for the second consecutive term, along with four Cabinet ministers on Tuesday. The newly constituted Cabinet held its first meeting on Wednesday, after which Sarma announced that a session of the Assam Legislative Assembly will be held from May 21 to 26, during which the newly elected MLAs will take oath.

"In the first meeting of the Cabinet, the party (BJP) manifesto has been adopted as the guiding principle for the government's working for the next five years... On 26 May, the last day of the assembly, a Uniform Civil Code Bill will be presented in the House. Today, the Cabinet has approved the draft of the UCC Bill," the CM said, adding that the proposed UCC Bill leaves the state's tribal population outside its ambit.

"The BJP's election manifesto listed "implementation of the UCC" — excluding tribal communities and parts of the state protected under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution — as one of the party's core promises. It had also promised laws against "land jihad" and "love jihad", more evictions, more "pushbacks" of declared foreigners, and a ramp-up of existing welfare schemes.

Remarks on CM Sarma's wife: Khera questioned by Assam cops

Guwahati: Congress leader Pawan Khera was interrogated for around 11 hours at the Assam Police Crime Branch on Wednesday in connection with an FIR registered against him based on a complaint by Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma's wife, Riniki Bhuyan Sharma.

Khera was earlier granted anticipatory bail by the Supreme Court on April 30, after he challenged the Gauhati High Court's April 24 denying him relief. The Apex court had then directed Khera to cooperate with the investigation and to "appear before the police station as and when required and intimidated".

On Wednesday, Khera appeared at the Crime Branch police station around 10.30 am. "I have been summoned, so I have come here in accordance with the law. Because I respect the judiciary and the law," he told reporters before reaching the station.

The questioning continued till Wednesday night, and Khera left the police station at around 9:15 pm, his lawyers confirmed to *The Indian Express*. Congress leader and advocate Aman Wadud said that Khera has been asked to report at the station again on Thursday. ENS

India, UAE may sign pacts on strategic petroleum reserves, LPG during PM visit

Shubhajit Roy
New Delhi, May 13

AT A time when the Indian government is adopting austerity measures amid the looming energy crisis due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, India and the UAE are likely to sign two pacts in the areas of "LPG and Strategic Petroleum Reserves" during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit on May 15, sources said on Wednesday.

During the PM's visit to the UAE, sources stated that one of the key areas of focus will be "energy security". "Two important MoUs in the areas of LPG and Strategic Petroleum Reserves are likely to be concluded during this visit," the sources said.

Underlining that the UAE has been an important partner in India's energy security, sources said that "last year, the UAE was the 4th largest source of crude oil meeting nearly 11% of our requirement". UAE is the largest source of LPG for India, meeting nearly 40 per cent of India's requirement, sources said. Sources said that through the current turmoil, the UAE has remained one of India's most reliable energy partners and continues to be so. "With long term supply agreements in place, India's energy security has been bolstered. Enhancing energy cooperation will be a key agenda of the visit," the source said.

According to the current itinerary, PM Modi will visit the UAE on May 15 to meet the UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan (MBZ). The PM has visited UAE seven times since 2014 and MBZ has visited India five times, last in January this year, accompanied by the next generation of UAE leaders — projected as marking the resilience of the bilateral relationship which has strengthened across generations. At a time when India is navigating secur-

E. EXPLAINED

2018 pact first on crude reserves

The UAE has been the first country to partner with India in the "Strategic Petroleum Reserves". In 2018, Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited (ISPRL) and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company entered into an agreement for the UAE to store over 5 million barrels of crude oil reserves in ISPRL's facility in Mangaluru. ISPRL is a specialised Indian public sector company under the Petroleum Ministry, responsible for maintaining the nation's strategic crude oil reserves, holding 5.33 million metric tonnes of crude across three underground facilities to ensure energy security against supply disruptions.

ity and economic challenges amidst the instability in West Asia, the UAE, which has a comprehensive strategic partnership with India and is home to a large Indian diaspora, has been included in the Prime Minister's itinerary at the last minute.

The UAE has been one of the main targets of Iranian missile attacks ever since the start of the West Asia war on February 28. Tehran accuses the emirates of providing safe space to American military bases, facilities and personnel. And amid the crisis in the Strait of Hormuz, which has impacted energy supplies to much of the world, including India, the UAE announced it was exiting the OPEC, the bloc of oil-producing exporters headed by Saudi Arabia.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Tehran will welcome diplomatic initiative from India: Iran Dy FM

Shubhajit Roy
New Delhi, May 13

FOR THE first time since Pakistan emerged as a mediator between the US and Iran amid the war in West Asia, Tehran has conveyed to New Delhi that if India comes up with a "diplomatic initiative", the Iranian government will "welcome and work on it". Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said on Wednesday that he has conveyed the same to MEA Secretary (West) Siby George at their bilateral meeting.

Giving a context to Pakistan's role, he said that Egypt, Qatar, Oman, and now Pakistan have been mediators, and that they are open to India as well. Gharibabadi, who is a member of the Iranian negotiating team and was part of the Islamabad talks, said, "We always welcome any diplomatic initiative. Egypt had diplomatic initiative, when we did not have even full political or diplomatic relations with Egypt, but we welcomed the initiative of Egypt. So, the nature of the initiatives are important. We went to Cairo. We had the Cairo declaration solving a problem between Iran and the agency (IAEA) regarding verification activities. We had Qatar, Oman, and now we have Pakistan. What is the role of a mediator? Mediator is only facilitating, not engaging substantively, because you are not a part of differences or dispute or even negotiations... negotiations are taking place only between two sides."

"This morning, I said to my counterpart in the (Indian) foreign ministry here... I requested India to come up with an initiative. India is a big, important country. If India comes up with an initiative, we will work on that. So this is the nature of accepting different initiatives." When asked about India's response, he said, "India has always supported peace in the re-



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi being received by officials ahead of BRICS Foreign Ministers' meeting in Delhi, Wednesday. PTI

gion. That's very important... So, if there is any initiative, we absolutely would welcome such an initiative... whatever role India plays, would be important."

In March, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said India can't act as a "dalal nation" (broker) in global geopolitics, specifically regarding West Asia mediation. This remark, made at an all-party meeting, differentiated India's foreign policy from Pakistan's role as a mediator between the US and Iran. Gharibabadi, who is accompanying Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi for the two-day BRICS Foreign Ministers' meeting starting Thursday, appreciated India for the "balanced view", and said, "India, as the chair, is showing impartiality, and that's important." He said Iran is in favour of a final declaration. "We want to have a successful meeting. It's not good to signal this message to the world that BRICS has been divided... we're in favour of having a declaration. But... there is one neighbouring country of Iran that is insisting to condemn Iran into final declaration. Iran has been aggressed. We have been attacked by the US and Israel, and now one neighbouring country of Iran is insisting to condemn Iran."

The Iranian minister is referring to the fact that the 11-member BRICS grouping, which the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Iran are part of, has not been able to agree on a common language on the conflict. Iranians claim that UAE is insisting on condemning Iran. With consensus eluding the grouping, New Delhi had issued a Chair's summary on April 24 stating that "members expressed deep concern on the recent conflict in the Middle East (West Asia) and offered views and assessments on the matter".

In early March, *The Indian Express* reported that Tehran had reached out to New Delhi to take the lead in issuing a statement on behalf of the BRICS, currently chaired by India, condemning the US and Israeli strikes against Iran in the previous two weeks. This put Delhi in a diplomatic pickle given that it had not taken sides in the ongoing conflict. About the closure of Strait of Hormuz, Gharibabadi said, "We are working now on protocol and arrangements to see what services Iran and Oman are providing in the Strait of Hormuz... We are evaluating... It hasn't been finalised... Yes, we have a temporary arrangement now..." However, he said India is a "friendly nation" and 11 vessels have been allowed to transit.

OF THOSE HELD, 3 FROM JAIPUR, 1 GURUGRAM, 1 NASHIK

NEET-UG: 3 from Rajasthan family among 5 in CBI net

Kin say 'framed'; CBI conducts searches, seizes phones & devices

Mahender Singh Manral, Hamza Khan, Sushant Kulkarni & Mohammed Thaver
New Delhi, Sikar, Pune, Mumbai, May 13



Members of ABVP clash with police during a protest outside the NTA office in New Delhi on Wednesday. GAJENDRA YADAV

FOLLOWING THE arrest of a Nashik-based Ayurveda student over his alleged involvement in the paper leak that led to the cancellation of the NEET-UG exam, the CBI said Wednesday that the agency has arrested five persons so far and conducted searches across multiple states as part of its probe in the case.

Police in Maharashtra and Rajasthan said more people have been detained in the case, mainly for questioning, including a woman from Pune. A CBI spokesperson said, "The arrests — three from Jaipur, one (Gurugram) and one (Nashik) — mark a swift crackdown after the CBI's registration of a FIR... on May 12." Those arrested have been identified as Shubham Khairnar from Nashik; Mangilal Biwal, Vikas Biwal and Dinesh Biwal (Jaipur); and, Yash Yadav (Gurugram).

In Rajasthan, officials said Mangilal and Dinesh are brothers who run a real estate business under the name of Biwal Properties at Jamwa Ramgarh, about an hour away from Jaipur city, while Vikas is a family member. They said the brothers are suspected of having allegedly purchased the NEET-UG question paper from Yadav last month and sold it to students in Sikar. Yadav had allegedly obtained the paper from Khairnar, the officials said.

Following their arrests, the Opposition Congress accused the brothers of having links to the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Mor-

cha, and being associated with state's BJP leaders. Congress leader and former Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said, "Dinesh Biwal is an office-bearer of the BJP. Is this the reason why the BJP government in Rajasthan tried to cover up the NEET paper leak and did not file any FIR?"

Rejecting the charges, BJP's state president Madan Rathore said, "The person he is referring to is not our worker. It is common these days to get photographed with anyone in public life, but it is not appropriate to associate someone with the party solely on the basis of photos... We are not trying to protect anyone. Strict action will be taken against those found guilty. The BJP has a zero tolerance policy... No matter how influential the person is, the law will take its course and the culprits will receive severe punishment."

The family of the brothers termed the allegations as "false". "They are being framed. They were taken away 3-4 days ago," their mother, Prabhudevi, said.

The CBI said it is collaborating with Rajasthan's Special Operations Group, which had initiated a preliminary inquiry. "After raids in targeted locations nationwide, the CBI has seized incriminating materials and e-devices, including cellphones. Several other suspects are under examination, and searches are underway based on emerging

leads," a senior officer said.

In Maharashtra's Ahilyanagar, a police officer said, "A CBI team detained a suspect, a resident of Pune, from Ahilyanagar district in connection to the NEET paper leak." Another officer said the Pune resident is suspected of having allegedly provided the physical copy of the leaked question paper to Shubham Khairnar, the arrested Nashik-based student who is accused of making soft copies and circulating them on WhatsApp. Khairnar was produced by the CBI Wednesday before a magistrate court in Mumbai, which granted a two-day transit remand. "The prosecution told the court that Khairnar was arrested in Nashik around 3 am.

In a related development, Police Commissioner Amitesh Kumar said, "We detained a woman suspect from Bibwewadi area of Pune in connection to the NEET leak case. We questioned her and her answers were found to be suspicious. She had been handed over to the CBI for further probe." Asked about the woman's role in the leak, a senior officer said, "She has been questioned about her phone communications and financial transaction with other suspects, who have been apprehended elsewhere. WhatsApp and Telegram chats of all these suspects are being probed." WITH SADAF MODAK

1-yr extension for Sood as CBI chief

Express News Service
New Delhi, May 13

CBI CHIEF Praveen Sood got a one-year extension on Wednesday, with the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet approving it. Sood's two-year tenure, extended by a year in 2025, is due to end on May 24.

An order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training said, "The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet, based on the recommendations of the Committee, has approved the extension in tenure of Shri Praveen Sood, IPS (KN:1986) as Director, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for a period of one year beyond May 24."

Soon after the PM-led three-member committee met Tuesday to select the next CBI Director, Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, in a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi recorded his dissent over the proceedings, saying he will not participate in "a biased exercise".

3 church leaders killed in Manipur ambush

Sukrita Baruah
Guwahati, May 13

THREE CHURCH leaders have been killed and four injured after an attack on their vehicles while they were travelling from Churachandpur to Kangpokpi in Manipur on Wednesday morning.

The deceased, identified as Reverend Vumthang Sithlou, Reverend Kaigoulen Lhouvum and Pastor Paogoulen Sithlou, are part of the Thadou Baptist Association and were reportedly returning to Kangpokpi after a church leaders' meeting in Churachandpur. Police said the attack took place between Kotzim and Kotlen in Kangpokpi while the group was travelling in two vehicles. A security official said that militant groups are suspected to be responsible for the attack, though the matter is subject to probe.

The four injured were transported to the state capital, Imphal, for treatment, and Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand visited them Wednesday afternoon, accompanied by Deputy



Manipur CM Y Khemchand Singh, his deputy Losii Dikho, Home Minister Govindas Konhoujam visit the hospital where the injured persons are being treated, in Imphal on Wednesday. PTI

Chief Minister Losii Dikho and Home Minister Govindas Konhoujam. "I vehemently condemn the dastardly terror attack of the armed miscreants firing upon a group of civilians this morning between Kotzim and Kotlen areas in Kangpokpi district, which resulted in the death of three innocent civilians... This act of violence is deeply troubling and devastating not only for the families but for the entire state, as it disrupts

our path to peace. Our state is gradually moving towards peace, and actions that undermine this collective effort of our people to restore normalcy are unacceptable," the CM said.

The attack comes even as the conflict between the state's Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities has been continuing for three years, and amid heightened tensions between Manipur's Kuki and Tangkhul Naga communities, which

started in February this year in Ukhrul district and has been escalating ever since.

One of the deceased, Vumthang Sithlou, was the president of the Thadou Baptist Association and had previously served as the General Secretary of the Manipur Baptist Convention. "He had recently initiated a reconciliation meeting between Kukis and Nagas in Kohima, because of the current tensions between the two communities," Thanginlen Haokip, a leader of the Kangpokpi-based Committee on Tribal Unity, said.

The fatal attack has drawn condemnations from the CMs of neighbouring states and from church bodies. Nagaland CM Neiphiu Rio said, "I strongly condemn the brutal killing of Kuki Church leaders in Manipur. Such barbaric violence against innocent lives is unacceptable."

Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangmasaid, "Deeply disturbed and anguished by the attack... I urge the authorities in Manipur to take immediate and strict action against those responsible."

'Doctor' without a degree is 1st arrest from Maharashtra

Vallabh Ozarkar
Nashik, May 13

A 27-YEAR-OLD man from Nashik district, Shubham Khairnar, who enrolled as a Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery (BAMS) student but never returned to attend classes is the first arrest from Maharashtra in connection with the NEET-UG paper leak case.

The signboard outside Shubham's consultancy office at a commercial complex in central Nashik, a busy coaching hub, describes him as "Dr Shubham Khairnar". The office was shut when *The Indian Express* visited on Wednesday. Shubham Khairnar was arrested on Tuesday from outside a temple for his alleged links with the NEET-UG paper leak network.

Investigators say Shubham Madhukar Khairnar had enrolled for a BAMS course at Sri Satya Sai University of Technology & Medical Sciences, Sehore, near Bhopal in 2021, but according to university officials, he never returned to college after taking admission — neither for classes nor examination.

Shubham started 'SR Education Consultancy' in central Nashik, offering counselling to students for admission to MBBS, BDS, BHMS and other undergraduate and postgraduate medical courses. An estimated 2,500 students visit the area daily for classes and competitive exam preparation.

Those who know Shubham said he projected himself as someone who could help students navigate admissions to medical courses after NEET results and had become active in informal NEET counselling and admission facilitators in Nashik, the very contacts investigators now suspect became his entry point into the alleged paper-leak network. Investigators said Shubham had shorn his hair to



Shubham Khairnar

change his appearance after realising agencies were looking for him. Officials said he even tried to flee, insisting that he was not Shubham when detained. Investigators matched old photographs, technical evidence and local verification before confirming his identity.

According to officials probing the case, Shubham allegedly helped in circulating the leaked question paper through a network of students who took counselling. Investigators claim he purchased the paper for around Rs 10 lakh and sold it for nearly Rs 15 lakh each through a courier chain that allegedly stretched from Nashik to Rajasthan. The probe reached Nashik after Rajasthan Police shared details linked to the alleged courier movement of the leaked paper.

Originally from Nandgaon in Nashik district, Shubham comes from a family associated with pharmacy and Ayurveda practice. His father, Madhukar Khairnar, is known in the village as a 'doctor'. Madhukar, however, denied being a qualified doctor and described himself as a "farmer". He, however, admitted that he treated patients through ayurveda. Madhukar also claimed he was unaware of his son's alleged activities. "He told me he was doing [BAMS] practice and also counselling students," he said.

Shri Satya Sai University Vice-Chancellor Mukesh Tiwari said Khairnar took admission in 2021 but never returned for lectures or examinations.

Aspirant dies by suicide due to 'exam stress'

Express News Service
Panaji, May 13

A 17-YEAR-OLD NEET aspirant allegedly died by suicide at his house in Goa on Tuesday night. Police said the student had appeared for the NEET exam on May 3, but whether the suicide was linked to the exam's cancellation Tuesday is not yet clear and is being investigated.

The NTA Tuesday cancelled the NEET-UG exam citing a "paper leak", more than a week after over 22.05 lakh candidates appeared for it. Police said the incident took place between 10 and 11 pm Tuesday. The police control room informed the local police station about the suicide of a 17-year-old boy at 11.15 pm. The teenager was taken to a nearby hospital, where he was declared brought dead. Police have initiated inquest proceedings and a case of unnatural death has been registered.

The student was a hockey player. Police said a note has been recovered from the spot, in which the minor is believed to have mentioned that he was under stress over "competitive exams". The panchanama recorded by police states that inquiry with the family members revealed that the boy allegedly died by suicide due to "pressure of exam performance".

A senior police officer said, "At night, the boy had bolted the door of his room from inside. When there was no answer despite repeated knocking, the family forced open the door and found he had died by suicide. The reason for the alleged suicide is yet to be conclusively ascertained."

On Wednesday, the CBI arrested five persons and conducted searches across states in connection with the alleged irregularities and paper leak in the NEET UG-2026 examination. The case stems from a written complaint by the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, following reports of alleged question paper leaks surfaced in Rajasthan and other states.

India gets its first Alzheimer's therapy at Rs 1 lakh/dose

Annona Dutt
New Delhi, May 13

INDIANS WITH Alzheimer's disease will now have the option of receiving a new treatment, with pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly launching the donanemab drug in the market under the brand name Lormalzi. The once-a-month 350 mg infusion has been shown to slow the progression of the disease by dissolving the amyloid beta protein plaques in the brain — a classical sign of the neuro-degenerative disease. The drug, costing nearly a lakh rupees per dose, is to be taken for at least 18 months.

Donanemab is a monoclonal antibody treatment for Alzheimer's. This is a disease-modifying therapy that uses laboratory-made proteins to target and remove amyloid-beta plaques from the brain, slowing cognitive decline in early-stage patients by roughly

30%. Approved therapies, including lecanemab (Leqembi) and donanemab (Kisunla), are administered intravenously.

Winslow Tucker, president and general manager, Eli Lilly India, said in a release: "Alzheimer's is a complex, progressive condition that places a significant emotional, clinical and societal burden on patients, caregivers, and healthcare systems. The launch of Lormalzi in India reflects our long-standing commitment to advancing innovation and supporting evidence-based intervention for people living with Alzheimer's."

How much will it cost?
The innovative drug — third to be approved for the disease by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the first to be launched in India — will be prohibitively expensive. A single dose of the drug will cost Rs 91,688. The company



Winslow Tucker, president and general manager of Eli Lilly India, who launched donanemab drug under the brand name Lormalzi

will run an access programme to ensure that patients get the drug at lower prices. Despite this, not many are likely to be able to afford the drug.

Eligible for treatment

The treatment is meant for patients in early stages of Alzheimer's disease — those with mild cognitive impairment and mild dementia. It is not meant for those already progressed to advanced stages,

which is an important caveat. While the drug can dissolve the build-up of plaque in the brain, it cannot reverse the damage that has already happened.

Importance of the drug

Considering the increasing burden of Alzheimer's in India, the drug is an important innovation. Dementia currently affects over 8.8 million people in India, with Alzheimer's accounting for the majority of cases. This number is projected to nearly double to 16.9 million by 2036. Experts say that therapies have been notoriously elusive. And while they may be inaccessible to many now, they present hope for more affordable options becoming available in the future.

The phase 3 study with 1,736 patients, 860 of whom received the infusion every four weeks till the plaque cleared, showed that donanemab slows down cognitive decline in early Alzheimer's

patients by 35.1% in 76 weeks. The drug is, however, known to cause amyloid-related imaging abnormalities — such as brain swelling in 24% participants and brain bleeding in 19.7% participants — most of which is asymptomatic. The study reported three treatment-related deaths.

In India, the challenges

Treatment with donanemab would require an early diagnosis, something that hardly happens with Alzheimer's in India. The health systems in India may not be ready for this, and it would further add to the cost of the medicine.

Other drugs available

There are two other therapies, aducanumab and lecanemab — both by Eisai-Biogen and working on the same principle. They were approved by the US FDA within two years of each other.

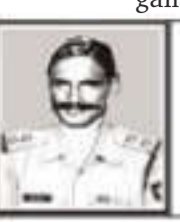





OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, CONSTRUCTION CIRCLE U.P. JAL NIGAM (URBAN)
NEAR MANOHAR BHUSHAN INTER COLLEGE JAL NIGAM COLONY, GANDHI NAGAR BAREILLY (U.P.). Mob: 9473942568 E-mail: se4_upjnibly@yahoo.co.in

Letter No.: 201/M-16/23 Dated: 11.05.2026

E-TENDER NOTICE
On behalf of U.P. Jal Nigam (Urban) online E-tenders for execution of Investigation and survey (on GIS basis) of the project area including soil investigation if required, Engineering Design (hydraulic and structural) as required, Procurement of all labour & material, T&P etc. and construction of various components complete for Interception and Diversion Works of tapping drain "USED WATER MANAGEMENT AT RUDAYAN, DISTRICT-BUDAUN" including successful testing and commissioning of said work on percentage rate "Turn-key basis" under SBM (U)-2.0 Programme. Bids are invited in two bid system on percentage rate basis from eligible, reputed and experienced bidder. E-tender documents will be available for download from **Date 20.05.2026 at 17:00 Hrs.**, Pre-Bid meeting will be held on **Date 28.05.2026 at 12:30 Hrs.** in the office of under signed. E-bid can be submitted till **Date 15.06.2026 up to 15:00 Hrs.** and technical bid shall be opened on **15.06.2026 at 16:00 Hrs.** in the office of The Superintending Engineer, Construction Circle, U.P. Jal Nigam (Urban), Bareilly in presence of contractor or their authorized representative. E-tender Cost is **Rs. 10000.00+GST @18%**. Details are available On U.P. Govt. <http://etender.up.nic.in> & U.P. Jal Nigam (Urban) website ["http://www.jn.upscd.gov.in"](http://www.jn.upscd.gov.in).

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

BORDER SECURITY FORCE
Director General and all Ranks of Border Security Force remember its gallant Subordinate officers on their Balidan Diwas.

 SUB INSPECTOR SWARAN SINGH 12.04.1948 - 14.05.1987	 ASI/RO MOHAN SINGH 10.09.1963 - 14.05.2002
 CONSTABLE JAI KISHAN, PMG 10.05.1974 - 14.05.2011	 CONSTABLE KARAN KUMAR 31.01.1988 - 14.05.2024
 CONSTABLE PARAS RAM 07.09.1946 - 14.05.1987	 CONSTABLE JOGINDER SINGH 30.10.1946 - 14.05.1987

CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
DG and all Ranks of CRPF pay solemn tribute to Lance Naik Bira Lal of 35 Bn, who made the supreme sacrifice while bravely resisting terrorists at his native village Taruwali, district Gurdaspur, Punjab on 14 May 1990. CRPF salutes the braveheart and pledges never to let his sacrifice go in vain.

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE
Div. Rly. Manager, N.W.Railway, Jaipur for and on behalf of President of India invites open E-Tender for the following works upto 15.00 hours on the date shown as below- **Sr.No : 1. Name of work with location : ENGG-JP-2026-27-39 ADEN (RGS) Sub Division:- Provision for dewatering of natural or accumulated water, desilting of RW, desilting of Hume pipe & other activities at various LHS/RUBS under SSE(P-way) NMK section. (For 02 Years). Approx Cost of work : 23901256.25 Earnest money Rs. : 478000.00 Sr.No : 2. Name of work with location : ENGG-JP-2026-27-40 ADEN (RGS) Sub Division:- Provision for dewatering of natural or accumulated water, desilting of RW, desilting of Hume pipe & other activities at various LHS/RUBS under SSE(P-way) AEL section. (For 02 Years). Approx Cost of work : 12654464.00 Earnest money Rs. : 253100.00 Sr.No : 3. Name of work with location : ENGG-JP-2026-27-41 ADEN (SIKAR) Sub Division:- Provision for dewatering of natural or accumulated water, desilting of RW, desilting of Hume pipe & other activities at various LHS/RUBS under SSE(P-way) SIKAR section. (For 02 Years). Approx Cost of work : 18234998.15 Earnest money Rs. : 364700.00 Sr.No : 4. Name of work with location : ENGG-JP-2026-27-42 ADEN (SIKAR) Sub Division:- Provision for dewatering of natural or accumulated water, desilting of RW, desilting of Hume pipe & other activities at various LHS/RUBS under SSE(P-way) JIN section. (For 02 Years). Approx Cost of work : 18234998.15 Earnest money Rs. : 364700.00 Sr.No : 5. Name of work with location : ENGG-JP-2026-27-43 ADEN (SIKAR) Sub Division:- Provision for dewatering of natural or accumulated water, desilting of RW, desilting of Hume pipe & other activities at various LHS/RUBS under SSE(P-way) JIN section. (For 02 Years). Approx Cost of work : 18234998.15 Earnest money Rs. : 364700.00 Sr.No : 6. Name of work with location : ENGG-JP-2026-27-44 ADEN (SIKAR) Sub Division:- Provision for dewatering of natural or accumulated water, desilting of RW, desilting of Hume pipe & other activities at various LHS/RUBS under SSE(P-way) JIN section. (For 02 Years). Approx Cost of work : 18234998.15 Earnest money Rs. : 364700.00 Sr.No : 7. Name of work with location : ENGG-JP-2026-27-45 Sr.DEN/SJP Section:- Provision of UPVC windows with toughened glass in Relay room for effective functioning of Air Conditioners. Approx Cost of work : 15765505.31 Earnest money Rs. : 315300.00 1. Detail is available on N.W.Rly website - www.ireps.gov.in and Notice Board in WA section, DRM Office, NWR/Jaipur. 2. Tender No. ENGG-JP-2026-26-39 to 45 are to be closed 02.06.2026 at 15.00 hrs and opened on 02.06.2026 at 16.00 hrs. **697-DI/26****

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY
Date: 12.05.2026
No.: CIB/PL/NU/ET/Auction/2026-01
President of India, through Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager West Central railway Bhopal Division, has invited E-Auction for awarding contracts of pay and use toilets. Catalogues are available on IREPS Portal (www.ireps.gov.in) Details of catalogues are as follows. **Catalogue number : C-BPL-PNU-ET, Type of contract : NORMAL Pay & Use TOILETS, Lot No./Bid No. : PnU-BPL-ET-Tol-19-25-2 (Pay and use Toilets, Contract Period : 3 Years (1096 day), Date and time of close of e-auction : 27.05.2026 12:30:00** All other details, Standard Condition of Contract and Special Condition of Contract are available on www.ireps.gov.in Participants can visit the portal for details.
For Divisional Railway Manager (C), West Central Railway, Bhopal
स्वच्छ भारत अभियान एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

रजिस्ट्री सं. डी.एन.ए. 33004/99
REGD. No. D.L.-33004/99

भारत का राजपत्र
The Gazette of India
सी.जी.-डी.एल.-अ.-11052026-272423
CG-DL-E-11052026-272423
असाधारण
EXTRAORDINARY
भाग II-खण्ड 3-उप-खण्ड (ii)
PART II - Section 3 - Sub-section (ii)
प्राधिकार से प्रकाशित
PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY
नई दिल्ली, शुक्रवार, मई 8, 2026/वैशाख 18, 1948
NEW DELHI, FRIDAY, MAY 8, 2026/VAISAKHA 18, 1948

MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS
NOTIFICATION
New Delhi, the 8th May, 2026

S. O. 2368(E).—In exercise of powers conferred by sub-section (1) of section 3A of the National Highways Act, 1956 (48 of 1956) (hereinafter referred to as the said Act), the Central Government, after being satisfied that for the public purpose, the land, the brief description of which is given in the Schedule below, is required for building (widening/two lane with paved shoulder/four lane etc.), maintenance, management and operation of NH709B in the stretch of land from Km. 14.75 to Km. 26.15 (Delhi Saharanpur Highway from Delhi/UP Border to EPE junction) in the district of GHAZIABAD in the state of UTTAR PRADESH, hereby declares its intention to acquire such land. Any person interested in the said land may, within twenty-one days from the date of publication of this notification in the Official Gazette, object to the use of such land for the aforesaid purpose under sub-section(1) of section 3C of the said Act. Every such objection shall be made to the Competent Authority, namely, ADM (LA) Ghaziabad in writing and shall set out the grounds thereof and the Competent Authority shall give the objector an opportunity of being heard, either in person or by a legal practitioner, and may, after hearing all such objections and after making such further enquiry, if any, as the Competent Authority thinks necessary, by order, either allow or disallow the objections. Any order made by the Competent Authority under sub-section (2) of section 3C of the said Act shall be final. The land plans and other details of the land to be acquired under their notification are available and can be inspected by the interested person at the aforesaid office of the Competent Authority.

SCHEDULE
Brief Description of the land to be acquired with or without structures falling NH709B in the stretch of land from Km. 14.75 to Km. 26.15 (Delhi Saharanpur Highway from Delhi/UP Border to EPE junction) in the district of GHAZIABAD in the state of UTTAR PRADESH

BENGALURU NORTH CITY CORPORATION
Office Of The Executive Engineer, Dasarahalli Division, BNCC, Zone-2 Hesaragatta main Road, MEI Layout, Bagalunte, Bengaluru-560073
No:BNCC/EE/DAS/TEN/03/2026-27 Date: 13.05-2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through GOK KPP Portal <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> only) Tenders on item rate basis are invited by the undersigned on behalf of the Commissioner BNCC for the works mentioned below from the registered contractors of GBA -Bengaluru North City Corporation, or equivalent registration with CPWD / KPWD / Railways / MES or any State Government Organizations. (Standard Tender Document KW-1, 2, 4)

Sl. No.	Name of the works
Single Cover System	
1.	Maintenance of drains by engaging Labour and Tractor in Jahahalli Ward No-60 (SC) Est. Cost: ₹.20.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.250000.00
2.	Maintenance of drains by engaging Labour and Tractor in HMT Ward No-61 (OTHERS) Est. Cost: ₹.20.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.50000.00
3.	Maintenance of drains by engaging Labour and Tractor in Brundavana Nagara Ward No-62 (OTHERS) Est. Cost: ₹.20.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.50000.00
4.	Maintenance of drains by engaging Labour and Tractor in JP Park Ward No-63 (OTHERS) Est. Cost: ₹.20.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.50000.00
5.	Maintenance of drains by engaging Labour and Tractor in Yeshwanthpura Ward No-64 (OTHERS) Est. Cost: ₹.20.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.50000.00
6.	Annual Maintenance of SWD in Part of RR Nagara Constituency (BNCC Limits) for the year 2026-27 (OTHERS) Est. Cost: ₹.40.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.10000.00
7.	Establishment of Temporary Control Room for Monsoon period in 2026 in Jahahalli Subdivision (CAT-2A) Est. Cost: ₹.5.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.6250.00
8.	Establishment of Temporary Control Room for Monsoon period in 2026 in Yeshwanthpura Subdivision (OTHERS) Est. Cost: ₹.7.50 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.18750.00
9.	Establishment of Temporary Control Room for Monsoon period in 2026 in Shethihalli Subdivision (SC) Est. Cost: ₹.7.50 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.9375.00
10.	Establishment of Temporary Control Room for Monsoon period in 2026 in Dasarahalli Subdivision (OTHERS) Est. Cost: ₹.7.50 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.18750.00
11.	Establishment of Temporary Control Room for Monsoon period in 2026 in Dasarahalli Subdivision (ST) Est. Cost: ₹.5.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.6250.00
Two Cover System	
12.	Annual Maintenance of SWD in Part of Dasarahalli Constituency (BNCC Limits) for the year 2026-27, SWD AMC, (OTHERS) Est. Cost: ₹.150.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹.150000.00

Calendar of Events: (1) Pre-Bid Meeting will be held on 22-05-2026 at 3:00 noon in the office of the Chief Engineer, Zone-2, BNCC, Bengaluru (2) Tender Documents can be Downloaded in KPP-Portal from **20-05-2026**. (3) Last Date and Time for Tender Queries/Clarifications 22-05-2026, 11.30 am (4) Last Date and Time for uploading the Filled proposals : 27-05-2026, 4:00 pm (5) Date and Time for Opening of Technical Bid: 29-05-2026, 4:30 pm (6) Date and Time for Opening of Single cover bid : 29-05-2026, 4:30 pm (7) Date and Time for Opening of Financial Bid : 02-06-2026, 4:30 pm
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Dasarahalli Division, Zone-2, BNCC

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
ई-निविदा आमन्त्रण सूचना
मंडल रेल प्रबंधक, इंजीनियरिंग, उत्तर पश्चिम रेलवे, जोधपुर द्वारा भारत के राष्ट्रपति के लिये एवं उनकी ओर से ई-निविदा के माध्यम से प्रकल्पित नियमों के अन्तर्गत निर्धारित प्रपत्रों में निविदा निम्न कार्यों के लिये क्रमानुसार आमंत्रित की जाती है- ई-निविदा सूचना सं. : 35of2026-27 कार्य का नाम व स्थान : Zone Contract (Masonry, Painting & Road Work) Zone-1:- Residential Buildings in the section of SSE/PW/PLCJ & SSE/PW/JSM under ADEN/JSM/JU. for the year 2026-27 & Year 2027-28. अनुमानित लागत रुपये : 7,31,99,681.20 बयाने की राशि रुपये : 14,64,000.00 ई-निविदा सूचना सं. : 36of2026-27 कार्य का नाम व स्थान : Zone Contract (Masonry, Painting & Road Work) Zone-2:- Service Buildings in the section of SSE/PW/PLCJ & SSE/PW/JSM under ADEN/JSM/JU. for the year 2026-27 & Year 2027-28. अनुमानित लागत रुपये : 99,99,911.90 बयाने की राशि रुपये : 2,00,000.00 ई-निविदा सूचना सं. : 37of2026-27 कार्य का नाम व स्थान : Zone Contract (Water supply) Zone-3:- Supply of potable sweet drinking water to P-Way Gangs staff quarters stations and L-Xing's in the section of SSE/PW/PLCJ & SSE/PW/JSM under ADEN/JSM/JU. for the year 2026-27 & Year 2027-28. अनुमानित लागत रुपये : 1,61,99,999.92 बयाने की राशि रुपये : 3,24,000.00 ई-निविदा सूचना सं. : 39of2026-27 कार्य का नाम व स्थान : Secondary TSR of loop lines & Deep screening of loop line in BOKT and JU yard in the section of SSE/PW/JU under ADEN/Line of Jodhpur division. अनुमानित लागत रुपये : 7,89,11,007.82 बयाने की राशि रुपये : 15,78,200.00 निविदा सूचना संख्या 35 to 37 of 2026-27 & 39 of 2026-27 निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि 01.06.2026 को 15:00 बजे तक है। वेबसाइट का विवरण जहाँ पर ई-निविदा देखी व भरी जा सकती है www.ireps.gov.in **698-DI/26**

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
ई-निविदा आमन्त्रण सूचना
मंडल रेल प्रबंधक, इंजीनियरिंग, उत्तर पश्चिम रेलवे, जोधपुर द्वारा भारत के राष्ट्रपति के लिये एवं उनकी ओर से ई-निविदा के माध्यम से प्रकल्पित नियमों के अन्तर्गत निर्धारित प्रपत्रों में निविदा निम्न कार्यों के लिये क्रमानुसार आमंत्रित की जाती है- ई-निविदा सूचना सं. : 2026-27 : 28 कार्य का नाम व स्थान : Improvement of officer bungalows in the section of ADEN/HQ/JU अनुमानित लागत रुपये : 16481183.79 बयाने की राशि रुपये : 329600.00 ई-निविदा सूचना सं. : 2026-27 : 29 कार्य का नाम व स्थान : Construction of new officer club and improvement to other service buildings at Jodhpur under ADEN/HQ/JU अनुमानित लागत रुपये : 28830491.55 बयाने की राशि रुपये : 576600.00 ई-निविदा सूचना सं. : 2026-27 : 30 कार्य का नाम व स्थान : Replacement of old/ dilapidated quarters by 20 units Type-III quarters in Nehru Park Colony under ADEN/HQ अनुमानित लागत रुपये : 43563097.36 बयाने की राशि रुपये : 8713000.00 ई-निविदा सूचना सं. : 2026-27 : 32 कार्य का नाम व स्थान : Outsourcing of day-to-day maintenance activities of Railway Colonies & Service Buildings for 24 months under SSE/W/BJU in the jurisdiction of ADEN/HQ/JU अनुमानित लागत रुपये : 11713545.13 बयाने की राशि रुपये : 234300.00 ई-निविदा सूचना सं. : 2026-27 : 33 कार्य का नाम व स्थान : Outsourcing of day-to-day maintenance activities of Railway Colonies & Service Buildings for 24 months under SSE/W/DJU in the jurisdiction of ADEN/HQ/JU अनुमानित लागत रुपये : 9956710.01 बयाने की राशि रुपये : 199100.00 निविदा सूचना संख्या 28OF2026-27, 29OF2026-27, 30 OF2026-27, 32OF2026-27 & 33OF 2026-27 निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि 29.05.2026, 01.06.2026, 08.06.2026 को 15:00 बजे तक है। वेबसाइट का विवरण जहाँ पर ई-निविदा देखी व भरी जा सकती है www.ireps.gov.in **694-DI/26**

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
ई-निविदा आमन्त्रण सूचना
मंडल रेल प्रबंधक, इंजीनियरिंग, उत्तर पश्चिम रेलवे, जोधपुर द्वारा भारत के राष्ट्रपति के लिये एवं उनकी ओर से ई-निविदा के माध्यम से प्रकल्पित नियमों के अन्तर्गत निर्धारित प्रपत्रों में निविदा निम्न कार्यों के लिये क्रमानुसार आमंत्रित की जाती है- ई-निविदा सूचना सं. : 2026-27 : 28 कार्य का नाम व स्थान : Improvement of officer bungalows in the section of ADEN/HQ/JU अनुमानित लागत रुपये : 16481183.79 बयाने की राशि रुपये : 329600.00 ई-निविदा सूचना सं. : 2026-27 : 29 कार्य का नाम व स्थान : Construction of new officer club and improvement to other service buildings at Jodhpur under ADEN/HQ/JU अनुमानित लागत रुपये : 28830491.55 बयाने की राशि रुपये : 576600.00 ई-निविदा सूचना सं. : 2026-27 : 30 कार्य का नाम व स्थान : Replacement of old/ dilapidated quarters by 20 units Type-III quarters in Nehru Park Colony under ADEN/HQ अनुमानित लागत रुपये : 43563097.36 बयाने की राशि रुपये : 8713000.00 ई-निविदा सूचना सं. : 2026-27 : 32 कार्य का नाम व स्थान : Outsourcing of day-to-day maintenance activities of Railway Colonies & Service Buildings for 24 months under SSE/W/BJU in the jurisdiction of ADEN/HQ/JU अनुमानित लागत रुपये : 11713545.13 बयाने की राशि रुपये : 234300.00 ई-निविदा सूचना सं. : 2026-27 : 33 कार्य का नाम व स्थान : Outsourcing of day-to-day maintenance activities of Railway Colonies & Service Buildings for 24 months under SSE/W/DJU in the jurisdiction of ADEN/HQ/JU अनुमानित लागत रुपये : 9956710.01 बयाने की राशि रुपये : 199100.00 निविदा सूचना संख्या 28OF2026-27, 29OF2026-27, 30 OF2026-27, 32OF2026-27 & 33OF 2026-27 निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि 29.05.2026, 01.06.2026, 08.06.2026 को 15:00 बजे तक है। वेबसाइट का विवरण जहाँ पर ई-निविदा देखी व भरी जा सकती है www.ireps.gov.in **694-DI/26**

District : Ghaziabad
<https://egazette.gov.in>
Publication date : 14th May, 2026
[https://egazette.gov.in/\(S\(nngbz2nshzpoat2op1hpc0s\)\)ViewPDF.aspx](https://egazette.gov.in/(S(nngbz2nshzpoat2op1hpc0s))ViewPDF.aspx)
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1J2WNWqrdh0AJq60jH9Z5jYfY37bVl/view?usp=sharing>

Note: Physical copy of this notification is also available at the office of CALA/PIU/RO and land owners may also see the notification there.

ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग कार्य प्रमंडल, देवघर
जिला परिषद बिल्डींग, सत्संगनगर, देवघर

ई-अल्पकालीन पुनर्निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना
ई-अल्पकालीन पुनर्निविदा संख्या :- 16R11/2026-27/RWD/EE/DEOGHAR दिनांक :- 12.05.2026

कार्यपालक अभियन्ता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमंडल, देवघर द्वारा निम्न विवरण के अनुसार e-procurement पद्धति के रूप में पुनर्निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्र. सं.	आईडीटी क्रिकेशन संख्या/वैकै संख्या	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि (रुपये में)		कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि	टेण्डर कॉल नं.	
			अंक में	अक्षर में			
1.	RWD/EE/DEOGHAR/40/2024-25	आराजोरी से महाराजमंड तक पथ निर्माण कार्य (नं०-1.320कि.मी.) (प्रखण्ड : सारठ)	1,76,16,300.00	अक्षर में	एक करोड़ छित्तर लाख सोलह हजार तीन सौ।	12 माह	सूचीय

(1). वेबसाइट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि - 17.05.2026
(2). ई0 निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि - 27.05.2026 अपराह्न 5.00 बजे तक
(3). निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय - 29.05.2026 अपराह्न 3.30 बजे।
(4).निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता- कार्यपालक अभियन्ता, ग्राम कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमंडल, देवघर। कार्यपालक अभियन्ता ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग कार्य प्रमंडल, देवघर

PR 379683 (Rural Development)26-27'D

BIHAR SCHOOL EXAMINATION BOARD
NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
Tender Notice No. : PR 103/2026

Bihar School Examination Board invites e-tenders under a two-bid system from reputed Service Providers/ Firms/ Companies/ Agencies/ Societies for the "Information Security Auditing, Vulnerability Assessment & Penetration Testing (VAPT), and IT Compliance services." Detailed tender documents, including eligibility criteria, terms and conditions, are available on the website: <https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in>.

Tender Schedule

Date and Time for Activity	Date/Time: Duration
Online Sale/ Download Date of Tender Documents	From: 18/05/2026 (16:00 Hrs.) to 08/06/2026 (16:00 Hrs.) (https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
Pre-Bid Meeting	26/05/2026 at 12:30 Hrs. (Bihar School Examination Board, Sinha Library Road, Patna-800017)
Last Date/ Time for Submission/ uploading of Online Bid	08/06/2026 up to 16:00 Hrs. (https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
Last Date and Time for submission of EMD in Hard Copy/Original (Only in case of BG)	09/06/2026 up to 14:00 Hrs.
Date & Time for Opening of Technical Bid	09/06/2026 at 15:00 Hrs. (https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
Date & Time for Opening of Financial Bid	Date to be announced later by Competent Authority.
Cost of the Tender Document	₹5,900/- (Five Thousand Nine Hundred Rupees Only) (Non-Refundable)
Tender Processing Fee	₹3,540/- (Three Thousand Five Hundred Forty Rupees Only) (Non-Refundable)
Earnest Money	₹2,00,000/- (Two Lakh Rupees Only) (Refundable)

* Contact Details: Nodal Officer, Mobile No.: +91 62999 23095, E-Mail ID: eproc-bseb-bih@gov.in / eproc.bseb@gmail.com
* Note: Bihar School Examination Board reserves the right to accept/ cancel/ reschedule tenders without assigning any reasons. Prospective bidders are advised to regularly visit <https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in>. Corrigendum/ Amendments etc., if any, will be notified on this portal only and no separate advertisement will be made. **Secretary**

JHARKHAND BIJLI VITRAN NIGAM LIMITED
(CIN: U40108JH2013SGC001702)
Regd. Office:- Engineering Building, HEC, Dhurwa, Ranchi-834004.
fax # 0651-2400483 e-mail : cesp.jseb@rediffmail.com / gmsp.jbvnl@rediffmail.com

E-Procurement Notice
JBVNL invites online e-tender from reputed, technically experienced and financially sound manufacturers/ supplier only for procurement of following Materials :-

Sr	NIT/Tender notice No. and description of item	Tender fee	Date of publication of tender on web site	Document download start date & time	Online Bid Submission start date	Online Bid Submission end date	Technical bid opening date and time
1	77/PR/JBVNL/2026-27 25 KVA Distribution Transformer with CSP, BIS Level-1 + GST	Rs 10000/- + GST	15/05/2026 from 13:00 Hrs.	15/05/2026 from 13:10 Hrs.	15/05/2026 from 13:20 Hrs.	04/06/2026 upto 18:00 Hrs.	05/06/2026 at 18:00 Hrs.
2	78/PR/JBVNL/2026-27 63KVA Distribution Transformer with CSP, BIS Level-1 + GST	Rs 10000/- + GST	15/05/2026 from 13:00 Hrs.	15/05/2026 from 13:10 Hrs.	15/05/2026 from 13:20 Hrs.	04/06/2026 upto 18:00 Hrs.	05/06/2026 at 18:00 Hrs.
3	79/PR/JBVNL/2026-27 100 KVA Distribution Transformer with CSP, BIS Level-1 + GST	Rs 10000/- + GST	15/05/2026 from 13:00 Hrs.	15/05/2026 from 13:10 Hrs.	15/05/2026 from 13:20 Hrs.	04/06/2026 upto 18:00 Hrs.	05/06/2026 at 18:00 Hrs.
4	80/PR/JBVNL/2026-27 200 KVA Distribution Transformer with CSP, BIS Level-1 + GST	Rs 10000/- + GST	15/05/2026 from 13:00 Hrs.	15/05/2026 from 13:10 Hrs.	15/05/2026 from 13:20 Hrs.	04/06/2026 upto 18:00 Hrs.	05/06/2026 at 18:00 Hrs.

NOTE:- (i) Only e-tenders will be accepted. Further details can be seen on website <http://jharkhand.tenders.gov.in> and may be contacted on Mobile No. 9470378503/ 9430348596, NIC helpline No. 0651-2400178
(ii) Tender fee & EMD must be paid through online mode.
(iii) Tender fee is non-refundable.


Sd/- Dy. General Manager Purchase
PR.NO.379676 Jharkhand Bijlee Vitran Nigam Ltd(26-27):D

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, CONSTRUCTION CIRCLE U.P. JAL NIGAM (URBAN)
NEAR MANOHAR BHUSHAN INTER COLLEGE JAL NIGAM COLONY, GANDHI NAGAR BAREILLY (U.P.). Mob: 9473942568 E-mail: se4_upjnibly@yahoo.co.in

Letter No.: 206/M-16/28 Dated: 11.05.2026

E-TENDER NOTICE
On behalf of U.P. Jal Nigam (Urban) online E-tenders for execution of Investigation and survey (on GIS basis) of the project area including soil investigation if required, Engineering Design (hydraulic and structural) as required, Procurement of all labour & material, T&P etc. and construction of various components complete for Interception and Diversion Works of tapping drain "USED WATER MANAGEMENT AT DAHGAWAN, DISTRICT-BUDAUN" including successful testing and commissioning of said work on percentage rate "Turn-key basis" under SBM (U)-2.0 Programme. Bids are invited in two bid system on percentage rate basis from eligible, reputed and experienced bidder. E-tender documents will be available for download from **Date 20.05.2026 at 17:00 Hrs.**, Pre-Bid meeting will be held on **Date 28.05.2026 at 12:30 Hrs.** in the office of under signed. E-bid can be submitted till **Date 15.06.2026 up to 15:00 Hrs.** and technical bid shall be opened on **15.06.2026 at 16:00 Hrs.** in the office of The Superintending Engineer, Construction Circle, U.P. Jal Nigam (Urban), Bareilly in presence of contractor or their authorized representative. E-tender Cost is **Rs. 10000.00+GST @18%**. Details are available On U.P. Govt. <http://etender.up.nic.in> & U.P. Jal Nigam (Urban) website ["http://www.jn.upscd.gov.in"](http://www.jn.upscd.gov.in).

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No. 1384 Date. 13/05/26

FACULTY RECRUITMENT NOTICE
Applications are invited, in online mode, from eligible candidates to fill up regular posts of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor in the Departments of Anthropology, Biotechnology, Botany, Chemistry, Commerce, Computer Science & MCA, Economics, Education & B.Ed, English, Geology, History, Mathematics & Statistics, Odia, Physics, Political Science, Zoology at Khallikote Unitary University, Berhampur.
Detailed advertisements will be available on the University website <https://kuu.ac.in> as well as on the HIMS Portal <https://himsrecruitment.odisha.gov.in/home> from 22.05.2026. The application process shall be conducted entirely in online mode through the HIMS Portal <https://himsrecruitment.odisha.gov.in/home> from 22.05.2026 to 22.06.2026 (11.59 PM). After submitting the application online, a printout of the same, along with all supporting documents duly self-attested by the applicant, must be sent to the "Registrar, Khallikote Unitary University, Berhampur, Ganjam, Odisha, Pin-760001" by Speed Post only so as to reach the office on or before 30.06.2026 by 05.30 PM.
For details of vacant Posts, essential qualifications, other terms and conditions, please visit the University website



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• ECONOMY

How farm exports have grown despite US tariffs

Indian exporters have managed to diversify away from the US market, with marine products, buffalo meat and coffee being star performers



HARISH DAMODARAN

INDIA'S FARM exports grew 2.3% year-on-year in 2025-26 (April-March), despite the steep tariffs imposed by US President Donald Trump's administration. Farm produce shipments were valued at \$53.1 billion during the last financial year, up from \$52 billion in 2024-25 and marginally below the all-time-high of \$53.2 billion for 2022-23.

Agricultural exports grew faster than overall merchandise exports, which rose 0.9% year-on-year to \$441.7 billion in 2025-26. This overall export figure was also below the 2022-23 peak of \$451.1 billion.

The Trump tariffs — 25% effective from August 7 and raised to 50% from August 27, before being cut to 18% on February 10 and 10% on February 24 — have hurt key Indian exports to the US.

These included pharmaceuticals (from \$9.7 billion in 2024-25 to \$8.6 billion in 2025-26), readymade garments (\$5.3 billion to \$4.8 billion), gold and jewellery (\$4.2 billion to \$2.8 billion) and leather products (\$948.5 million to \$887.7 million). Among agri items, the significant drops were of marine products (from \$2.7 billion to \$2.3 billion), spices (\$654.7 million to \$578.7 million), basmati rice (\$337.1 million to \$285.9 million) and processed fruits & vegetables (\$274.3 million to \$214 million).

Diversification dividends

The US tariff shocks notwithstanding, exports of some agricultural produce — including marine products, buffalo meat and coffee — touched record levels in 2025-26 (see chart 1).

The value of marine product exports grew by 13.9% to over \$8.4 billion. Even as exports to the US fell, that to other countries rose. The top examples include China (\$1.2 billion in 2024-25 to \$1.6 billion in 2025-26), Vietnam (\$381.8 million to \$648.6 million), Japan (\$408.5 million to \$451.1 million), Belgium (\$225.3 million to \$376.6 million) and Thailand (\$311.9 million to \$362.2 million).

Simply put, marine product exporters more than offset the impact of the tariffs on their largest market — the US, especially for frozen shrimps and prawns — by augmenting shipments to other destinations.

Having a diversified market also helped

• HOW AGRI TRADE HAS PERFORMED AMID U.S. TARIFF TROUBLES

Chart 1: KEY AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS (\$ million)

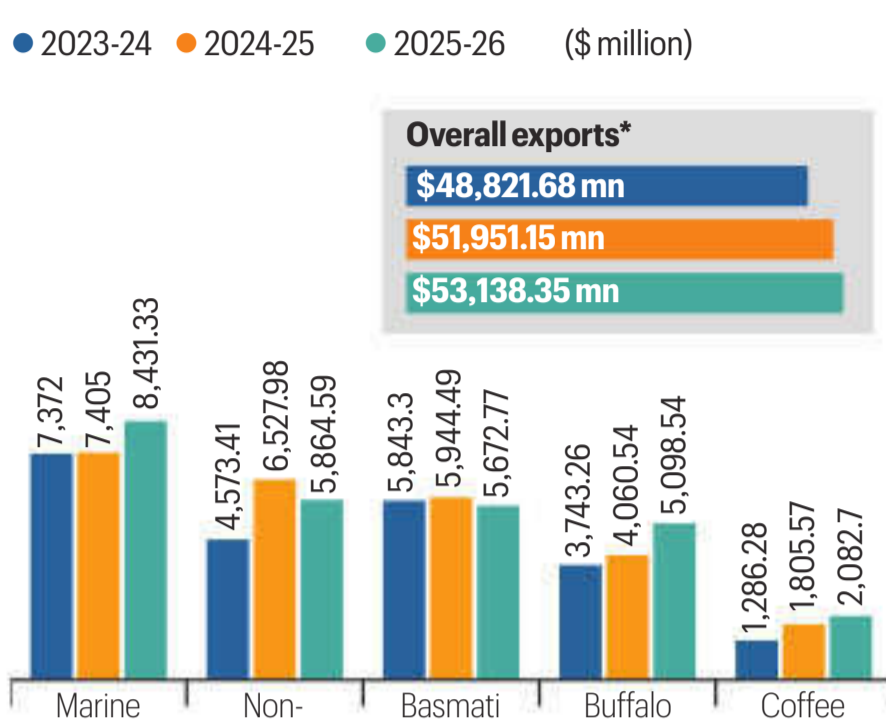


Chart 2: KEY AGRICULTURAL IMPORTS (\$ million)

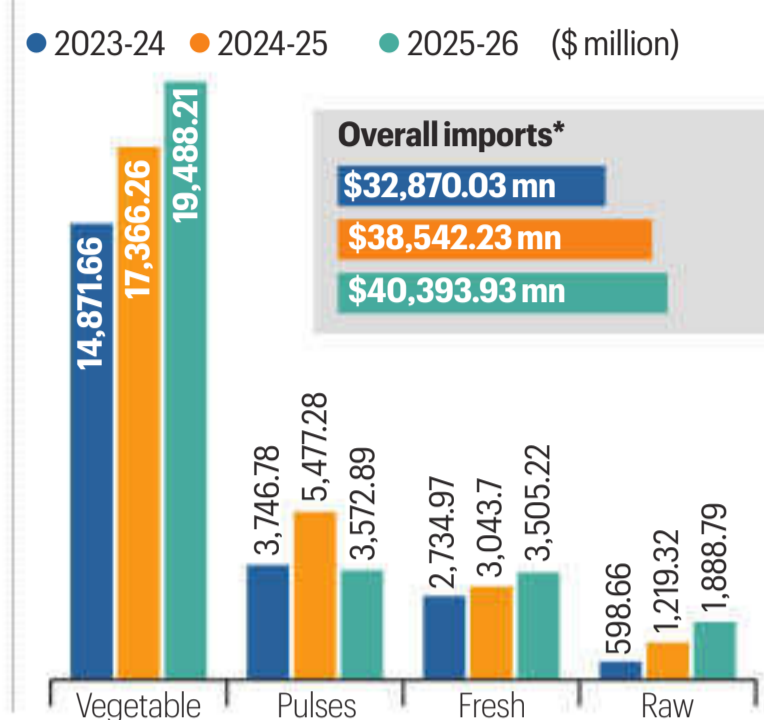
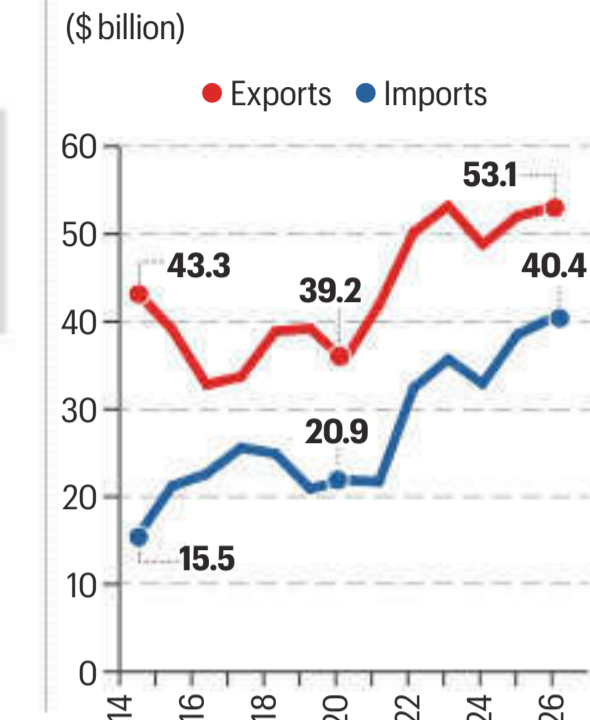


Chart 3: AGRI TRADE BALANCE (\$ billion)



* INCLUDES OTHER ITEMS. SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE. NOTE: CHARTS SHOW SELECT IMPORT AND EXPORT ITEMS. LONGER VERSION ON INDIANEXPRESS.COM

buffalo meat exports, whose value soared by 25.6% to \$5.1 billion in 2025-26, surpassing the previous record of \$4.8 billion in 2014-15. The main countries to which India's buffalo meat exports went include Vietnam (\$740.8 million in 2024-25 to \$933.9 million in 2025-26), Egypt (\$656.1 million to \$725 million), Malaysia (\$617.5 million to \$654.1 million), UAE (\$300.4 million to \$444.2 million), Saudi Arabia (\$317.6 million to \$359.3 million), Uzbekistan (\$97.1 million to \$307 million), Indonesia (\$233.1 million to \$301.3 million), Iraq (\$360 million to \$300.1 million), Philippines (\$114.7 million to \$176.6 million) and Jordan (\$83.6 million to \$105.5 million).

In quantity terms, India's buffalo meat shipments were 13.2% up, from 12.5 lakh tonnes (t) in 2024-25 to 14.2 t in 2025-26, according to the Department of Commerce.

Indian coffee exports crossed the \$2-billion mark for the first time in 2025-26, nearly trebling from the \$720 million of 2020-21. The driver has been high global prices and stocks plunging to historically low levels. The US Department of Agriculture has projected global ending stocks for 2025-26 at 20.1 million bags, marking a fifth consecutive year of decline. Brazil and Vietnam, the world's biggest producers of arabica and robusta varieties respectively, have had subpar crops. India mostly exports robusta beans and powder used in instant coffee and espresso blends, with Italy, Germany, Russia, UAE and Belgium being major markets.

India's fresh fruit and vegetable exports

also hit a record. These largely comprise grapes, pomegranates, mangoes, bananas, oranges, onion, tomato, potato, green chilli and mixed vegetables. The important markets are the UAE, Iraq, Netherlands, Bangladesh and Malaysia. Exports of other big-ticket items — rice (both basmati and non-basmati), spices, tobacco and processed fruits & vegetables — were down compared to their all-time highs in 2024-25.

Import trends

India's agri imports, unlike exports, are confined to a few commodities. The top item is vegetable oils, with imports at a record 169.4 t in 2025-26, as against 164.1 t the previous fiscal. In value terms, though, the \$19.5 billion of vegetable oil imports were lower than the \$20.8 billion high of 2022-23 (see chart 2).

Pulses imports peaked both in quantity (72.6 t) and value (\$5.5 billion) terms during 2024-25, falling to 59.6 t and \$3.6 billion in the fiscal gone by. The high imports reflect India's lack of self-sufficiency, with domestic production meeting only about 40% of the country's consumption demand for vegetable oils and 80% in the case of pulses.

The No. 3 agri import item is fresh fruits. In 2025-26, India's fresh fruits imports were worth over \$3.5 billion, against \$3 billion the previous fiscal. The US had the largest share: \$1.1 billion in 2024-25 and \$1.4 billion in 2025-26. India primarily imports almonds, pistachios, walnuts and other tree nuts (the

bulk of it from the US), in addition to apples, grapes/raisins, kiwis, figs, pears and dates.

Another commodity that has seen an import surge is raw cotton. India, not long ago, was a huge exporter of this natural fibre, with the shipment values topping \$4.3 billion, \$3.7 billion and \$3.6 billion in 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14, respectively.

But in 2024-25 and 2025-26, its imports of \$1.2 billion and \$1.9 billion exceeded exports at \$809.7 million and \$560.7 million, respectively. Thus, India has turned from a net exporter to an importer of raw cotton. That is because of domestic production shortfalls, with no new yield-enhancing technologies after Bt cotton.

Narrowing surplus

Chart 3 shows India's farm exports coming down after 2013-14 and remaining below those levels till 2020-21. There was a recovery thereafter, with exports at \$50 billion-plus in most years from 2021-22.

On the other hand, imports have been seeing a rising trend, barring a brief period from 2018-19 to 2020-21. So, the surplus — exports minus imports — has dipped from \$277 billion in 2013-14 to \$12.7 billion in 2025-26.

In other words, India continues to be a surplus trader of agri produce, as opposed to running deficits in other merchandise goods. Even that surplus, however, has been narrowing over time.

FULL REPORT ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

• CLIMATE

Behind Mumbai's water cuts, reliance on weakening rain

Pratip Acharya
Mumbai, May 13

THE BRIHANMUMBAI Municipal Corporation (BMC) has announced that a 10% water cut will be imposed starting Friday. BMC, India's richest civic body, allocated over Rs 7,800 crore towards ensuring water supply to the city in its 2026-27 budget. Despite this sizeable allocation, Mumbai still has to depend on rainfall entirely for its source of potable water supply stock.

Why Mumbai depends on monsoon

Given Mumbai is surrounded by the Arabian Sea on two sides, salinity levels of the underground water are high, making it unfit for potable use.

So, Mumbai depends on seven lakes — Tulsi, Vihar, Bhatsa, Tansa, Modak Sagar, Upper Vaitarna and Middle Vaitarna — for water supply throughout the year. These are located in suburban Mumbai and in nearby Thane, Nashik and Palghar districts. Monsoon rain fills up the catchment areas of these lakes. This water is transported to reservoirs, and then to Mumbai's households and establishments through water supply channels.

Dependence on rain for potable water is common in coastal cities. Chennai relies on four rain-fed reservoirs which get filled during monsoon. Similarly, Cape Town (South Africa) depends on water dams whose stock is replenished during monsoon. To minimise the dependence, several cities are introducing desalination plants — facilities that treat saline water to make it fit for potable use.

Why the water cut

According to BMC data, the combined capacity of all seven lakes is 14,47,363 million litres. As of May 13, the overall stock stood at 23.12% (3,34,643 million litres). Last year, the water stock on this date was even lower at 19.86%.

However, the BMC's proposed water cut is owing to the IMD's projected "below normal" southwest monsoon for 2026. This is down to El Niño, a climate phenomenon where sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern Pacific Ocean become unusually warm.

The BMC supplies 3,850 million litres daily (MLD) to Mumbai against an overall demand of 4,300 MLD, leaving a deficit of 450 MLD. According to officials, Mumbai's current stock is set to last till early August.

With inadequate rainfall projected, civic officials said that if water is supplied in full capacity, then the stock will last only until the end of July. During an El Niño phase, the months of June, July, and August usually record much lower rainfall, while overall heat levels increase.

Meanwhile, Mumbai and its adjoining districts have been seeing day temperatures around 35-40°C over the past three months. Between March and April, Mumbai also recorded four heatwave days. With increasing day temperatures, chances of faster evaporation of the water stock from the lakes leading to depleted supply are high.

In July 2023, too, the BMC imposed a 10% cut after lake levels fell below 10% owing to inadequate rain. That year, BMC approached the state government seeking an additional quota of water from state-controlled reserves, citing emergencies. In May 2024, a 10% cut was again imposed after lake levels fell below 10%.

BMC's contingency

To ensure uninterrupted water supply and reduce dependency on monsoon, especially amid climate change, BMC has chalked out plans to construct two desalination plants at Mumbai's Manori and Versova. Each plant will have the capacity to treat 200 MLD of water, to be later raised to 400 MLD. Other cities that have deployed such plants are Chennai, Tel Aviv (Israel), and Dubai (UAE).

• EDUCATION

Why NEET is more prone to paper leaks than JEE

Anonna Dutt
New Delhi, May 13

SEVERAL PEOPLE have been detained in Maharashtra and Rajasthan amid a widening probe into the NEET-UG paper leak which led to the exam being cancelled. Lakhs of students have been affected by the cancellation. But this is not the first time irregularities have surfaced in this medical entrance exam. In contrast, the JEE, the engineering entrance exam, has seen relatively fewer controversies.

What are NEET and JEE?

The National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (Undergraduate) is a pen-and-paper entrance exam for admission to undergraduate medical institutions. It is conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA) in 13 languages — English, Hindi, Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu.

The Joint Entrance Examination (Main), meanwhile, is for admission to Centrally Funded Technical Institutes. Students who

clear JEE (Main) are then eligible to sit for JEE (Advanced), for admission to IITs.

While JEE (Main) is conducted by the NTA, with some involvement of the IITs, JEE (Advanced) is handled completely by the IITs. There are two key differences in how the exams are held: More students take NEET; and the JEE is a computer-based exam rather than an offline one.

Why is NEET not computer-based?

There are two main hurdles to implementing a computer-based NEET-UG. First, a very small number of centres are equipped to conduct computer-based tests. With NEET-UG being one of the biggest competitive exams in India in terms of the number of aspirants — around 23 lakh students every year — there aren't enough centres to accommodate them. To compare, around 14 lakh students appear for the JEE. The NTA can conduct computer-based tests for only about 1.5 lakh students in a single shift. This would mean the NEET-UG would have to be conducted over at least 15 shifts and a period of weeks.

Second, if the exam is held over several

Rush for seats

• NEET-UG is extremely competitive, with nearly 23 lakh students appearing for around 1 lakh medical seats across the country.

• Students strive to get into government colleges, which account for around half the medical seats, since they are far cheaper than private colleges, where fees can run into crores.

shifts, the process of normalisation would be a challenge. To ensure fairness across shifts, questions for an examination are divided into different levels of difficulty, with a statistical process determining that each paper contains a certain percentage of questions from these different levels.

"While a normalisation process exists, as is done with examinations such as JEE, it will be very difficult to do so across multiple shifts and will lead to litigation and delay the admission process," said an official from the Health Ministry.

Another official from the Health Ministry said that this was also in line with the indication given by the Supreme Court.

After irregularities in NEET-UG 2024, there were "rumours" of a NEET-PG paper leak, which led to its postponement. The National Board of Examinations under the Health Ministry, which conducts the NEET-PG test, decided to conduct it only in the most trusted testing centres across two shifts. Litigation, however, led to the Supreme Court directing that the examination be conducted in a single shift and it proceeded as it used to.

Are computer-based tests secure?

While there have been irregularities even in computer-based tests, they are generally more secure.

The question papers for these tests are not prepared by a single person. A bank of questions of varying difficulty is prepared by several experts and the system chooses the questions on its own, based on a blueprint of what type of questions and how many of them are needed. The question papers are opened at the designated time across examination centres together, removing the likelihood of it being leaked from one centre to others.

There is no physical transportation of these papers. The second official quoted above said: "When the papers are being transported physically across the country, there are multiple points of leak no matter how much security is put in place. It can leak from the printing agencies or simply a vehicle that is transporting it."

This official added: "NEET is an extremely high-stakes examination, meaning there are always people who are willing to pay to get the paper."

• ENVIRONMENT

The key issue in Delhi govt's plans to reforest Ridge: Selection of non-native trees



EXPERT EXPLAINS
PRADIP KRISHEN
ENVIRONMENTALIST AND AUTHOR

THE DELHI government has declared around 670 hectares of the Central Ridge — one of the Capital's most important ecological zones — as a "reserved forest". Authorities have also laid out plans to develop special *vans* (forests) and plant "native" tree species there.

The 864-hectare Central Ridge is a part of the larger Delhi Ridge system, an extension of the ancient Aravalli hill range. The 35-km Delhi Ridge is a fragmented forested zone that runs through the city and acts as

its green lungs. The Central Ridge, however, was already a reserved forest, first notified in 1994 under Section 4 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927. Much like what happens with Protected Areas under the Wildlife Protection Act, a "first" notification is meant to be followed by a settlement of rights, after which a "second" notification under Section 20 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927, puts a final seal on the matter — albeit after 30 years.

What is cause for concern, however, is other aspects of the government's plans for the Ridge.

The anti-termite plan

The Forest Department recently floated a tender requiring contractors to carry out "anti-termite treatment" when they're planting. But using poisonous substances will kill not just termites but all the micro-organisms and fungi that make up the Central Ridge's "living soil".

As for termites, it's true that they damage wood, books, clothes and electric wires in our homes. But in nature, scientists and

ecologists have come to realize that termites play a beneficial role, not just because they break down woody tissue and recycle dead matter. They are effective "ecosystem engineers" which aid nitrogen fixation and influence soil structure to retain more moisture, especially in drylands such as ours.

The Forest Department swiftly, and laudably, responded to criticism and cancelled the use of toxic pesticides.

Special forests and native trees

The Delhi Forest Department is planning the development of special forests, with names such as Tirthankara Van, Ritu Van, Rashi Van and Panchvati Van, in the Ridge.

Depending on what is intended, creating these themed forests on the Ridge could constitute a violation of the Forest Conservation Act, especially if hardscapes (human-made constructions) are part of the plan.

The main worry, however, is what the Forest Department will plant inside these *vans*. We have had more than a hundred years of failed reforestation of the Central

Ridge, with planted trees dying as soon as irrigation is withdrawn. The only thing that succeeded — and its "success" is a big part of the problem — is South American *vilayati keekar*. This invasive tree prospered at the expense of all the other trees and shrubs that grow naturally on the Ridge.

For trees to succeed on the Ridge, they need to be perfectly attuned to the precise conditions one finds in that dry, rocky landscape. It's a matter of picking out all those plants — not just trees, but shrubs, lianas, herbs, grasses — that grow naturally in quartzitic soils in the northern Aravallis. Strictly "native" plants. The trouble is that the term "native plants" is seldom used or understood correctly.

The Delhi government's list of "native and environmentally suitable tree species" that are to be planted on the Ridge includes neem, peepal, shisham, jamun, tamarind and mango. These are all Indian trees, of course, but not one of them — with the possible exception of the peepal — is found growing naturally in the Ridge ecosystem.

Neem might just survive there because it's so hardy. Shisham is native to the sub-Himalayan tract where rivers rushing down from the mountains start to lose momentum and dump their load of silt; so, they need plenty of moisture and deep porous soil. Jamuns are thirsty trees from moist jungles and survive in dry forests only along perennial streams. Tamarind is frost-prone. And the mango needs a lot of water.

The word "native", therefore, ought to be about the particularity of an ecosystem, not a nationality label.

What goes wrong with restoration efforts

The Forest Research Institute has prepared a Working Plan for Delhi's forests for the decade beginning 2026-27. The Working Plan, supposed to be the bedrock for the Delhi's Forest Department's work, does talk about planting for biodiversity and ecological restoration. But it also appears to view the Ridge as a timber plantation. Instead of detailing steps for ecological restoration, it

shows a focus on aspects such as estimating the annual increment of timber.

Even when the authorities get it right, they run into other problems. Four years ago, the Delhi Forest Department created a fairly well-thought-out list of 42 suitable species. But when it came to actual planting operations on the Ridge, only four of the 11 species used were from the Forest Department's list. Three species were, in fact, exotics.

So, what went wrong? Government contractors may procure cheaper saplings that do not conform to the approved species list. In fact, the most commonly planted tree in the newly restored tract is a South American plant called 'jungle jalebi' in India because of its *jalebi*-like fruit.

There's a lot more to good restoration practice than getting your species right, although that is a crucial starting point. The proposals for the new *vans* and a Miyawaki forest have nothing to do with ecological restoration. We probably have one good shot at recreating a thriving natural dry forest on the Ridge. It's important not to jeopardise it.

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Chief Secretary and a chief challenge

THE APPOINTMENT of West Bengal's Chief Electoral Officer Manoj Agarwal as the Chief Secretary by the Suvendu Adhikari government raises many a question. Agarwal, who is the state's senior-most bureaucrat, but is set to retire in July, supervised the rollout of the Special Intensive Revision exercise in the state, which led to about 91 lakh deletions. Of these, nearly 27 lakh are seen as controversial, for which the appellate process is incomplete. The West Bengal SIR is also under challenge in the Supreme Court. Against this backdrop, the government's decision to appoint Agarwal is questionable not because of his own competence, but because it risks undermining trust in a premise larger than him — that those overseeing election processes are not keeping an eye on a post-election office. It is also for this reason, arguably, that the poll panel had wanted a CEO who would retire after overseeing the election. The problem is also this: As CEO, Agarwal oversaw the SIR process, and as Chief Secretary, he will steer the state response in terms of addressing infirmities in the process. There is also an issue of institutional credibility here. Fifteen years of Trinamool government saw a disquieting politicisation of the bureaucracy that smudged institutional lines. The new BJP government that seeks to make a departure from this past can ill afford to be unmindful of this.

The Adhikari government in Bengal has also said that while those whose cases are still under consideration by the appellate tribunals will receive the benefits of government schemes, those deleted through the SIR exercise will no longer be able to do so. A minister has underlined the new framework of exclusion: Those who have applied under the CAA for citizenship can also avail all government schemes. This resurrects the spectre that the amendments to the citizenship law a few years ago had touched off, and draws the SIR into it. The CAA drew criticism because, for the first time in a diverse democracy, it made religion a criterion for citizenship, providing an accelerated path to Indian citizenship for persecuted religious minorities from neighbouring countries — except Muslims. The SIR process that shifted the burden of proof onto the vulnerable voter, set unrealistic timelines for voters and no deadlines for appellate tribunals, and in which there were many more deletions in Muslim-dominated constituencies, cannot — and should not — become a test for citizenship. The watchful eye of the Court is needed more than ever.

The term "ghuspaithiya" or illegal immigrant — invoked to justify the new exclusionary framework and paper over its cracks — is part of the language of communal dog-whistle politics. In West Bengal, the BJP government has just won a formidable victory. It must deliver on a mandate to deliver change that includes all, not tarnish it by narrowing its vision at the very outset. As CEO, the process that Agarwal steered achieved a much-needed cleanup but has been tainted by exclusion. As Chief Secretary, can he hit reset and refresh? A lot rides on this question.

Close cervical cancer gap, focus on equity

A MODELLING study in *The Lancet* has estimated that India can prevent more than 10 million cervical cancer cases over the next century if it achieves the WHO's targets on HPV vaccination — 90 per cent of girls to be vaccinated by age 15; 70 per cent of women to be screened at ages 30 and above; and 90 per cent of patients to receive treatment. The scale of that possibility is extraordinary. But so is the scale of the challenge. India accounts for one of the world's heaviest cervical-cancer burdens, with more than 1.2 lakh new cases and roughly 80,000 deaths each year. Cervical cancer is among the most preventable forms of the disease, yet for many women — especially those in rural districts, poorer households and socially marginalised communities — access to early screening, reliable diagnosis, treatment that is not prohibitively expensive and preventive vaccination remain a distant reality.

The Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine was first introduced in India in 2008, but its uptake remained limited due to safety concerns, patchy information dissemination, logistical gaps and sociocultural barriers. Nearly two decades later, in February this year, an HPV vaccination programme for adolescent girls was launched, but participation has been uneven. Screening rates, too, remain distressingly low: Only around 2 per cent of eligible women undergo regular testing. Disparities within India are stark. Tamil Nadu has achieved screening rates above 10 per cent, while Assam and West Bengal register figures as low as 0.2 per cent. The outcome is a disease that disproportionately punishes the vulnerable.

The ongoing vaccination drive places India among a handful of countries that include the HPV vaccine in their national immunisation programmes. Experts have also proposed integrating HPV nucleic acid testing into the National Essential Diagnostics List to expand the reach and accuracy of screening beyond urban centres. With targeted outreach, these can narrow the inequity, offering India a rare opportunity to reduce one of its most preventable cancer burdens.

Black and white chips for a world at war

THE COLOUR may be gone, but the crunch will stay. That is the resolve of Calbee, a Japanese snack maker known as much for its colourful packaging as for the taste of its shrimp chips and potato sticks. With shipping through the Strait of Hormuz experiencing severe disruption and the supply of hydrocarbons and specialised industrial minerals, among the hardest hit is the supermarket's munchies aisle — largely because the packaging for these products, dependent on petroleum-derived chemicals, is becoming more difficult to manufacture. Calbee's workarounds — it has been hit by a shortage of printing ink — is to go black and white.

Even before the war hit the supply of pigment categories like Phthalocyanine blues and greens and Azo reds, oranges and yellows, the great colour disruption was underway. Whether because of climate change, geopolitical upheavals or the Covid disruption, global supply chains for paints and inks were being reshaped by sudden shortages.

In a world wobbling under the weight of war, small disruptions can feel catastrophic. Perhaps there is something reassuring in the continued, albeit transformed, availability of snacks. Yet, it is also a fact that colour theory has long been used to guide consumer behaviour. Calbee's solution may work for the moment, but the desaturation of its vibrant red and yellow packaging may just reshape consumer behaviour in ways that crunch cannot offset. When the world loses colours, appetite itself begins to change.

In age of uncertainty, patriotism is a poor substitute for statecraft

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi has called on Indians to tighten their belts, particularly on fuel and gold consumption. It is a belated public admission that the fallout from Donald Trump's morally appalling, "the world be damned", war in Iran is likely to add to the cumulative uncertainties already besetting the global economy. The sinking value of the rupee has made it inevitable that India will have to confront the shortages. Managing demand is not a reasonable tool to deploy under such circumstances. India is vulnerable as an economy, with imports surging, foreign investment and remittances slowing down, and energy self-reliance a chimera. How effective the exhortation will be remains to be seen.

Modi loves nothing better than appealing to the language of sacrifice, patriotism, and civilisational virtue as an asset to be deployed in solving problems. This is of a piece with his approach to demonetisation or the clanging of pots and pans during the early days of Covid as a show of national solidarity. But there is a larger danger that India will once more fail to attend to the three risks inherent in these forms of appeal. The first risk is to assume that what we are witnessing is a temporary shock. For starters, the duration of the war is still uncertain. It is exerting immense pressure on the US economy as well. But in most scenarios, there is no quick resolution to the war. There is no question that the United States and Trump have lost face in this war. Most of the terms Iran has to offer will be

seen as a defeat. In the long run, the United States will be better off eating a small dose of humble pie now for its own democracy and the world's sake. But if it had even this minimal sense of enlightened self-interest, it would not have pushed the world down this path of catastrophe.

Israel's capacity to subvert any ceasefire should not be underestimated. And while Gulf states need peace for the viability of their own models, they also cannot stomach a resurgent Iran. Iran itself is also playing for existential stakes. So, protracted instability is a high-probability outcome. The challenge with the language of sacrifice is that it works, if at all, on short-term time horizons. Otherwise, it is a recipe for inducing more cynicism.

But more importantly, India has repeatedly made the mistake of using moralised language to deflect attention from deep structural and governance problems. Like most shocks, this one has also exposed our preexisting vulnerabilities. Despite impressive gains in renewables, India's long-term energy strategy has not reduced our dependence on the world. It is all very well for analysts to propose, and for the government to adopt, diversification as a mantra. But our diversification options have been limited by growing fears of American pressure. The environment for foreign investment was never particularly benign in India. Astonishingly, we are still having the same debates over complex tax regimes, regulatory uncer-



PRATAP BHANU MEHTA

India has repeatedly made the mistake of using moralised language to deflect attention from deep structural and governance problems. Like most shocks, this one has also exposed our preexisting vulnerabilities

Writing obits for the Left is much too glib and unfair



JOHN BRITTAS

I WAS IN Noida recently to meet striking workers. What stayed with me was not merely their words but the silence of our mainstream politicians. I did not find the leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party or the Congress party there. But the Communist Party of India (Marxist) general secretary, along with his colleagues, made it a point to be there to declare solidarity with the workers. For parties obsessed with appearing "industry-friendly", workers often seem to exist only as statistical abstractions.

As the country celebrates stock-market highs, millions who actually keep the economy running continue to survive on fragile wages. The vast silent workforce of India, including factory workers, delivery agents, sanitation workers, and gig labourers, rarely appears in triumphant speeches about development.

That is where ideological conviction matters. This is something this newspaper's editorial ('On being left out, and left behind', *IE*, May 6) loses sight of. My political sensibility as a leftist compels me to stand with workers, not because it is electorally fashionable, but because politics without the concerns of labour becomes little more than corporate management.

Many parties today pay ritualistic lip service to workers while amplifying the voices of corporations. The Left alone continues to ask uncomfortable questions about exploitation, inequality and the dignity of labour.

The same political instinct recently took me to Kotdwar to meet a young fitness entrepreneur who had raised his voice against majoritarian communalism. Once again, I did not find the political mainstream there. Many politicians woke up only after my visit became news. It demonstrates an old truth about Indian politics: The Left often leads morally before others discover the issue politically.

For the Left, politics is not confined to seminar rooms. During the farmers' protests five years ago, Left cadres and leaders were among those present from the beginning. Rahul Gandhi himself never visited the main protest site at the Singhu border. After the 2020 Delhi riots, Left activists stayed with survivors, documented testimonies and exposed state complicity when many others had already moved on to the next news cycle.

It is, therefore, curious when some Congress leaders now speak as though the

Left is somehow politically outdated or that mainstream politicians step into their shoes. Shashi Tharoor would do well to remember ('Left needs to find a new vocabulary for the economy of aspiration', *IE*, May 6) that the constituency he has represented since 2009, Thiruvananthapuram, became receptive to a cosmopolitan global citizen because of decades of social reform and Left politics in Kerala.

Kerala's political culture did not emerge accidentally. Reformers and communists transformed society by dismantling feudal hierarchies, expanding public education and creating democratic social consciousness. The progressive culture that allowed an outsider intellectual to thrive politically in Kerala was itself produced by Left influence.

When the Left had nearly 60 MPs, we extended support to the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance government without bargaining for ministries or privileges. We supported the alliance because we believed keeping communal forces away from power was historically necessary. That is ideological consistency, something that is tough to imitate through mere political messaging.

The Kerala model, or what Amartya Sen famously described as the "Kerala experience", emerged from precisely these political priorities. We eradicated extreme poverty while many richer states continue to struggle with deep social inequalities.

Kerala today still prides itself on social harmony. So did West Bengal during the decades of Left governance. We built societies that resisted hatred. And we continue resisting it. During these elections, too, in several states including Kerala, Congress often functioned as the BJP's indirect facilitator through political fragmentation that ultimately aided the saffron camp.

Every electoral setback for the Left is immediately described as the death of ideology. Why?

When parties like the DMK or TMC suffer reverses, analysts call it cyclical politics. But when the Left loses seats, they declare the sunset of an entire worldview. This is intellectually dishonest. The claim that the Left can be easily emulated in its electoral absence is a tall one, far easier articulated than practised.

The writer is a Rajya Sabha member belonging to CPI(M)

tainty, and an ad hoc legal system that we were having 40 years ago. We have passed measures such as labour-law reforms, but in the larger scheme of things, India is still not an attractive place for investment.

We also misread the world economy. We assumed that there would always be capital sloshing around the world, and were caught off guard by the massive reallocation of capital induced by AI. Private domestic investment is finally rising, but only after a decade of stagnation. There are individual success stories in manufacturing, but our aggregate share in global manufacturing has barely moved. We are almost totally irrelevant to the world's leading technology races. The world has also figured out that governance is a scarce resource, and how it is allocated matters enormously. Let us say that in India, it has been disproportionately allocated to the circus part of the bread and circuses. This familiar litany of woes can go on. But the basic point is that we have accumulated structural problems that have made us vulnerable in the first place. The world is now hypercompetitive.

In a world of cumulative uncertainty, where geopolitical, technological, financial, climate, and possibly pandemic shocks reinforce one another, there is no margin for error. What we need at this moment is not merely moralised discourse on the economy. This is not just a time to tighten demand for energy and gold. It is a time to double down on the fundamentals of the economy, in a frame-

work that is credible and concrete. This is the only way to avoid a possible confidence doom loop in the Indian economy. But, likely, the emphasis will quickly pivot to spins like "we are still the fastest-growing economy in the world". At this point, a statement like that is a bit like saying, "I have a big gun. Oh, by the way, I have no ammunition." It does not solve any problem you are trying to fix. Some honesty might make us more credible.

Moralised calls for demand management can disguise distributive conflicts. For one thing, moralised appeals are not about structural change; they are meant to reinforce the direct emotional appeal between the leader and the people. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with that aspiration, but it can also detract from serious economic thinking. Even the implementation of rationing is not simple; it requires serious economic trade-offs. Already, the brunt of the costs of the LPG gas shortage has been borne by the poorest consumers and the smallest restaurant businesses. One of the secondary effects of this war, and the inflation it creates, will be political and social churn across the world. Just like we were underestimating the vulnerability of our economy, we may also be underestimating the social churn about to follow. The age of cumulative uncertainty will require, not patriotic exhortation, but sophisticated statecraft. Right now, patriotism is a substitute for statecraft.

The writer is contributing editor, The Indian Express

The British rebel who backed 'The Revolt of Hindostan'



THINKAL HANSAN

I N SEPTEMBER 1857, Britain was starting to wake up to the fact that what was happening in India was more than a mutiny. Reports of atrocities had come in, and the nation — Parliament, the mainstream press, the general public — was baying for vengeance with one voice. Almost. In the heart of the empire, Ernest Charles Jones — poet, Chartist leader, orator, friend of Karl Marx — wrote in his working-class journal *The People's Paper*, "There ought to be one opinion throughout Europe on the Revolt of Hindostan. It is one of the most just, noble, and necessary ever attempted in the history of the world."

Jones's views show that, contrary to the popular narrative, the British reaction to the rebellion that began on May 10, 1857, was not a monolith. This foregrounds an understudied aspect of 19th-century British working-class radicalism — its internationalism and anticolonialism. Chartism, the first major working-class movement in Britain, advocated for parliamentary reform and was committed to the democratic dissemination of knowledge. At war with an increasingly dominant liberal knowledge system, the Chartist press sought to redefine what counted as knowledge across politics, literature, political economy, and empire.

Jones's epic poem 'The New World', published in 1851, was, as Ronald Paul has argued, "one of the most remarkable and elaborate examples of a poetic critique of imperialism produced in the whole of the Victorian period". Notably, it prophesied a sepy rebellion in India: "Victorious deluge! From a hundred heights/Rolls the fierce torrent of a people's rights/ And sepy soldiers, wakening band by band/ At last remember they've a fatherland!"

When rebellion broke out in India in 1857, Jones retitled his epic "The Revolt of Hindostan". In his editorials in *The People's Paper*, he argued that the revolt was not just a military mutiny, and attributed it to Indian discontent with British misrule. *The Paper* also published a series of articles titled "Hindostan", intended to give the public "a full insight into India, as it is, and as it is misgoverned"; their content ranged from pre-colonial agricultural and scientific achievements to manmade famines under British rule. By July, Jones was calling the mutiny "the patriot war in India" and a "national insurrection for independence", writing that it was "shaking the British oligarchy to its foundation". As news of the conquest of Delhi reached Britain in early August, Jones called for revolution: "Let Delhi remain uncaptured — let the British force receive a check — then Madras and Bombay will do what Bengal has done." He urged the working people of England, who had gained nothing from the empire, to sympathise with "their Hindhu (sic) brethren". By mid-November, as a victory for the Indian side seemed impossible, he wrote about the need to record and pay tribute to the "heroic bravery of the Hindhu (sic) force": "... contemporaries continue to stigmatise them as 'cowards', and 'dastards'... Shame on the ungenerous dastards who apply such words to such a gallant foe!"

The emergence of Britain as an imperial state towards the later part of the 19th century was achieved through the resolution of internal contradictions — suppressing the voice of dissent against the state and empire, leaving only the voice of the establishment. "On its colonies the Sun never sets, but the blood never dries," Jones wrote of the British Empire. The Sun has set. Yet those two voices echo down to the present, one mobilising sentiment in support of imperial wars, and the other articulating resistance.

The writer has completed a PhD on the British working-class press in the 19th century

40 YEARS AGO

May 14, 1986



EAM hits out at Jayewardene

THE NEW Minister for External Affairs, P Shiv Shankar, strongly criticised Sri Lankan President J R Jayewardene for his interview to *The Sunday Times*, London, in which he threatened a military solution to Sri Lanka's ethnic crisis and accused PM Rajiv Gandhi of supporting Tamil separatists. Speaking in the Rajya Sabha during a debate on Sri Lanka, Shiv Shankar called the remarks "intemperate and irresponsible language".

India seeking another Cancun

INDIA, DISAPPOINTED that the Tokyo summit

of industrialised nations ignored the concerns of non-aligned developing countries, is considering taking the initiative for a Cancun-type summit involving leaders from developing nations. Minister of State for External Affairs K R Narayanan said non-aligned countries would continue efforts to evolve a common strategy for dialogue.

PM leaves for Africa tour

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi left New Delhi on a six-day official visit to four frontline African states — Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola and Tanzania. Accompanied by a high-level delegation, he received a warm send-off at the

airport from MPs, Congress(I) leaders, senior officials, the three service chiefs and members of the diplomatic corps.

Union Carbide case

REPRESENTATIVES OF the Government of India expressed satisfaction over the conditions laid down by Judge Keenan of the New York district court while transferring the Union Carbide case to India for trial. The judgment required Union Carbide Corporation, USA, to submit to the jurisdiction of Indian courts, enabling India to seek compensation from the parent company's vast assets rather than being limited to its Indian subsidiary.



At India-Nordic Summit, turn historical sambandh into future partnership



THAROORTHINK
BY SHASHI THAROOR

AS PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi arrives in Oslo next week for the forthcoming India-Nordic Summit, the visit carries the weight of a long-overdue diplomatic milestone. This is the first time an Indian Prime Minister has set foot on Norwegian soil since Indira Gandhi's visit in June 1983—a gap of over four decades that belies the profound, if often understated, historical and contemporary linkages between our two nations. From the linguistic resonances of the word *sambandh* (connection) in Hindi and *samband* in Norwegian, to the pioneering fisheries projects of the 1950s, the roots of this relationship run deep. Yet, as the Prime Minister joins his counterparts from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, the agenda is less about nostalgia and more about a strategic recalibration towards a partnership of the future.

The Nordic region, often viewed through the prism of its exceptional social models and tranquil landscapes, has emerged as a powerhouse of specialised technology and capital. For an India navigating a volatile global order, the “Nordic way” offers more than just inspiration; it offers concrete solutions to the most pressing challenges of our century. The Oslo Summit represents a pivot from traditional diplomacy toward a “Green Strategic Partnership” that spans the blue economy, renewable energy, and deep-tech innovation.

Norway occupies a unique position in this constellation. It was among the first countries to recognise an independent India in 1947, and our developmental journey has been quietly intertwined ever since. In the early 1950s, Norway launched its first-ever international development programme in Kerala. This pioneering initiative, focused on modernising fisheries and introducing motorised boats, was a hallmark of the Nehru-Gerhardsen era. It is a testament to

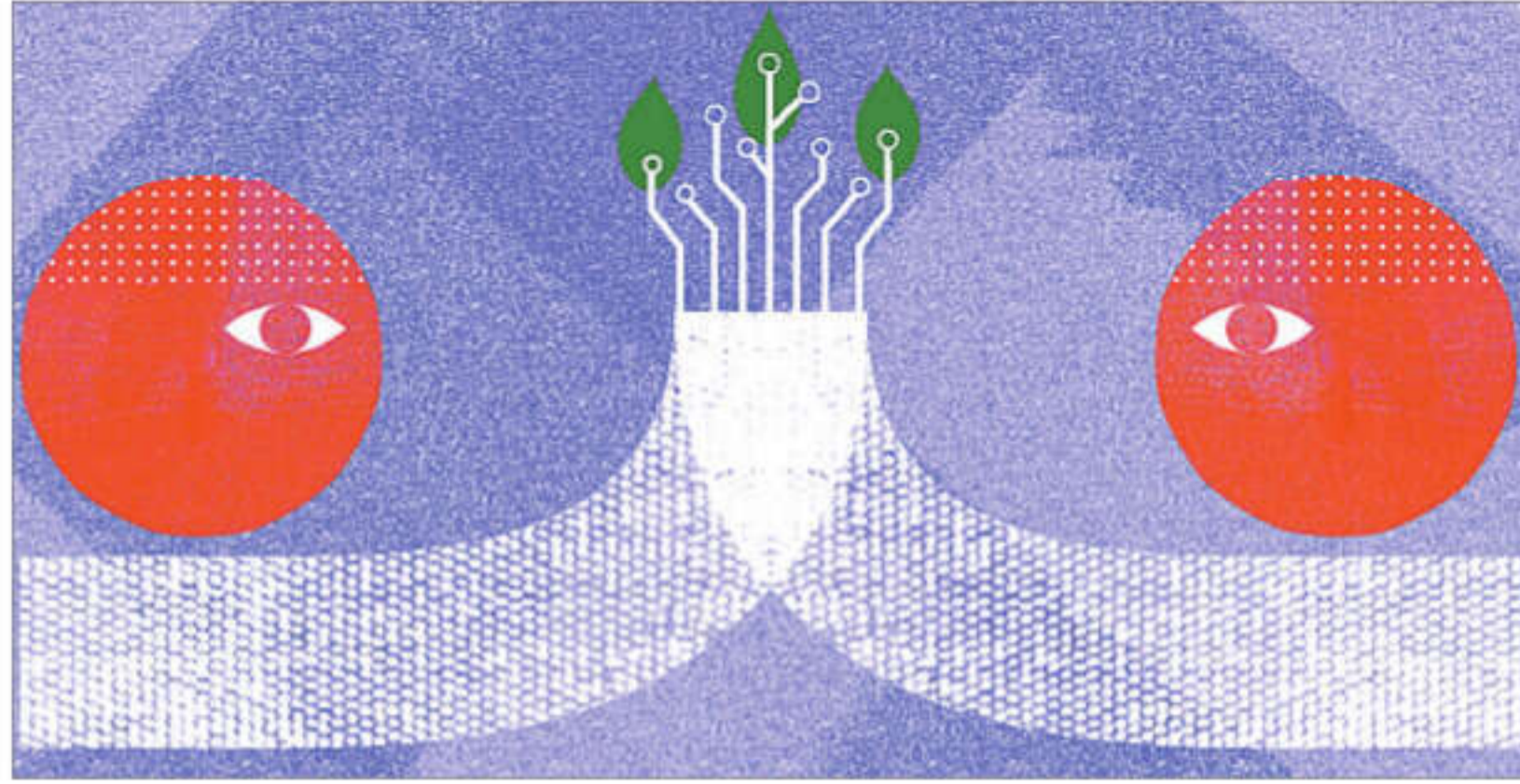


ILLUSTRATION: C R SASIKUMAR

the project's success that its legacy lives on through the National Institute of Fisheries Post-Harvest Technology and Training (NIPPHATT), remaining a vital part of Kerala's coastal economy.

Today, the opportunity exists to replicate this model of localised excellence by deepening cooperation with selected Indian states—such as Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Gujarat—that possess the coastal or industrial infrastructure to absorb Norwegian expertise. The economic logic for a deeper engagement is now irrefutable, especially following the landmark EFTA-India Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA). This agreement is a game-changer, committing EFTA countries—including Norway—to a target of \$100 billion in investments in India over the next 15 years. Central to this will be the role of the Government Pension Fund Global, Norway's sovereign wealth fund. As one of the world's largest investors, its increased exposure to the Indian market would not only provide the long-term patient capital required for India's infrastructure but also signal a vote of confidence in our economic trajectory.

One hopes the Prime Minister's discussions in Oslo will pave the way for more direct institutional investment into India's burgeoning green-tech and manufacturing sectors. Energy security remains the

At a time when the turbulence of the Trumpian era has unsettled global norms, India and the Nordic countries share a common interest in defending world order and stability

cornerstone of our strategic complementarity. Norway's technology in offshore wind, green shipping corridors, and carbon capture and storage (CCS) is a perfect match for India's scale and manpower. As India seeks to decarbonise its heavy industries, the Norwegian experience in the circular economy and renewable energy offers a viable roadmap. Our collaboration on green shipping corridors, in particular, could revolutionise maritime trade, making the “blue economy” a sustainable engine for growth. The potential for Norway to assist in scaling up India's hydrogen mission or providing specialised maritime competence is immense.

Furthermore, the Arctic-Indian Ocean linkage is a burgeoning frontier for scientific cooperation. The Arctic and the Indian Ocean are no longer disparate geographies; they are ecologically and strategically linked by the science of climate change, demanding a shared response. India's interest in the Arctic is not merely academic; the melting of polar ice has direct consequences for the Indian monsoon and our food security. By strengthening ties with Norway, a key Arctic Council member, India can enhance its polar research capabilities and contribute to global climate monitoring.

This scientific synergy is underpinned by a shared commitment to multilateralism, the rule

of law, and a democratic world order—values that resonate strongly in both New Delhi and Oslo. India's relations with the Nordic countries remain an under-exploited asset in our foreign policy. We have no major disputes dividing us, and the few irritants that have arisen—such as Denmark's refusal to extradite an arms-smuggling pilot or Norway's controversial custody decision involving an Indian child, rooted in cultural incomprehension of practices like eating with one's hands—should be seen as episodic incidents rather than structural obstacles. The misunderstandings over these matters linger, but their potency has been defused, and they are best resolved through sustained dialogue and a willingness to appreciate cultural differences. Beyond such episodes, the potential for partnership is immense. Scandinavia's reputation for social innovation, green technology, and democratic resilience aligns well with India's own aspirations for inclusive growth and sustainable development. At a time when the turbulence of the Trumpian era has unsettled global norms, India and the Nordic countries share a common interest in defending world order and stability. Making common cause with them would not only diversify India's diplomatic portfolio but also strengthen our voice in shaping a multipolar system that values fairness, cooperation, and rules-based governance. The opportunity is clear: To transform a relationship free of major conflicts into one of purposeful collaboration.

As the leaders gather in Oslo, they will find that the complementarity is striking. Norway has the specialised competence; India has the scale to drive global solutions. From the historic church of St Olav in Serampore to the high-tech shipyards of the present, the journey of India and Norway has been one of quiet, steady growth. Forty-three years after the last prime ministerial visit, the Oslo Summit is the moment to transform this historical *sambandh* into a transformative strategic alliance for the 21st century. The northern lights may be distant from the tropics, but the horizons we seek are increasingly one and the same.

The writer is a fourth-term Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) for Thiruvananthapuram and chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs

Somnath to Bengal: India's way of reconciling unity, diversity



VINAY SAHASRABUDHE

THE COMPLETION of 75 years of the resurrection of the Somnath Temple—on May 11—was preceded by the swearing-in of West Bengal's first BJP government. The relation between the two isn't symbolic. If the West Bengal verdict reflects demographic anxiety, the saga of Somnath's resurrection serves as its antidote. To understand why demographic change causes anxiety, it is instructive to examine chapters of our history alongside experiments such as multiculturalism in Europe and Diversity-Equity-Inclusion (DEI) in the US—all these offer cautionary lessons.

In West Bengal, demographic anxiety stems from the growing presence of illegal intruders from across the border and the implications this has for regional and national security. The border is porous, and families in districts along it have longstanding connections on the other side. But under the garb of this contiguity, the Left—for over three decades—and the Trinamool Congress thereafter, facilitated the absorption of illegal intruders. Whenever questions were raised, the issue was framed in communal terms—Hindus versus Muslims. This framing effectively granted a veto to illegal immigrants, who were absorbed as a voter bloc with their co-religionists in border districts. From accepting a truncated “Vande Mataram” as the national song to ignoring the constitutional mandate of a Uniform Civil Code, successive Congress governments bowed to this pressure. Overturning the Shah Bano verdict was another expression of this perverse secularism.

This militates against the Indian ethos. The pseudo-secularism mainstreamed by Congress resonates with the multiculturalism embraced by Europe and the DEI framework advocated in the US—all prescriptions that have failed to address demographic anxiety. British author Kenan Malik has observed that European countries “have enacted either multicultural policies that place communities in constricting boxes or assimilationist ones that distance minorities from the mainstream”, and that Europe must rediscover a progressive sense of universal values that its liberals have largely abandoned. In the Indian

context, universal values mean recognising the idea of spiritual democracy—a civilisational tradition in which no ruler ever succeeded in imposing a theocratic state.



DEI, as practised in the US, similarly risks collapsing into tokenism. Consider those old full-page advertisements released by the DAVP on Independence Day or Republic Day, bearing the slogan *Hum Sab Ek Hain*. They typically featured three young men standing shoulder to shoulder: One supposedly Hindu with a

prominent *tilak*, one Muslim in a traditional cap and beard, one Christian in a suit with a visible cross. The intention was well-meaning, but the approach was reductive: Showcasing diverse dress codes as a shortcut to Unity in Diversity. What those behind such campaigns missed is that the key to India's social and national integration across millennia has been the understanding that our diversity is the diverse manifestation of an innate unity. We do not need to be reminded of our superficial differences and then asked to unite as though we were not already united. In a society where, at the philosophical level, divinity is recognised in every individual, artificially promoting diversity is detrimental to our original, organically interwoven social fabric.

The same applies to equity and inclusion. All of us live simultaneously with multiple identities. India has largely navigated this through the understanding that smaller identities—of religion, region, and language—need not be crushed, but must eventually merge with a larger national identity. India's affirmative action stands as an exemplar in the democratic world of how marginalised groups can be included in the mainstream and how social justice programmes can genuinely foster equity. Those transplanting concepts like DEI and multiculturalism would do well to remember one foundational fact: Despite innumerable apparent diversities, our civilisational history is a testimony to the sustaining power of “*Ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti*”—the profound maxim from the Rig Veda—which holds that truth is one, though the wise speak of it in many ways. This insight has helped India survive with its foundational values intact.

While inaugurating the reconstructed Somnath Temple, President Rajendra Prasad said it was desirable for all of us to realise the great secret of spiritual faith—to have a glimpse of god or truth, all people don't need to follow one and only one path. If believers of all faiths in India can truly internalise this, changing demography need never become a cause for anxiety.

The writer is a national executive committee member of the BJP

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Paper leak

THE CANCELLATION of NEET-UG 2026 has left 22 lakh hapless students disappointed and distressed (“NEET leak unacceptable: Who's accountable?”, *IE*, May 13). They will once again have to undergo the mental agony and stress associated with the examination. Students cannot be made to suffer because of the NTA's incompetence and ineptitude. Many students are currently preparing for other entrance examinations like CUET, and this entire episode could seriously affect their performance in those exams as well. The NTA and the government cannot play with the lives of students who strive for years. All the perpetrators ought to be brought to book at the earliest.

Aanya Singhal, Noida

IT IS disheartening that despite previous CBI probes and expert committee recommendations, the NTA continues to outsource critical logistics to private players with dubious links to the coaching industry (“NEET leak unacceptable: Who's accountable?”, *IE*, May 13). Reducing this systemic rot to a mere law-and-order issue ignores the NTA's failure to safeguard the sanctity of examinations. We need more than just investigations.

Nilesh Dubey, Ahmedabad

Fertiliser reform

THE EDITORIAL makes a compelling case for replacing product-wise subsidies with per-acre direct payments (“West Asia crisis is nudge for fertiliser reform”, *IE*, May 13). The urgency that geopolitics has now injected into India's fiscal arithmetic is equally important. Import prices for urea have nearly doubled to \$935-959 per tonne, sulphur costs have risen by 50 per cent, and domestic urea production fell by 25 per cent in March 2026 due to natural gas shortages linked to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. Analysts at Crisil project a 20-25 per cent surge in the FY27 fertiliser subsidy bill, threatening FM Nirmala Sitharaman's fiscal deficit target of 4.3 per cent of GDP.

Ritika, Hyderabad



KINSHUK GUPTA

I CLEARLY remember the Sundays in my matchbox hostel room, the smell of slick bhaturas wafting through the corridor, when I would doze off for a power nap that was supposed to last only 15 minutes, as instructed by our in-charge. Those days were filled with fear, frustration, exhaustion, and at times, anger. And yet, beneath all of it, there was also a dream: The thought of the day I would finally walk out of the examination hall after writing NEET and know that it was over, once and for all.

Now, as news of the cancellation of NEET 2026 begins to trickle in, and the possibility of a retest looms, my heart goes out to all those young students who believed it was finally over, only to find themselves dragged back into the same cycle of uncertainty and anxiety. What is particularly tragic is that NEET itself was designed to reduce stress on medical aspirants and spare them the burden of multiple entrance examinations. Instead, it seems to have reproduced the very anxieties it was meant to eliminate.

This leak is nothing new. The pattern has repeated itself over the years, with the 2024 controversy serving as the most recent reminder of how fragile the system remains. What troubles me most is the cyclical nature of these leaks. Every controversy prompts corrective measures that allow the next exam to proceed smoothly

A weighted consideration of school performance, board examinations, and skill-based evaluation would allow a broader understanding of a student's abilities

NEET has revived anxieties it was meant to eliminate

until, inevitably, the cycle repeats itself.

This time, question papers were gtagged while in transit, and examination centres reportedly used 5D jammers and AI-enabled cameras. Yet, all of it proved insufficient. Perhaps that reveals that the issue no longer lies in isolated lapses alone, but in the deeper structural flaws of an examination system that continues to rely on stopgap solutions rather than meaningful reform.

JEE Main offers an interesting case in point, having built a largely meticulous and leak-resistant reputation over time. It is a completely computer-based examination with end-to-end encryption. Questions are systematically tagged and drawn from extensive software-driven pools that generate multiple sets across several shifts. Students are also given two attempts, in January and April, reducing the immense pressure of a single do-or-die day. Rather than relying on thousands of centres across the country, the system uses selected, standardised centres. As a result, even if a breach occurs, its impact remains far more contained. Further, we must also begin to question the utility of NEET in its present form. The idea of a single three-hour examination determining a student's future has always seemed absurd to me. How can a person's competence to become a doctor be judged through 180 MCQs? The current format increasingly rewards rote memorisation over genuine under-

standing, reducing learning to speed, pattern recognition, and endurance. Selections should move towards a more balanced and comprehensive system. A weighted consideration of school performance, board examinations, and skill-based evaluation would allow a broader understanding of a student's abilities. NEET could function as a qualifying examination, followed by assessments focused on reasoning, aptitude, and suitability for the profession. This could also help address the growing problem of score clustering at the top ranks, where tiny margins now separate thousands of students, making the present system an increasingly weak differentiator of merit. It could reduce the overwhelming reliance on coaching institutes, which have increasingly become hotspots of burnout, emotional distress, and extreme academic pressure. Such skill-based learning and assessment become even more important in a world increasingly shaped by AI, where the era of the fast-cramming medical aspirant is unlikely to survive for long.

The question we must ask is whether we are finally willing to move beyond temporary outrages, take responsibility for repeated failures, and genuinely learn from them. More importantly, are we willing to offer students a system that values their hard work and aspirations, rather than repeatedly testing the limits of their endurance?

Gupta is a doctor and writer



GURJIT SINGH

THE FOURTH India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS IV), scheduled for May 28-31, is a moment to rethink how India engages Africa in a rapidly changing world, and find ways to keep the relationship anchored in, but not dependent on, a summit.

IAFS IV was due in 2020, but the Covid pandemic, followed by a period of intense global diplomatic churn, resulted in a prolonged pause. Africa's global partnerships have deepened and diversified since. The re-uptake must therefore contend with a far more competitive landscape. The EU and Japan held summits with African partners in 2025, and South Korea convened minis-

India's Africa policy needs continuity

terial consultations. Germany hosted discussions on the Sudan crisis in April, and France is advancing its own outreach this month. China continues its structured engagement through the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. In this crowded field, India retains significant goodwill, but the challenge is to convert historical affinity into sustained, structured, and visible engagement. The appointment of Mahamoud Ali Yousof as chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) signals an openness to reinvigorating partnerships.

The five-year summit cycle remains useful at the leadership level, but in the absence of a robust inter-summit mechanism, engagement defaults to bilateral interactions. India's earlier three-tier Africa framework, structured across bilateral, regional, and pan-African levels, remains conceptually

sound. While implementation challenges limited its impact, abandoning it altogether would be erroneous. India could reinstate the practice of inviting the AUC chairperson for annual visits; the AU's annually rotating country chair could be hosted for a state visit. This would deepen political engagement and ensure geographic diversity, bringing to the fore countries that may otherwise remain outside India's bilateral radar. With Burundi currently holding the AU chair and co-chairing IAFS IV, such an approach would have been timely. Equally important is the

One of the persistent weaknesses of the India-Africa Forum Summit has been the gap between commitment and delivery

need to re-engage Africa's Regional Economic Communities (RECs). An annual Track 1.5 India-Africa Strategic Dialogue could provide the missing layer of continuity, integrating policymakers, AUC leadership, representatives of the Permanent Representatives' Committee (PRC), and domain experts.

The AUC plays a central role in shaping African positions on global issues, from climate change and energy transition to digital governance and AI. Engaging it would allow India to share its own experience in digital public infrastructure, public health, financial inclusion, and capacity building. One of the weaknesses of the IAFS has been the gap between commitment and delivery. Periodic consultations between Indian officials and the African diplomatic corps in New Delhi could serve as an initial layer of monitoring, complemented by regular engagement in

Addis Ababa, where India's ambassador to the AU interacts with the AUC and the PRC. A more formal mid-cycle review would allow both sides to recalibrate priorities.

While many African countries view India as an accessible and adaptable partner, without consistent engagement, India risks being seen as an episodic rather than a strategic partner. IAFS IV could go beyond declaratory diplomacy and be more of a process-driven partnership. In 2018, addressing the Ugandan Parliament, PM Narendra Modi articulated a key principle of India's Africa policy: That African priorities would guide India's engagement. IAFS IV is the moment to demonstrate that India's engagement is not only historic but also contemporary and credible.

The writer is former ambassador to Ethiopia and the AU and author of The Harambee Factor

कार्यालय उज्जैन नगर पालिक निगम, उज्जैन



(Online) निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

उज्जैन दिनांक 09/5/26

क्र.	टेण्डर क्रमांक	कार्य का नाम	अनुमानित लागत	नगरीय प्रशासन एवं विकास विभाग म.प्र. भोपाल	अर्नेस्ट मनी रु.	समय अवधि	आनलाईन क्रय करने की एवं ई. एम. डी. राशि एवं समस्त दस्तावेज Submission करने की अंतिम दिनांक
1	2026.UAD.489111.1	देवास रोड से नानाखेड़ा तक MR 2 मार्ग का उन्नयनीकरण।	10,47,10,780/-	02-08-2021 UADD ISSR SOR And 08-011-2025 UADD ISSR Road SOR	5,23,560/-	365 दिवस	23.05.2026 समय 17:00, टेण्डर फॉर्म मूल्य 30,000/- रहेंगा।

कार्यालय यंत्री - नगर पालिक निगम उज्जैन

TAMLNADU POWER GENERATION CORPORATION LIMITED

Notice Inviting Tenders (E-Tendering Process)

Specification No.	Tender Inviting Authority	Name of the Work
02	SE/P&A/MTPS	Modification of existing single sealing Rotary APH to double sealing arrangement for UNIT IV

For details of works/Procurement/Due date of submission/Opening/viewing and downloading of e-tenders, please visit websites, www.tnpdcl.org, www.tenders.tn.gov.in, www.tntenders.gov.in

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD DIVISION AMET (RAJSAMAND)

File No. 301 Date: 11.05.2026

Notice Inviting Bid

Bids for Nit No 03/2026-27, (Rate Contact for VIP Visit) 02 Nos. are invited from interested bidders upto Date 21.05.2026, 06.00 P.M. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajsamand.gov.in>), (<http://sppp.rajn.nic.in>) of the state, and departmental website. The approximate value of the procurement is Rs. 203.00 Lacs.

N.B No. PWD2627A0433
UBN No. 1. PWD2627WSRC02003
2. PWD2627WSRC02006

Sd/- EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD DIVISION AMET

GVK Power (Goindwal Sahib) Limited

Regd. Office: Plot No. 10, Paigah Colony, Sardar Patel Road, Secunderabad-500003, Telangana, India
CIN: U40109GT1997PLC028483

(A wholly owned subsidiary of Guru Amar Das Thermal Power Limited, GATPL)
(A step down wholly owned subsidiary of Punjab State Power Corporation Limited, PSPCL)

HOD-C&I, GATP, Goindwal Sahib, invites E-Tender for the work of:

Tender Enquiry No. 153/GATP/CNI/20016726 dated 13/05/2026
"Supply of Different types of Limit Switches"
Area of 2x270 MW Thermal Power Plant GATP, Goindwal Sahib" at 2X270 MW Guru Amardas Thermal Plant (GATP), Goindwal Sahib, Distt.: Tarn Taran, Punjab as per details given in the tender specifications."

For detailed NIT & tender specifications, please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 13/05/2026 from 17:00 Hrs. onwards.

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any, will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>

No. 11475/PB GATP-46/26

भारत सरकार GOVERNMENT OF INDIA रेल मंत्रालय MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (रेलवे बोर्ड) (RAILWAY BOARD)

Ministry of Railways, Government of India invites applications from eligible persons for the post of Managing Director in National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL), which is implementing Mumbai-Ahmedabad high speed train project.

For detailed advertisement, kindly refer to www.indianrailways.gov.in/railwayboard For IR Personnel> Vacancy Circular> Vacancy Circular_2026

The applications, along with enclosures may be sent to:

Shri Ravi Shekhar, Joint Secretary/Deputation, Ministry of Railways, Room No. 152-J, Rail Bhawan, New Delhi-110001.

Last date for receipt of applications is 17.30 hrs. on 11.06.2026. Applications received after the last date will not be entertained and no correspondence will be entertained in this regard.

UJVN LIMITED

H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephones: 0135-2763808, Fax: 0135-2763598
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866 Website: www.ujvn.com

Letter No: 411 Date extension Notice -2 Date: 13/05/2026

Due to unavoidable reasons the date of submission & opening of bid e-NIT No. 01/EE(Civil)/MB-I/TN/2026-27 is being extended as below:-
Last date & Time for submission of bid on portal:- upto 17:00 hrs. of 20.05.2026.
Last date & Time for submission of hard copies:- upto 17:00 hrs of 22.05.2026
Date & Time Opening of bid on the portal:- At 17:00 hrs. of 23.05.2026.
Other terms, conditions of bid shall remain same.
For fuller & further details, kindly visit "e-procurement portal "<http://uktenders.gov.in>"

Executive Engineer (Civil) MB-I, Maneri

"AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY"

Government of Rajasthan

Director Rajasthan State Archives, Bikaner
Phone No.: 0151-2545354, Email: dir.archives-rj@gov.in

S.No.:-bik/dirarch/T cell/E-NIB-01/2026-27/542 Date:-08-05-2026

e-Notice Inviting Bid No. 01/2026-27

On behalf of the Hon'ble Governor of Rajasthan, Bids of Procurement Scanning & Digitization of Archival Historical Documents (Paging, Listing, Bar-coding, Scanning & Digitization with Meta Data), (AO/A1/A2/A3/A4/Legal/ Miscellaneous size) of this office is online invited from interested bidders upto 03:00 PM on 10.06.2026. Online Bid Opening date is 10.06.2026 at 5:00 PM. Estimated Cost of Bid is RS. 3.25 Crore/Three Crore Twenty Five Lakh only). For other particulars of the bid, bidder may be visited on the procurement portal <http://sppp.rajn.nic.in> <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> and Department Website <https://rsadapp.rajasthan.gov.in> of the state. UBN No. of Bid is mentioned below:-

UBN No: ARC2627SLRCR00001

Sd/- Director Rajasthan State Archives Bikaner

DIPR/C/8272/2026

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LIMITED

Regd office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001.
Corporate Identity Number:U40109PB2010SC033813
Website: www.pspcl.in (Contact no. 0164-2756347, 96461-17659)

Tender Enquiry no: 1925/MAMC/O&M/PC-2790 dated 12.05.26

Chief Engineer / O&M (P&P Cell-II), GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat-151111 Distt. Bathinda invites E-tender for the Procurement Of 01 No. 20 KL Capacity Sulphuric Acid (98% Concentrated) Storage Tank For CW Chlorination Stage-II at GHTP, Lehra-Mohabbat. Quantity as per NIT. For detailed NIT & tender Specification please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 12-05-2026 from 17:00 hrs. onwards.

Note:- Corrigendum & addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>

No. 11474/PB GHTP-46/26

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

NOTICE FOR INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

Subject: Construction of Subways (opening size 3m X 2.6m) at trespassing locations with Precast Box Segments and launching/placement across double line tracks with Pulling/ Pushing/ Crane (Crawler/ Tyre mounted) in traffic block (with/ without relieving girders), as well as launching/placement of precasted approaches, providing of Approach covering, waterproofing, pumping system, Solar, lighting etc suitable for passage of pedestrian/ 2 wheelers at 16 locations between Jaipur- Rewari Section and Sections adjoining Jaipur area in Jaipur Division of North Western Railway. In connection with the Pilot project regarding above mentioned work, Expression of Interest (EOI) is invited for shortlisting competent, efficient and experienced contractors for undertaking the project amounting to approx Rs.50 Cr. to be completed in period of 10-12 months. The project is of specialized nature involving Box segments of longer lengths to be casted with use of high quality Moulds, superior finish, enhanced methods of quality control & assurance, large excavators, high performing Water Proofing techniques etc. as per prescribed methodologies and to be launched/placed with Heavy capacity cranes (Crawler/ tyre mounted), Double acting Heavy duty Jacks, Robust efficient Pulling/ Pushing techniques at site. Interested contractors should possess relevant technical credentials for Completed/ substantially completed atleast one similar work of atleast Rs.30 Cr. i.e. "Construction of LHS/RUB involving launching/placement under traffic block" in last 5 financial years and Average Annual turnover (Financial Credentials) of atleast Rs.100 Cr. in last 3 financial years. The submission should include, but not be limited to: 1. Name & constitution of the firm with proof of registration. 2. Details of Completed/ substantially completed (received equal or more than 90% of present contract value excluding P.V.C) for similar work in prescribed formats as in STD, NWR with latest update. 3. Financial Certificate (turnover certificate, audited balance sheets) in prescribed formats as in STD, NWR with latest update. 4. Details of Penalty/ Token Penalty, Extensions granted with LD, without P.V.C, token penalty, Extension granted on account of Agency, Blacklisting, termination/ short closure etc. The EOI documents should be submitted to the office of the Dy.Chief Engineer/Construction-III, NWR, Jaipur on or before 23.05.2026, during office hours or through email at dyccelliii@gmail.com. Based on the credentials received, suitable contractors may be shortlisted and methodology shall be approved for inviting, awarding of tender for execution of the work. This notice does not constitute an offer of contract but is only an invitation for Expression of Interest. (Note No.NWR-SC-JP-T-26/EOI Notice Dated: 12.05.26) Dy. CE/C-III/J.P, NWR / Jaipur

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Classifieds

PERSONAL

It is informed to the General Public that I, Mam Raj Mittal, Son of Late Sh. Ram Kumar Mittal, Resident House No.230, Second Floor, Tarun Enclave, Pitampura, New Delhi-110034, that father name mentioned in my daughter Ritu Gupta Passport no. M694412 is Mani Raj Mittal however the correct Father's name is Mam Raj Mittal needs to be rectified.

It is for general information that I, Molly Thomas W/o Thomas P Joseph, residing at B-12/203, Shalimar Garden Extn-2, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201005, declare that the name of my husband has been wrongly written as Mr. Thomas in my service book. The actual name of my husband is Thomas P Joseph which may be amended accordingly.

I, Zakir Hussain, S/o. Sh. Haji Sabbir Ahmad, R/o. H.No.79, Gali No.3, Nasti Basti Vill. - Kureni Narela, Delhi-110040, have changed my name to Jakir Husain, for all purposes.

I, YASHASVI S/O M PRIYA, R/O Flat.No.403, Padmabh Homes, Plot No.1/267/6, Sector-1, Vaishali, Ghaziabad (U.P.)-201010, have changed my name to YASHASVI SRIVASTAVA.

I, Virat Bhatnagar S/O Vinod Kumar Bhatnagar, R/o-C-8/5, F.F. Krishna Nagar, Delhi-110051, have changed my name to Virat Kumar Bhatnagar for all purposes.

I, Vinod Kumar S/o Late Shri Vishwa Nath R/o 507, Block-2, Kirti Apartments, Mayur Vihar Phase-1 Extn., Delhi-110091, have changed my name to Vinod Kumar Khanna for all purposes.

I, VINOTH R, FATHER OF, LAKSHITHA V, ADDRESS- NO.35, VILANTHIDA SAMUTHIRAM, CHIDAMBARAM MAIN-ROAD, SIRKALI, NAGAPATTINAM (DT), TAMIL, NADU-609110.I WOULD LIKE TO CHANGE MY-MINOR DAUGHTER NAME, FROM LAKSHITHA V TO LAKSHITHA VINOTHRAJENDRAN. VIDE AFFIDAVIT, DATE- 13-MAY-26

I, VINOD KUMAR S/o Om Parkash Aggarwal, R/o-CGX-041 DLF, Capital Greens-15, Shivaji Marg Moti Nagar, Karan Pura Delhi-110015 have changed my name to VINOD AGGARWAL.

I, Upendra Kumar Sah, S/o Shri Hiralal Sah, R/o-H.No.1157, Block-F-6, Sultapur, Delhi-86, declare that "Upendra Sah" and "Upendra Kumar Sah" are one and the same person. That in future, my name considered as Upendra Kumar Sah

I, Tanya, W/o-Gautam Priyadarshi, R/o-Flat no.402, Dev-Homes Apartments, Plot no 19-20, Welcome-City, Shahberi, Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P.-201009, have changed my name to Tanya Johar, for all, future purposes.

I, TANMAY MALLICK S/O NITYA KUMAR MOLLICK R/O C-12, Nehru Garden, Khora Colony, Ghaziabad (UP) have changed my name to TANMAY MOLLICK.

I, Suraj Singh, S/O Vijay Pal Singh, R/O S-1006, Sector-76, Amrapali Silicon City, Noida, G.B.Nagar, have changed my name to Suraj Pal Singh.

I, Satish Kumar Bindal, S/O-Late Sh. Raghuraj Singh, R/O-Flat No.12/203, Sunshine County, Kundli, Sonapat, Haryana-131029, have changed my name to Satish Kumar Aggarwal, for all purposes.

I, Sat Pal Narang S/O Roop Chand Narang R/O 1/32, Ramesh-Nagar, Delhi-110015, have changed my name to Satya Pal Narang for all-purposes.

I, SURAJ TIWARI, S/O-Dulam Tiwari, R/O WZ-43, THIRD FLOOR-80 Yards, Tilak Nagar, Delhi-110018, have changed my minor son's name from SARANSH TO PRATHAM TIWARI permanently.

I, SIMAR ALAGH, daughter of, GURMEET SINGH, residing at, D141, Yuri Gagarin Path, Bidhan Nagar, Durgapur, W.B-713212, have changed my name to SIMAR KAUR ALAGH, for all purposes.

I, SHAHIDA W/o Yunus, R/o Plot No.B-20, Khasra No.758, Gali No.5/6, Rajeev Nagar Bhalswa, Dairy Delhi-110042, have changed my name from SHAHIDA to SHARDA

I, Radhika D/o Pramod Pandey R/o 675, Karkar Model-3, Sahibabad, Hapur, UP-201010, have changed my name to Radhika Pandey.

I, LIPIKA MOLLICK S/O NITYA KUMAR MOLLICK R/O C-12, Nehru Garden, Khora Colony, Ghaziabad (UP) have changed my name to LIPIKA MALLICK.

I, Kush S/o Sachin Verma R/O H.No.- 188/12, Krishna Colony, Gurgaon (Haryana), have changed my name to Kush Verma.

I, Kulvant Singh, S/o-Bhikhan Singh, R/o-Railway Fatak, Jaider, Mohalla, Near-66k v Power House, Village-Mewla Maharajpur, Sector-46, Faridabad, Haryana-121012, have changed my name to Kulvant Singh for all purposes.

I, KM PRITI SINGH, W/O ROHIT SINGH, R/O SHIV Puri, Sadar Bazar, Pratapgah, Uttar Pradesh. 230001 have changed my name to PRITI SINGH.

I, KM AMRITA CHAND, W/O KULDEEP SINGH, HOUSE NO 257, SECTOR-13, VASUNDHARA, GHAZIABAD, Uttar Pradesh 201012, have changed my name to AMRITA SINGH

I, Santosh Verma W/o Shri Narender Kumar R/o QD-22, Pitampura, Delhi-110034, changed my name to Santosh Rani.

I, PRIYANKA W/O Gagan deep, R/O, UC-29 Hind Floor, USHA PARK, JAIL ROAD, HARI NAGAR, WEST DELHI-64, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PRIYANKA DEEP, FOR ALL PURPOSE IN FUTURE

I, No-30032241A, L-NK Mushtaq Ahmad Meelo, R/O- Zangali, Tehsil/District-Kupwara. In my service records name of my spouse has been wrongly mentioned as Saleema Instead of Saleema Bano as mentioned in Aadhaar card. It needs correction. Objections be filled to Unit 175 Eng. Regt (TA) within seven days.

I, Navneet Kumar, S/O Prakash Chand Mittal R/o 418A, Gali-10, Near Dali Ki Kothi, New Krishna Nagar, bagu, Ghaziabad, have changed my name to Navneet Mittal.

I, Naseema Khatoun W/o-Shahadat Husain, R/O B-62 Lal Bagh, Azadpur, North West Delhi, Delhi-110033, have changed my name to Nasima Khatoun.

I, NUTAN W/o Chetan Singh Trehan, R/O-Flat No.123, MIG, PH-2, Pkt-B, Sector-14, Dwarka, Delhi-110078, have changed my name to NUTAN TREHAN, permanently.

I, NEHA WALIA W/o-Ashok Walia R/O-B/211-1st-Floor, Green Avenue Sector-71, Gautam Buddha Nagar NOIDA-UP-201307, have changed my Name from NEHA WALIA to NEELAM WALIA, permanently

I, Mrs Jopna, wife of, Mr Amul Nath, resident of, House No.3/65, Gali No.6, Block-C, near Shanti Niketan Public-School, state that my name has been incorrectly mentioned as "Jopana Rani" in my house documents. My correct name is "Jopna". Therefore, it is requested that my correct name, "Jopna", be recorded in all house/property documents.

I, Mohammd Anwar, S/O- Mohd Yameen, R/O-D-53, Street no-5, Near Hamdard Public School, Ratiya-Marg, Sangam Vihar, South, Delhi-110062, have changed my name to Mohd Anwar for all future purposes.

I, Manoj Kumar Duhani, S/O Om Prakash Duhani, R/O-346/12, Shastri-Nagar, Bahadurgarh, Hajjar (Haryana), declare that Manoj Kumar Duhani, Manoj Kumar & Manoj are one and the same person.

I, Manish Rawat, S/O- Madan Singh Rawat, R/O- H-1/25, 3th/F, Mahavir Enclave, Palam, South West Delhi, Delhi-110045, that in my National Pension System (Govt. of India) my name has been wrongly written as Manish Madan Rawat instead of Manish Rawat, which may be amended accordingly.

I, MAHENDRA KUMAR, S/O HARI CHAND BATRA, R/O G-4/58-59 SECTOR-11 ROHINI, DELHI-110085, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MAHENDER KUMAR BATRA.

I, Kanta w/o Om Prakash Rajput, R/O- UC-29, 1Ind Floor, UJSHA PARK, JAIL ROAD, HARI-NAGAR, WEST, DELHI-110064, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO KANTA RANI FOR ALL PURPOSE IN FUTURE.

I, Mahendra Kumar, S/O HARI CHAND BATRA, R/O G-4/58-59 SECTOR-11 ROHINI, DELHI-110085, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MAHENDER KUMAR BATRA.

I, Kanta w/o Om Prakash Rajput, R/O- UC-29, 1Ind Floor, UJSHA PARK, JAIL ROAD, HARI-NAGAR, WEST, DELHI-110064, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO KANTA RANI FOR ALL PURPOSE IN FUTURE.

I, Naseem Zaidi D/O A. H. Zaidi R/O A- 114, SECTOR-55 Noida, 201301, HAVE CHANGED MY Daughter NAME Inaya Ali Imran TO Inaya Ali.

I, Aruna Madan, W/o Sh. Sushil Madan, R/O-A-112, 3rd Floor, Derawal Nagar, Delhi-110009, do hereby solemnly declare that Aruna Madan and Aruna are one and the same women. Henceforth, I have changed my name from Aruna to Aruna Madan for all purposes.

I, ASHOK GUPTA S/O MADAN LAL GUPTA R/O A-108, FIRST FLOOR, SARASWATI VIHAR, PITAMPURA, DELHI-110034, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ASHOK KUMAR GUPTA FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES.

I, ANJUMAN ARA BEGUM W/O MOHAMMAD SULEMAN R/O 5973 FIRST FLOOR BARADARI BAZAR BALLIMARAN DELHI 110066, have changed my name to KHURSHEED BEGUM Permanently.

I, ANJANA JALAN W/O PRAVIN KHETAN R/O 42/8, 2ND FLOOR, IPLAN EDUCATION, WEST PATEL NAGAR, DELHI-08, have changed my name to ANJANA KHETAN for all future purposes.

I, hitherto known as Thomas P J S/o Joseph P A, residing at B-12/203, Shalimar Garden Extn-2, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201005, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Thomas P Joseph.

I, hitherto known as Krishan Kumar S/o Om Prakash Verma, R/o 20, Street No.1, Near Som Bazar, South Anarkali, Krishna Nagar, East Delhi, Delhi-110051 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Krishan Kumar Verma.

I, hitherto Known as Manju, D/o Shashi Kumar Goel W/o Krishan Kumar Verma, R/o 20, Street No.1, Near Som Bazar, South Anarkali, Krishna Nagar, East Delhi, Delhi-110051, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Manju Verma for all purposes.

I, RENU w/o SANJAY R/O HARI NAGAR VILLAGE BADARPUR, SOUTH DELHI-110044 have changed my name RENU and DOB- 06/02/1990 TO SEELA AND DOB 01/01/1985 FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES.

I, Payal D/o Mukesh Kumar, 70c/9 main road old tezab mill Bhola Nath nagar Shahdara 110032, have changed my name to Payal verma.

I, PRAVIN KUMAR KHETAN S/O GOPAL PRASAD KHETAN, R/O 42/8, 2ND FLOOR, IPLAN EDUCATION, WEST PATEL NAGAR, DELHI-08, have changed my name to PRAVIN KHETAN for all future purposes.

I, PATRICK BABUL BUTLEROO S/O Sunil Evgen Butleroo, N-16, Near Jagat Ram Park, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi-92, have changed my name to BABUL BUTLEROO.

I, NASEEM ZAIDI D/O A. H. ZAIDI R/O A- 114, SECTOR-55 Noida, 201301, HAVE CHANGED MY Daughter NAME Iba Ali Imran TO Iba Ali.

I, Namish Kumar, S/o Sh. Raj Kumar, resident of Village Kalehali, Post Bajura, Tehsil Bhunatr, District Kullu, Himachal Pradesh, do hereby declare that my mother's name is incorrectly recorded as "Nisha Raj Kumar" in my CBSE Class X records (Roll No. 21158698). Her correct name is "Nisha" as per affidavit dated 08th May 2026 sworn before the Public Notary at Noida, and the same may be considered correct for all purposes.

I, AZAD SINGH S/O Balbir Singh Dagar R/o H.No. -472/5, Sector-15, Patel-Nagar, Gurgaon (Haryana)-122001, have changed my name to Azad Singh Dagar

I, Ashmita Madhok D/o Virander Madhok W/o Deepak Saigal R/o 23A/18A, Tilak-Nagar, West-Delhi, Delhi-110018, have changed my name to Ashmita Saigal.

I, MONICA BHILWARIA W/O SHRI SAURABH BHILWARIA R/O C-298, SECTOR-122, NOIDA, DISTT GAUTAM BUDDH NAGAR, U.P.-201301, have changed my name to MONICA KUMARI for all future Purposes.

I, Kamal Kumar Goyal, S/o-Manmohan Goyal, R/o-16 Manpada Dankaar Gautam Buddha-Nagar (U.P.)-203201, have changed my name to Kamal Goyal for all purposes.

I, DEVENDER S/O Bihari Lal Verma, 1679-C, Gali No-2, Gindrapuri Extn, Kalkaji, Delhi-19, have changed my name to DAVENDER KUMAR.

I, KM. VIMALA W/O. GANGA SINGH R/O. F.1/8, Ganga Triveni Apartment, Sector 9, Rohini, Delhi have changed my name to VIMLA DEVI

I, KANTA SUBHASH W/O SUBHASH CHANDER SAINI R/O FLAT NO. 257, C & D BLOCK, SHALIMAR BAGH, DELHI-110088, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as KANIKA SAINI.

I, HARGULAL JAIN, S/O Padam Chand Bansal R/O F-1/29, Krishna Nagar, Delhi-110051, have changed my name to HARGULAL BANSAL permanently.

PUBLIC NOTICE: Be it known to all that my clients Sh. Bijender Singhal S/O Lt. S. Mann Chaudh and his wife Smt. Anshu Gupta both residents of C-138, Ashok Vihar, Delhi-110052 have severed all relations with his son namely Sarabh Singhal and his wife Smt. Shivangi Singhal and have disowned and disinherited them from all their movable and immovable properties due to their disrespectful behavior and out of control All relations with their have been severed. Any dealings by them shall be at their own risk, cost, and consequence of the parties involved. Our clients shall not be liable or responsible for any such dealings.

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is informed to the general public that my client, Shri Maniram S/o Late Shri Raj Kumar, resident of House No. 2372, UGF, Bar Bahad, North West Delhi, Delhi-110034, has hereby disowned and debarred his son, Shri Hunney Goel S/o Shri Maniram R/o House No. 2372, UGF, Raja Park, North West Delhi, Delhi-110034, from all movable and immovable properties, rights, titles, interests, claims, and benefits belonging to my client. The general public is hereby notified that any person dealing with Shri Hunney Goel shall do so at his/her own risk, cost, and responsibility. My client shall not be held liable or responsible for any act, deed, transaction, misrepresentation, and misconduct committed by him in any manner whatsoever.

PUBLIC NOTICE: My client, Shri Maniram S/o Late Shri Raj Kumar, resident of House No. 2372, UGF, Bar Bahad, North West Delhi, Delhi-110034, has hereby disowned and debarred his son, Shri Hunney Goel S/o Shri Maniram R/o House No. 2372, UGF, Raja Park, North West Delhi, Delhi-110034, from all movable and immovable properties, rights, titles, interests, claims, and benefits belonging to my client. The general public is hereby notified that any person dealing with Shri Hunney Goel shall do so at his/her own risk, cost, and responsibility. My client shall not be held liable or responsible for any act, deed, transaction, misrepresentation, and misconduct committed by him in any manner whatsoever.

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY: E-TENDER NOTICE: Dy. CEE (W), NWR, Ajmer on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tender for the following work up to 15.00 Hrs. on the mention date. Tender No.: IE/50/23/2025-26RT Name of work: Ajmer-Augmentation of Ancillaries shop with load Bearing Covered shed with Solar Panel including CMT lab Improvement and Digitization in H/O Carriage Workshop Ajmer. Approximate cost: Rs. 18218436.99E. Earnest money : Rs. 364400/- Date & Time of closing of E-Tender Date : 22.05.2026 at 15.00 Hrs. and 22.05.2026 at 15.30 Hrs. The details of above E-Tender is available on website: www.ireps.gov.in 696-DI/26

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY: E-Tender Notice: E-Tender is invited by Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G)/N.E. Railway/Itzanagar For & on behalf of the President of India for the following work : SN: 01, Tender Notice No.: IZ-N-Elect-OT-07-2026, Dated: 08.05.2026. Description of work: Strengthening of power supply, lighting arrangement at Railway stations and colony under jurisdiction of SSE/E/Bareilly City of Itzanagar Division., Details: Approximate tender value in Rs.: 2,40,82,753.13, Earnest money in Rs.: 4,81,700.00, Cost of tender paper in Rs.: Nil, Tender Type: Open Tender, Date & time of closing E-tender: 29.05.2026 at 17.00 hours. Completion time from the date of issue of letter of Acceptance: 06 months, SN: 02., Tender Notice No.: IZ-N-Elect-OT-18-2026, Dated: 08.05.2026. Description of work: General Electrification work in connection with "Provision of tap water supply with overhead tank at LCs in IZN division (with 20% Solar Panel)", "provision of office cum rest room for sectional Traffic inspectors at 10 stations", "provision of attached toilet in 15 station master panel room" and "provision of piped water supply in colony by providing plastic tank over RCC staging" of Itzanagar Division., Approximate tender value in Rs.: 1,39,06,986.14, Earnest money in Rs.: 2,78,100.00, Cost of tender paper in Rs.: Nil, Tender type: Open Tender, Date & time of closing E-tender: 29.05.2026 at 17.00 hours. Completion time from the date of issue of letter of Acceptance: 09 months. Manual tenders are not allowed against this tender and such manual offer received shall be ignored. The tender can be viewed at web site http://www.ireps.gov.in.. The tender/bidders must have Class-III Digital signature certificate & must have registered on IREPS portal. All relevant papers, must be uploaded at the time of participating in e-tendering.. The bidders are advised to periodically check for online corrigendum issued, if Any. No separate publication in newspaper shall be issued.

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY: E-Tender is invited by Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G) CP/RO/EL-39, N.E. Railway, Itzanagar Do Not Misdemean Bids/Cigarette in train

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, CONSTRUCTION CIRCLE U.P. JAL NIGAM (URBAN) NEAR MANOHAR BHUSHAN INTER COLLEGE JAL NIGAM COLONY, GANDHI NAGAR BAREILLY (U.P.), Mob: 9473942568 E-mail: se4_ulpnibj@yahoo.co.in

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, CONSTRUCTION CIRCLE U.P. JAL NIGAM (URBAN) NEAR MANOHAR BHUSHAN INTER COLLEGE JAL NIGAM COLONY, GANDHI NAGAR BAREILLY (U.P.), Mob: 9473942568 E-mail: se4_ulpnibj@yahoo.co.in

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Netanyahu made secret visit to the UAE during war

Saudi Arabia had 'launched covert attacks' on Iran

Associated Press
Jerusalem, Riyadh, May 13

ISRAELI PRIME Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Wednesday that he secretly visited the United Arab Emirates during the Iran war.

Netanyahu met with UAE President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan during the visit, the Israeli leader's office said. It added the visit "resulted in a historic breakthrough in relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates."

The announcement comes just a day after US Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee revealed that Israel had sent Iron Dome air-defense weapons to UAE along with personnel to operate them. The UAE has not commented on the reported visit by the Israeli leader.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia launched numerous, unpublicized strikes on Iran in retaliation for attacks carried out in the kingdom during the West Asia war, two Western officials briefed on the matter and two Iranian officials said.

The Saudi attacks, not previously reported, mark the first time that the kingdom is known to have directly carried out military action on Iranian soil and show it is becoming much bolder in defending itself against its main regional rival.

The attacks, launched by the

Saudi Air Force, were assessed to have been carried out in late March, the two Western officials said. One said only they were "tit-for-tat strikes in retaliation for when Saudi (Arabia) was hit." Reuters was unable to confirm what the specific targets were.

In response to a request for comment, a senior Saudi foreign ministry official did not address directly whether strikes had been carried out.

The Iranian foreign ministry did not respond to a request for comment.

The Saudi strikes underscore the widening of the conflict — and the extent to which a war that began when the US and Israel launched airstrikes on Iran on February 28 has drawn in West Asia in ways that haven't been publicly acknowledged.

Since the US and Israeli strikes, Iran has hit all six Gulf Cooperation Council states with missiles and drones, attacking not only US military bases but civilian sites, airports and oil infrastructure, and closed the Strait, disrupting global trade.

The United Arab Emirates also carried out military strikes on Iran, the *Wall Street Journal* reported on Monday. Together, the Saudi and Emirati actions reveal a conflict whose true shape has remained largely hidden — one in which Gulf monarchies battered by Iranian attacks began hitting back.

But their approach has not been identical. The UAE has taken a more hawkish stance, seeking to extract a cost from Iran and engaging only rarely in public diplomacy with Tehran.

U.S. TREASURY SECRETARY BESSANT NEGOTIATES WITH CHINESE OFFICIALS IN SOUTH KOREA

Trump in Beijing for key summit with Xi amid Gulf and trade wars

US President eyes economic wins, brings along Musk & Jensen Huang

Reuters
Beijing, Seoul May 13

PRESIDENT DONALD Trump and an entourage that included Nvidia's Jensen Huang and Elon Musk were greeted with a lavish welcome in Beijing on Wednesday as he prepared to ask China's Xi Jinping to "open up" to US business at the start of their two-day summit.

Trump is seeking to snag some economic wins on the first visit by a US president to China in nearly a decade and maintain a fragile trade truce to prop up public approval ratings bruised by his war with Iran.

He was welcomed by Chinese dignitaries, a tightly choreographed formation of military honor guard and dozens of Chinese students waving US and Chinese flags as he disembarked Air Force One in the waning hours of twilight on Wednesday. Pausing midway down the red carpet as the students chanted "welcome, welcome, warm welcome" in Mandarin, he punched the air and smiled broadly before departing in his limousine.

The CEOs accompanying Trump are drawn mainly from companies seeking to resolve business issues with China, such as Nvidia, which has struggled to get regulatory permission to sell



President Donald Trump walks with China's Vice President Han Zheng during a welcome ceremony at Beijing on Wednesday. AP

its powerful H200 artificial intelligence chips there.

Trump asked Huang at the last minute to join the trip, said a source familiar with the matter who spoke on condition of anonymity, and he was spotted boarding Air Force One during a refuelling stop in Alaska en route to Beijing.

"I will be asking President Xi, a Leader of extraordinary distinction, to 'open up' China so that these brilliant people can work their magic," he said in a post on Truth Social, referring to the CEO delegation. "I will make that my very first request."

Asked about Trump's post,

Guo Jiakun, a spokesperson for China's foreign ministry, said Beijing stands ready to "expand cooperation, manage differences and inject stability and certainty into turbulent world".

As Trump prepared for the pomp-filled occasion, his trade negotiator Scott Bessent wrapped up three hours of preparatory talks with Chinese officials in South Korea.

China's official *Xinhua* news agency described them as "candid, in-depth and constructive", but officials did not offer any detailed summary.

Trump's two days of meetings will include a grand recep-

tion at The Great Hall of the People, a tour of Beijing's 600-year-old Temple of Heaven imperial religious complex, and a state banquet.

Apart from trade, the talks will cover a host of sensitive subjects from the Iran war to US arms sales to Taiwan, the democratically governed island claimed by China.

Trump is widely expected to encourage China to convince Tehran to make a deal with Washington to end the conflict, though he has said he did not think he would need its help.

China reiterated on Wednesday its strong opposition to

US arms sales to Taiwan, with the status of a \$14 billion package awaiting Trump's approval still unclear.

The United States is bound by law to provide Taiwan with the means to defend itself, despite a lack of formal diplomatic ties. China regards the democratically governed island as part of its territory.

While Trump rubbed shoulders with executives aboard Air Force One, Bessent held his latest round of trade negotiations with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng at a VIP reception room at South Korea's Incheon airport.

Israeli strikes kill 12 people in Lebanon ahead of truce talks

Reuters
Beirut, May 13

TWELVE PEOPLE were killed by a series of Israeli strikes on cars in Lebanon on Wednesday, the health ministry said, as conflict between Hezbollah and Israel continued on the eve of a third round of US-mediated talks between Lebanon and Israel.

More than 10 weeks into the war that spiralled out of the Iran conflict, Hezbollah confirmed that the commander of its elite Radwan force was killed in an Israeli strike in Beirut's southern suburbs last week.

Hezbollah and Israel have been trading blows despite a US-mediated ceasefire announced last month, with hostilities largely focused in southern Lebanon, where Israeli forces are occupying a self-declared security zone.

Israel's attacks on Wednesday included three drone strikes targeting vehicles well beyond the main theatre of conflict in the south, on the coastal highway some 20 km south of Beirut, security sources in Lebanon said.

The health ministry said those strikes killed eight people, including two children. A fourth strike killed one person near the southern city of Sidon, 40 km from Beirut, it said.

Three more people were killed in Israeli airstrikes on cars in three locations further south in Tyre district. The Israeli military did not immediately respond to a request for comment about the strikes.

It said it was striking Hezbollah infrastructure in southern Lebanon and told residents to leave nine towns where it intended to act against the group.

Starmer faces quit calls as King outlines govt agenda

Associated Press
London, May 13

KING CHARLES III delivered the government's legislative program for the coming year at the ceremonial opening of Britain's Parliament.

But the question remains whether Prime Minister Keir Starmer will be around to implement it and, even if he survives the latest government crisis, whether he will have the authority to push his proposals through Parliament.

Health Secretary Wes Street-

ing, long believed to be preparing for a leadership challenge against Starmer, met privately Wednesday with Starmer for less than 20 minutes at his 10 Downing Street residence.

Starmer says he has full confidence in Streeting as reports say he will resign from Cabinet and mount a leadership challenge, his spokesman says.

The *Times* and other British media are reporting that Streeting could quit as soon as Thursday and try to win the votes to oust Starmer. If Streeting quits, he'd be the first Cabinet min-

ister to resign. The King said the UK's economic, energy and national security would be tested as it deals with the fallout from the wars in Iran and Ukraine.

Planned measures include controlling the cost of living, strengthening ties with the European Union and making it easier to build new energy infrastructure.

Pledging action on antisemitism following a run of attacks on the Jewish community in recent months, King Charles said the government would "de-

fend the British values" of decency and tolerance.

Meanwhile, the embattled PM has been urged to set a timetable for his departure by more than a fifth of the Labour Party's lawmakers in the House of Commons. Some junior ministers have quit the government in protest, but no one has yet challenged Starmer directly.

The King's Speech represents Starmer's latest effort to save his premiership after Labour suffered huge losses in local and regional elections last week. If those results were re-

peated in a national election that has to be held by 2029, the party would be overwhelmingly ejected from power.

Labour secured a landslide victory in 2024, driving the Conservatives from power after 14 years, but since then the party's popularity has plunged and Starmer is getting much of the blame.

Gunshots fired in a standoff at Philippine Senate over ICC suspect

Reuters
Manila, May 13

GUNSHOTS BROKE out at the Philippine Senate on Wednesday and people ran for cover after a top politician wanted by the International Criminal Court said his arrest was imminent and security forces entered the building.

There were no immediate reports of casualties, however, Senate Secretary Mark Llandro Mendoza told reporters following the chaos at the legislature in the capital Manila.

Senator Ronald dela Rosa, a former police chief who was the main enforcer of ex-Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's bloody "war on drugs", had earlier urged people to mobilise to prevent his arrest and hand-over to the ICC.

The Hague-based court on Monday unsealed an arrest warrant for dela Rosa on charges of crimes against humanity, the same that 81-year-old Duterte is accused of as he awaits trial in the ICC following his transfer last year.

Dela Rosa, 64, has denied involvement in illegal killings. "I am appealing to you, I hope you can help me. Do not allow another Filipino to be brought to The Hague," he said in a video from his Senate office, where he has taken refuge since Monday.

• BRIEFLY

EUROPEAN UNION

European Commission seeks to ban gay 'conversion therapy'



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. FILE

THE EUROPEAN Commission said Wednesday it will ask all European Union nations to outlaw gay "conversion therapy" following a public campaign to ban the practice and just days before the annual Brussels Pride festival celebrating the LGTBQ+ community. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said on Wednesday that the "conversion practices" have "no place in our Union." Increasing protections for LGTBQ+ citizens has been long promised by the EU executive since she had taken office in 2019. REUTERS

TURKEY

324 detained over suspected links to IS groups

TURKISH AUTHORITIES have detained 324 people suspected of links to the Islamic State group in a nationwide sweep, the Interior Ministry said Wednesday. A statement said the suspects were detained across 47 provinces and included people suspected of financing IS and people previously known to be active in the group. It did not provide details or say if any of the suspects detained were foreign nationals. AP

FRANCE

PM Takaichi to visit UK and Italy in June

JAPANESE PRIME Minister Sanae Takaichi plans to visit Britain and Italy before attending a Group of Seven leaders' summit in France in mid-June, broadcaster NTV reported on Wednesday, citing multiple unnamed government officials. Takaichi is arranging trips to London and Rome for summit meetings, but one of the officials said her visit to the UK remains fluid depending on British PM Keir Starmer's future, NTV said. REUTERS

Tests in Italy & Spain negative; global hunt on for hantavirus

Reuters
Rome, Paris, May 13

SEVENTEEN PEOPLE under observation in Italy and Spain for possible hantavirus infection have tested negative, the countries' health ministries said on Wednesday as governments around the globe track the virus to stop it from spreading.

The MV Hondius cruise ship, which had confirmed hantavirus cases on board, is expected to arrive at the Dutch port of Rotterdam on Monday, shipowner Oceanwide Expeditions said, adding that the remaining 25 crew members, along with two medical staff,

will follow quarantine procedures set by Dutch authorities upon arrival.

The World Health Organization said on Tuesday more cases were expected from the cluster that broke out on the ship during a polar expedition that departed from Argentina, but it stressed this was nothing like COVID and was not a pandemic.

Hantavirus is primarily spread by rodents but can be transmitted between people in rare cases.

Incubation can last about six weeks, and crew, passengers and people in contact with them have been quarantined in several European countries.

Three people, a Dutch couple and a German national, have died since the start of the outbreak. Some European health ministers were to meet on Wednesday afternoon to share information and better coordinate their response to the virus, French Health Minister Stephanie Rist told parliament.

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control has recommended quarantine for all asymptomatic passengers from the original cruise ship for six weeks, until June 21/22 depending on when they left the boat. The WHO has increased its tally of confirmed cases in the outbreak to nine.

UN food agency halves aid to Syria amid fund crunch, no cheap bread

Reuters
May 13

THE WORLD Food Programme said on Wednesday it had halved emergency food assistance in Syria due to funding shortages, warning that millions remained vulnerable despite signs of stabilisation in parts of the country.

The UN agency's biggest donor, the US, has slashed its foreign aid under President Donald Trump, and other countries have also made or announced cuts in development and humanitarian assistance. The WFP said in a statement

the number of people receiving emergency food aid in Syria fell to 650,000 in May from 1.3 million, while scaling back operations in all 14 Syrian governorates to just seven.

Meanwhile, 7.2 million people in Syria remain acutely food insecure, including 1.6 million facing severe hunger, the WFP said. Many households were already reducing meal portions, eating less nutritious food or skipping meals, it added.

"The reduction in assistance is driven solely by funding constraints..." Marianne Ward, WFP's director in Syria said.

INDIA WAS REPRESENTED BY ALIA BHATT, RESPLENDENT IN BLUSH-TONED PINK, AND THE NEWLY-APPOINTED IFFI DIRECTOR ASHUTOSH GOWARIKER

It's 'Cannes time': Red carpet rolls out for jamboree where cinema meets glamour



SHUBHRA GUPTA

TURNING THE familiar corner from the old church to the main avenue across the Palais, you see the iconic duo of Geena Davis and Susan Sarandon splashed across the poster telling us it is 'Cannes time' again — that annual jamboree where cinema meets glamour, and the world's biggest and brightest stars walk the red carpet to be welcomed inside the Grand Theatre Lumi-

naire, for the opening ceremony.

Just so we don't use up all our superlatives in the first paragraph, let us remind you that behind the scenes of the glitz and glamour, the gowns and jewels and champagne cocktails, and the legendary after-parties on the lit-up yachts lined up in the harbour, the serious grind of movie-making and deal-striking goes on till dawn and beyond, and that's the reason why the bustling Marche du Cinema, or the Market section, is a beacon that invites all those involved in the business of cinema to be there, or perish.

Watching movies. Buying and selling movies. Talking movies. This is what draws the

world's press, including your correspondent, to the Croisette every year, where all eyes are on the Competition section, which has films from celebrated auteurs, several of them Cannes darlings, as well as a bunch of others, including Pedro Almodovar's *Amarga Navidad*, Asghar Farhadi's *Parallels Tales*, Pawel Pawlowski's *Fatherland*, Cristian Mingui's *Fjord*, Hamaguchi Rysuke's *All Of A Sudden*, Ira Sachs's *The Man I Love*.

The jury of the competition section of the 79th edition of the festival, which has been making a concerted effort to go international, is headed by South Korea's Park Chan-wook, several of whose films have bowed in



Director Peter Jackson during the opening ceremony of the 79th International Film Festival in Cannes on Tuesday; India was represented at the Cannes by actor Alia Bhatt. AP, INSTAGRAM/ALIABHATT

Cannes. Wook, along with American actor Demi Moore, Irish-Ethiopian actor Ruth Negga, Chinese director and writer Chloe Zhao, Swedish actor

Stellan Skarsgard, Scottish screenwriter Paul Laverty, Belgian director Laura Wandel, Chilean director Diego Cespedes, Ivorian American actor Isaach



de Bancole.

Watching the amazing Jane Fonda stride on to the stage, belying every one of her 88 years, along with Gong Li, was a mo-

ment: a striking combination of East and West, accompanying an announcement of declaring the festival open.

Sir Peter Jackson, whose down-to-earth airs wowed the crowd, was given the Honorary Palme, which he brandished, saying, "I'm not a Palme sort of guy". Sure, coming from the guy who gave us *The Lord Of The Rings* trilogy, that sounds like something that the unassuming director would say — up until Jackson got his hands on that JRR Tolkien's door-stopping three-part novel, the Middle Earth saga was considered un-film-able — and look what we got.

India was represented at the Cannes by opening with Alia

Bhatt, resplendent in blush-toned pink, and the newly-appointed IFFI director Ashutosh Gowariker. Aishwarya Rai, a Cannes regular, will join later in the festival.

In the last couple of years, Indian filmmakers have done the country proud, with Payal Kapadia's *All We Imagine As Light* (2023) winning a major award, as well as Neeraj Ghaywan's *Homebound* (2024) getting a standing ovation.

This year, the Cannes classic section will screen a restored version of John Abraham's *Amma Ariyan*, and in the La Cinef (students' films) category is Mehar Malhotra's short film *Shadows Of The Moonless Night*.

Gold duty hike to push export cost, block working capital: Exporters

Ravi Dutta Mishra
New Delhi, May 13

A DAY after the government doubled the duty on gold imports to 15%, Indian gems and jewellery traders have said the move will stifle export shipments amid trade disruption in the West Asia region.

Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEP) said that hiking the import duty on gold could be ineffective in reducing imports and would escalate export cost and fuel smuggling. "Hiking import duties rarely curbs gold imports — it merely inflates prices. Despite gold prices doubling recently, imports have not declined proportionally. Such measures often fuel smuggling and escalate export costs," it said.

Exporters now face bank guarantees of Rs 28-30 lakhs per kg of duty-free gold from nominated agencies, severely blocking working capital and stifling exports, the export promotion council said. "The most severe impact of this policy will be felt by MSME manufacturers, who are the 'backbone' of our industry, accounting for 80% of GJEP's membership, who are currently facing a critical liquidity crunch. This retrograde step risks undermining our industry's competitiveness at a critical time," exporters said.

This comes as the gems and jewellery sector is currently navigating a phase of heightened uncertainty.

West Asia accounts for 18% of the country's total diamond exports during the first nine months of the current fiscal year and nearly 68% of India's rough diamond imports originate from the UAE and Israel, according to the NITI Aayog.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Petition seeking stay on Tata Trusts' meeting withdrawn

George Mathew
Mumbai, May 13

A PETITION seeking stay on the board meeting of the Sir Ratan Tata Trust (SRTT) was withdrawn from the Bombay High Court on Wednesday, with the bench expressing displeasure over the petitioner's conduct.

The petition was filed on May 8 — the day the board meeting was to take place. But the meeting was postponed to May 16.

The plea, filed by Suresh Patilkhede, had claimed that the composition of the SRTT board contravenes the Maharashtra Public Trusts Act, particularly the second amendment that came into force on September 1, 2025. The amendment limits the number of lifetime or perpetual trustees to 25% of the total board strength, unless the original trust deed specifically provides otherwise.

The SRTT board currently has 50% perpetual trustees.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

WAR FALLOUT: ABOUT 250 WEEKLY GLOBAL FLIGHTS CUT

Air India curtails overseas ops amid jet fuel price surge

Sukalp Sharma
New Delhi, May 13

AIR INDIA has made substantial cuts to its international flight schedule for the June-August period as the surging international jet fuel prices have put the Tata group airline's global operations under severe stress.

Flight frequencies on numerous routes have been scaled back, while a few routes have been suspended altogether.

According to information provided by the airline and flight schedules filed by it, about 250 weekly international flights, outbound and inbound, have been cut. This reduction is on top of flights that have been cut in recent weeks amid the West Asia war. The routes that have been temporarily suspended include Delhi-Chicago, Delhi-Newark, Mumbai-New York, Delhi-Shanghai, Chennai-Singapore, Delhi-Male, and Mumbai-Dhaka. Frequencies on most other international routes have been reduced to varying degrees.

"The adjustments have been made in response to a combination of factors, including continued airspace restrictions over certain regions and record high jet fuel prices for international operations, which significantly impact the commercial viability of certain planned services," Air India

GLOBAL NETWORK

Area/Country	Flights per week
North America	33
Europe	47
UK	57
Australia	8
Far East, Southeast Asia and SAARC	158
Mauritius (Africa)	7

SOURCE: AIR INDIA OFFICIAL STATEMENT



said, adding that despite the schedule curtailment, it will still be operating over 1,200 international flights a month.

"Despite the challenges and beyond these adjustments, Air India will continue to operate more than 1,200 international flights every month, retaining a robust international network that spans five continents, including 33 flights per week to North America, 47 flights per week to Europe, 57 flights per week to the UK, 8 flights per week to Australia, 158 flights per week to the Far East, Southeast Asia and SAARC regions, and 7 flights per week to Mauritius (Africa)," it said.

While the carrier said that it continues to work closely with the regulators, airport authorities, and industry partners to restore full capacity as soon as

conditions permit, further adjustments to its network may be required, "should the extraordinary operating environment prevail". Even before the war, jet fuel accounted for about 40% of Indian airlines' operating costs. The conflict and its impact on fuel prices has led to a jump in the fuel's share in the carriers' cost structure.

Notably, while only a fraction of the international jet fuel price hike has been passed on for domestic flights, Indian carriers have to cough up the full international prices — which have more than doubled since late February — for their international operations.

That is a key reason why Air India has significantly curtailed its international operations.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

'OMAN, NIGERIA, U.S. EMERGE AS KEY SUPPLIERS'

Behind India's LNG import basket recast amid Qatar, UAE supply loss

Sukalp Sharma
New Delhi, May 13

THE WEST Asia war has upended the regular flow of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to India from its major suppliers like Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), leading to a scramble for LNG cargoes from alternate geographies and a recasting of New Delhi's natural gas import basket.

Supplies from Qatar and UAE pass through the Strait of Hormuz, which has been blocked since the start of the US-Iran war.

After faltering in March, the country's LNG imports rebounded a bit, as importers turned to suppliers that don't depend on the strait to secure emergency spot cargoes.

As a result, while not one LNG cargo reached Indian shores in March from the country's largest supplier Qatar and another major supplier, the UAE, the likes of Oman, Nigeria, Angola, and the United States stepped in to partially bridge the gap.

India depends on LNG imports to meet about half of its natural gas requirement. And about 60% of those imports came through the Strait of Hormuz, primarily from Qatar, and also the UAE.

The two Gulf countries are major LNG exporters at the global level as well.

Recovery in LNG imports in April

LNG imports in April recovered to 1.95 million tonnes



LNG imports in April recovered to 1.95 million tonnes, after falling to 1.67 million tonnes in March.

REUTERS

(mt), after falling to 1.67 mt in March, according to data from commodity market analytics firm Kpler.

The country's 2025 average monthly LNG imports stood at 2.08 mt, not significantly higher than the volumes imported in April.

On a year-on-year basis, April LNG imports were down 9.3% from 2.15 mt in the year-ago period, which reflects that the supply shock was not fully offset and market conditions remained tight, according to Sonal Ranjan, LNG and natural gas analyst at Kpler. The month-over-month growth in imports over March was likely due to higher gas use in a few sectors, particularly fertilisers.

Following the disruption in LNG supplies, the government had initially reduced gas allocation to the fertiliser sector to 70% of average consumption

over the previous six months. It was part of a larger effort to manage natural gas supplies in order to prioritise the most critical sectors.

But by early April, the allocation to the fertilisers sector was hiked to about 95%, and earlier in May, it was hiked further to about 98%. This has been done to ensure uninterrupted urea production ahead of the crucial Kharif season.

Reshuffle in LNG import basket

"After the Hormuz disruption, Oman, Nigeria and the US have emerged as the key LNG suppliers in both March and April. They accounted for almost 69% of the total LNG imports in India. Oman of course remained the largest supplier out of the three, contributing to 30-31% of the total imports, supported by its ad-

vantage of shorter-delivery route to India's west coast terminals," Ranjan told *The Indian Express*.

In 2025, the average monthly LNG import volumes from Qatar stood at 0.95 mt, followed by imports from the UAE at 0.27 mt.

In March-April, the Strait of Hormuz closure meant that just 0.06 mt came from Qatar and 0.13 from the UAE during the two months. These would have been cargoes that had transited the strait before the West Asia war started with the US and Israel attacking Iran on February 28.

Supplies from Oman, which was the fourth largest supplier of LNG to India in 2025 with an average monthly flow of 0.18 mt, jumped to 1.2 mt in March-April, or 0.6 mt a month on average.

While Oman is located in West Asia, it has a sizable coastline facing the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman, and doesn't depend on the strait for the transit of its cargoes.

Imports from the US, India's third-largest LNG supplier in 2025, rose to 0.31 mt a month on average in March-April.

The average monthly LNG imports from the US in 2025 were at 0.24 mt.

Average monthly imports from Nigeria and Angola jumped to 0.41 mt and 0.24 mt in March-April, respectively; the monthly average of imports from the two suppliers in 2025 was 0.14 mt apiece.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Cabinet gives nod to Rs 37,500-cr scheme for coal gasification

Pratyush Deep
New Delhi, May 13

THE UNION Cabinet Wednesday approved a new Rs 37,500 crore scheme to promote conversion of coal and lignite into synthesis gas (syngas) through the gasification process, a move through which the Centre intends to reduce dependence on imports of LNG, urea, ammonia, and methanol.

The Scheme for Promotion of New Surface Coal/Lignite Gasification Projects seeks to incentivise 25 projects for production of syngas and downstream products, targeting gasification of approximately 75 Million Tonne of coal/lignite.

The new scheme is an addition to the existing viability gap funding scheme worth Rs 8,500 crore approved in 2024 for incentivising coal and lignite gasification projects.

According to the Centre, the new scheme aims at enhancing energy security and reducing dependence on imports of key products such as LNG, urea, ammonia, and methanol.

This comes in the backdrop of growing concerns over disruptions in global energy supplies due to the ongoing crisis in West Asia.

What is coal gasification?

India has limited reserves of crude oil and natural gas and is dependent on imports, making it vulnerable to global price volatility and supply disruptions. At the same time, it has the fourth-largest coal reserves globally, with an estimated 389 billion tonnes (bt). Of this, 212 bt are classified as proven reserves, which means they are economically extractable with reasonable certainty based on a detailed Preliminary Feasibility Study.

The Centre believes coal gasification offers a cleaner and more efficient way to utilise domestic coal resources while improving energy security.

Coal gasification is a thermochemical process of converting coal into synthesis gas (syngas), which is a mixture of fuel-rich gases like carbon monoxide (CO), carbon dioxide (CO₂), hydrogen (H₂), and methane (CH₄).

The syngas can be used for producing Synthetic Natural Gas (SNG), electricity generation, energy fuel (methanol and ethanol), ammonia for fertilisers, and chemicals.

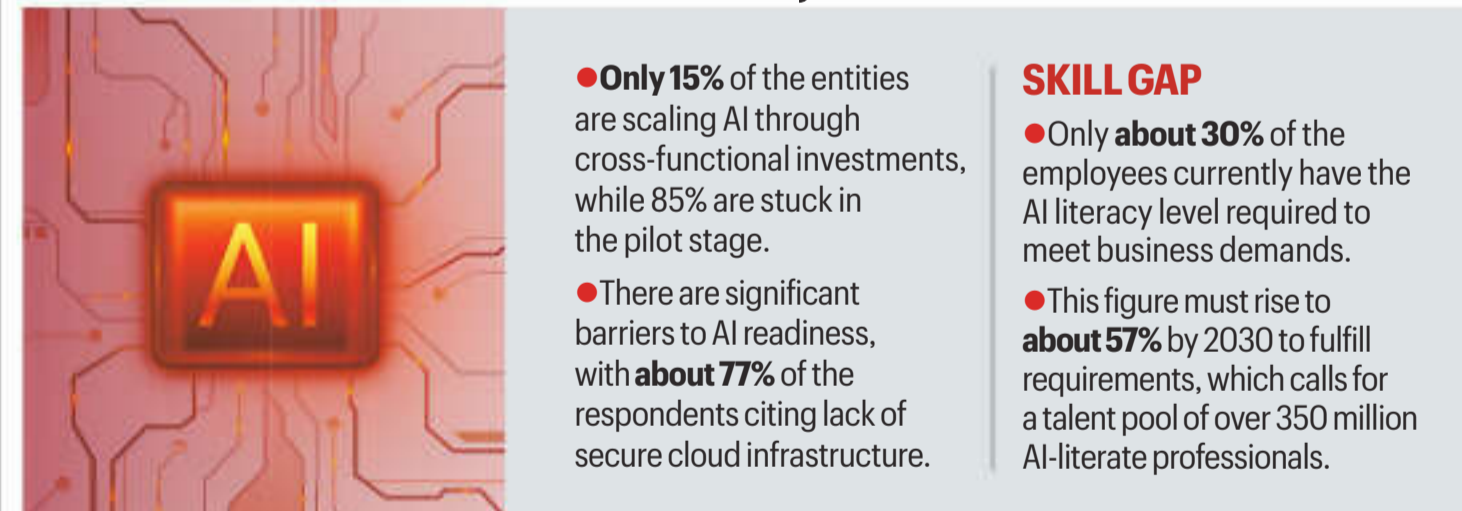
FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

AI COULD ADD OVER \$500 BILLION TO INDIA'S ECONOMY BY 2030

With the potential to contribute over \$500 billion to the economy, artificial intelligence (AI) can fuel the pace of growth in the country, according to a report titled 'From Promise to Power: How AI Is Redefining India's Economic Future' by IBM and IndiaAI, a MeITy initiative. Few countries are entering the AI era with India's mix of scale, digital muscle, and ambition.



AI: USAGE, BARRIERS



“What will set India apart is not just the scale of adoption, but how organisations build trusted AI agents and systems on strong data foundations, hybrid architectures, and a workforce empowered to work alongside AI. With the right investments in skills, governance, and infrastructure, India can translate AI ambition into sustained economic impact.”

SANDIP PATEL, MANAGING DIRECTOR, IBM INDIA & SOUTH ASIA

SOURCE: IBM AND INDIAAI REPORT/PTI

BRIEFLY

GIC Re to manage Maritime Insurance Pool

Mumbai: General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re) has been appointed by the government as the manager of the Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMIP), a sovereign-backed maritime insurance mechanism aimed at ensuring uninterrupted domestic coverage for maritime trade. The BMIP, approved by the Union Cabinet last month, carries a sovereign guarantee of \$1.4 billion. It is designed to protect Indian-flagged vessels, India-controlled ships, and India-bound cargo operating through volatile global maritime routes. The pool will begin

operations with an initial underwriting capacity of Rs 927.10 crore, of which GIC Re will contribute Rs 400 crore. The remaining amount will be subscribed by public and private sector insurers, it said. ENS

'Govt may hike fuel prices if crisis prolongs'

New Delhi: The Centre might have to hike petrol and diesel prices if the West Asia crisis continues for a longer period, according to Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Sanjay Malhotra. Speaking at a conference in Switzerland on Tuesday, Malhotra highlighted that the government has been rather fiscally prudent and on the path of fiscal consolidation. PTI

MARKETS

Sensex 74,608.98 49.74 0.07%	NIFTY 23,412.60 33.05 0.14%	Gold ▲ ₹1,65,350	US Dollar ▲ ₹95.70
		Silver ▲ ₹2,97,500	Oil ▲ \$109.05

NOTE: GOLD, SILVER RATES AS PER ALL INDIA SARAFI ASSOCIATION DATA GOLD PER 10G, SILVER PER 1KG; CRUDE OIL (INDIAN BASKET) AS OF MAY 12, 2026

TRUMP-XI SUMMIT KICKS OFF

Iran war, trade & AI could top agenda, and why China has the upper hand

Anil Sasi
New Delhi, May 13

IN NOVEMBER last year, when President Donald Trump announced that he had accepted an invitation to visit China in April, the meeting's agenda appeared straightforward enough.

Trade tensions between the world's two biggest economies were spiralling into a full-blown tariff war, while Taiwan was the lingering flashpoint.

Delayed by a month from its original schedule, the summit that started on Wednesday now risks being consumed by a more compelling crisis: the war in Iran.

While it is unclear where the West Asia conflict will go from here, even as an uneasy ceasefire continues to hold, two things are now evident: a resolu-

tion to the Iran war is ostensibly not that easy and China's role will be crucial in whichever direction this conflict is headed. If Iran has to be brought back to the negotiating table in any constructive form, there seems to be a growing realisation in Washington DC that China is likely to play some kind of a role.

Significance

When Beijing officially confirmed the date of the state visit earlier this week, it marked the first visit to China from a sitting US president since Trump's 2017 visit during his last term. This summit would be Trump's seventh in-person meeting with President Xi Jinping.

Trump is taking a big business delegation of over a dozen American CEOs with him, with Apple's Tim Cook, Boeing chief



This summit would be Trump's seventh in-person meeting with President Xi Jinping.

REUTERS

Kelly Ortberg and Tesla's Elon Musk part of his business entourage. The one conspicuous absence was Nvidia's Jensen Huang, who did not figure on an initial list of executives provided by the White House earlier this week. *Reuters*, however, reported Wednesday

quoting two sources familiar with the matter that Huang will join Trump's delegation to China. Nvidia's new H200 chips that have not yet been sold to China, and remain a point of contention between the two sides.

The choice of the people on

the delegation are being read as harbingers of what the administration in Washington DC is pivoting towards in terms of its business priorities with China. "Trump visiting China and meeting with Xi Jinping this week surrounded by businessmen instead of China hawks is incredibly helpful in yielding positive outcomes from discussions," according to Brian Tycangco, analyst at Baltimore-based Stansberry Research.

Trump's visit will include bilateral talks, a state banquet, and a visit to the Temple of Heaven during the course of the visit spanning May 13-15. Later this year, a reciprocal visit to Washington could be on the cards for President Xi, and signal if the relationship is likely to endure.

Apart from Iran and the agenda for the business delega-

tion, there are other key issues that could be on the table: the likely direction of global trade and competition in advanced technologies such as AI. An investment deal is being seen as a possible wild card entry to the list. According to experts, Beijing could possibly indicate its willingness to buy Boeing aircraft and American soybeans, alongside announcing a 'Board of Trade' and parallel 'Board of Investment' that seem to have been discussed in previous official-level talks.

The two sides are also reportedly thinking of establishing an AI safety dialogue.

Rising tensions across the Taiwan Strait does seem partly fuelled by the Trump administration's mixed signals when it comes to its Taipei policy. Last December, the US had an-

nounced an \$11 billion arms deal with Taiwan, triggering protest from the Chinese government. Trump, however, has since downplayed the US willingness to defend Taiwan. "He considers it to be a part of China," Trump said of Xi, adding that "(it's) up to him, what he's going to be doing (on Taiwan)."

China, which has been keen to position itself as a stabilising power, was conciliatory ahead of the meeting. "President Xi and President Trump — looking back at their past meetings, one message stands out: the steady development of China-US relations brings certainty and stability to the world," Mao Ning, spokesperson of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China said in a post on X ahead of the meeting.

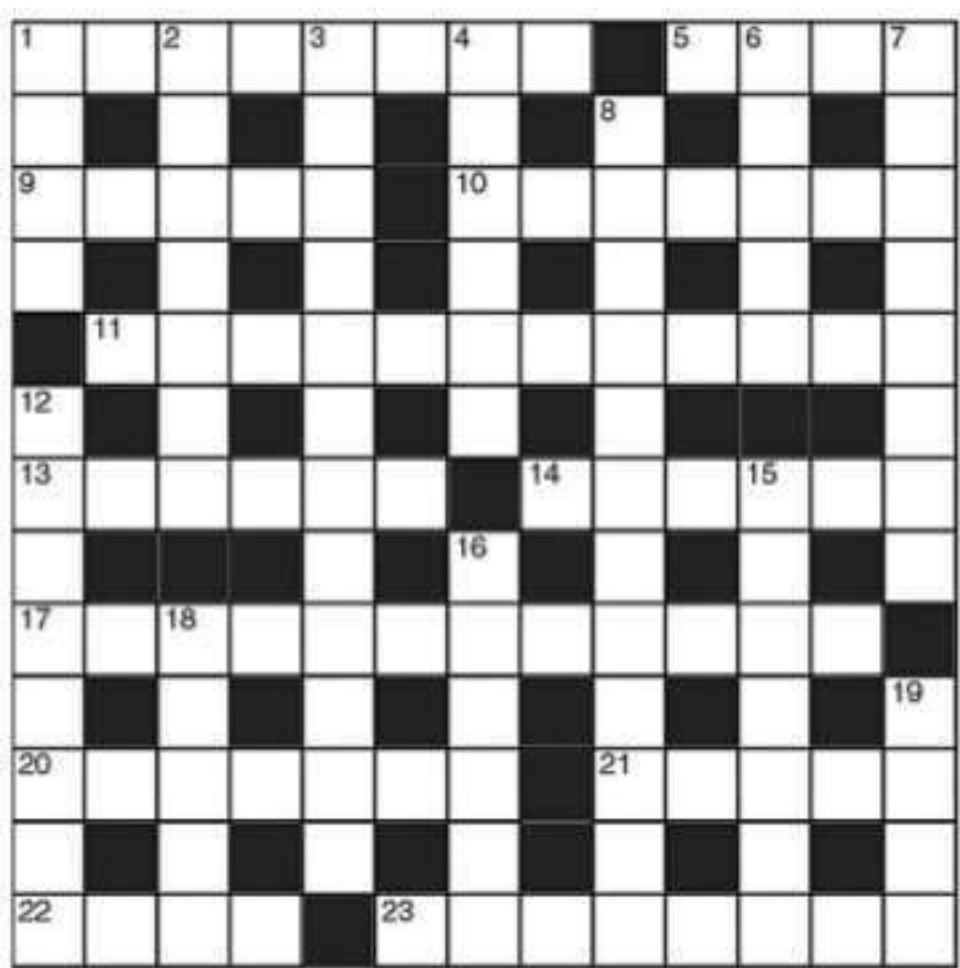
In the Iran conflict, China is

now wading in as a mediator, alongside Pakistan. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi's visit to Beijing last week seemed to signal the clout China wields in West Asia. "Hope the Chinese tell him what he needs to be told," US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said when questioned on Beijing's role. "And that is that what you are doing in the Strait is causing you to be globally isolated. You're the bad guy in this." Beijing does seem to have an upper hand going into this summit than when it was originally announced, as per experts. India's policymakers believe any bilateral deal that is cut, especially involving concessional tariffs, could be read as the baseline scenario for the revised trade deal that is under negotiation between US and India.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

CROSSWORD

5988



ACROSS
 1 Union gets a nice settlement after all (8)
 5 It may be played on the lawn in summer (4)
 9 Scene of a towering row (5)
 10 Novel articles put in case (7)
 11 Where one finds prices rising constantly (7,5)
 13 Ruler seen as part of America's troubles (6)
 14 Usual place for a wake (6)
 17 Stranded travellers' friend may be barred at inns (5,7)
 20 Such games won't be covered (7)
 21 Fall into part of the main current (5)
 22 Doubtless it follows a plea for enjoyment (4)
 23 Agree on two points then another colour (3,5)

DOWN
 1 Religious house is too much for this priest (4)
 2 A sailor scowls about Herculean tasks (7)
 3 Initial repetition is only repetition after all (12)
 4 The fashion trade (6)
 6 Go beyond an open-air party (5)
 7 Nevertheless netting first and last service (8)
 8 Typical of sales agent in a bad mood (12)
 12 On the one hand they're instrumental in cutting (8)
 15 Some wear a cheerful smile in affliction (7)
 16 Transport provided for those who are late (6)
 18 Finally dig in (5)
 19 Club for evening out (4)

SOLUTIONS CROSSWORD 5987 ACROSS: 1 Scratched, 8 Erica, 9 Tail off, 10 Ganges, 11 Delete, 12 Insecure, 15 Adherent, 18 Agenda, 20 Lining, 21 Topical, 22 Easel, 23 Emotional **DOWN:** 2 Crane, 3 Allies, 4 Caffeine, 5 Debate, 6 Ring out, 7 Mass media, 11 Defaulter, 13 Set about, 14 Chinese, 16 Rankle, 17 Mexico, 19 Drama

JUMBLED WORDS

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

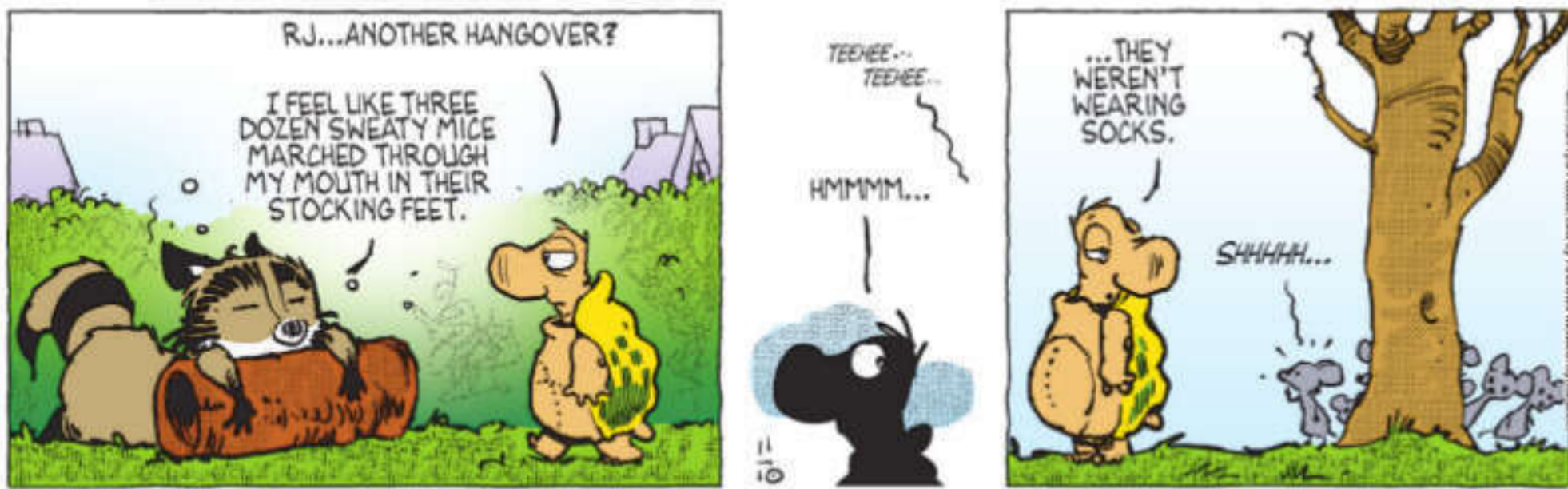
The greatest good you can do for another is not just but to reveal to him his own. - Benjamin Disraeli (5,4,6)

IAEER **CUPIDS**

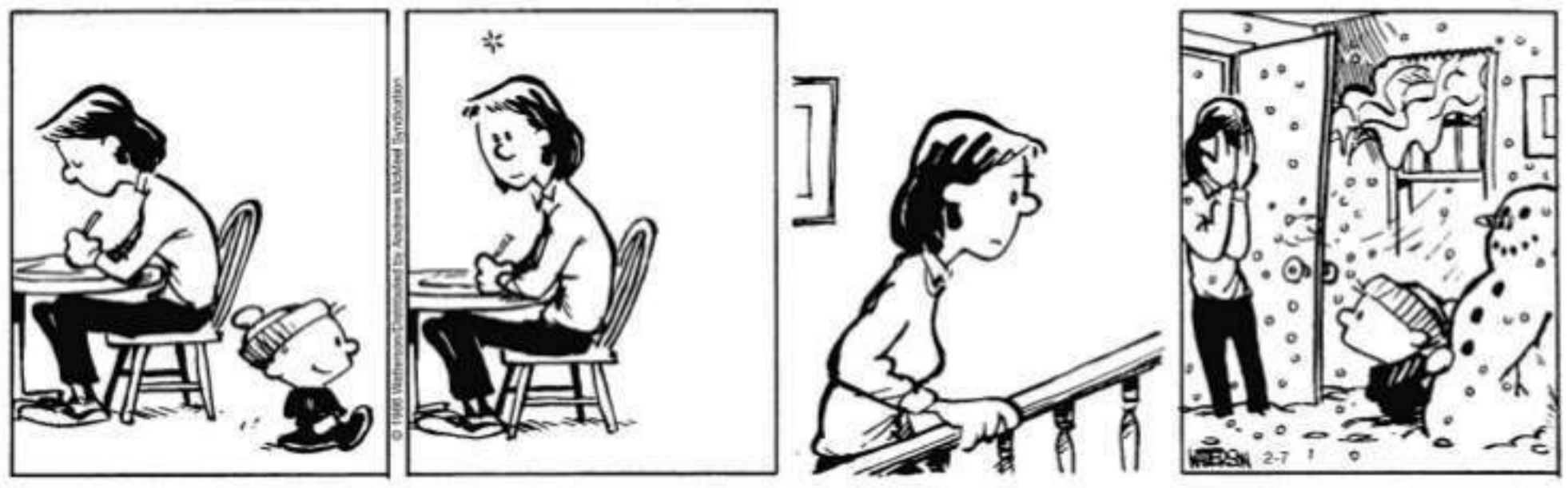
IORRS **ENPHHY**

ANSWER: The greatest good you can do for another is not just share your riches, but to reveal to him his own. - Benjamin Disraeli

OVER THE HEDGE



CALVIN & HOBBS



MARVIN



DIFFICULTY LEVEL 2s INSTRUCTIONS

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

DIFFICULTY LEVEL

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

SUDOKU 6317

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 6317

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

JODHPUR VIDYUT VITARAN NIGAM LIMITED
 Corporate Identity Number (CIN) - U40109RJ2005GC016483
 Regd. Office: New Power House, Jodhpur- 342003, Phone No: 0291-274264
 E-mail: secivijdvnl@gmail.com, Website: http://energyrajasthan.gov.in/jdvnl

NIT No. 02/2026-27

"A" and "AA" category in Central/State Government departments and JVVNL Online tenders are invited through e-procurement process for various civil construction works under Jodhpur (9413359193)/ Barmer (9413359455) from registered tenderers. Details of work, estimated cost, tender fee, process fee, security deposit, date of tender opening and general contract conditions etc. are available on websites <http://energy.rajasthan.gov.in/jdvnl> and <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in> Available on raj.gov.in and <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>. Intimation of future amendments/period extension, if any <http://energy.rajasthan.gov.in/jdvnl> And <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in> Will be published on <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>.

UBN : JVV2627WSOB00101, JVV2627WSOB00102, JVV2627WSOB00103, JVV2627WSOB00104, JVV2627WSOB00114, JVV2627WSOB00115, JVV2627WSOB00117, JVV2627WSOB00118
 Raj.Samwad/C/26/2681 SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (CIVIL)
 0194-3516481

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
Office of the Executive Engineer, Trans. Line Maintt. Division-VII, JKPTCL Bemina, Srinagar-190010
 Ph. No. 0194-3516481, e-mail: tmd-viisgr@jk.gov.in

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e-NIT No: TLMD-7/05 of 2026-27 Dated: 12.05.2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, the Chief Engineer JKPTCL Kashmir, hereby invites e-Tenders valid for 180 days, from eligible and financially sound registered reputed, experienced original manufacturers/ Firms/ Suppliers/ Contractors/firms joint ventures, having sufficient experience of the relevant work as per Terms, Conditions, Technical Specifications and Schedules thereto mentioned in Standard Bidding Document, for the works detailed below.

S.#	Scope of Work	Qty	Estimated Cost (Rs in lacs)	EMD	Tender Fee	Time of Completion
1	Augmentation of Grid Station Alusteng from 320MVA to 475 MVA at 220/132kV level alongwith allied works	As per BOQ	Rs. 3918.00	2% of the advertised cost in the form of BG/CDR/FDR	Rs. 10000/-	15 Months

The date & time of opening of Price Bids shall be notified on J&K Government's website <http://www.jktenders.gov.in> and conveyed to the Bidders automatically through e-mail message on their e-mail address.

Before participating in the online Bids, the intending bidders shall get acquainted with the site of work and local conditions thereof.

1. Clarifications, if any, can also be sought from the office of the undersigned on e-mail: tmd7.jkptcl@gmail.com or during office working hours.

2. The Department reserves the right to reject any or all the Bids at any stage without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/-
 Executive Engineer
 TLMD-VII Srinagar

No: TLMD-7/TS/468-73
 Dated: 12.05.2026
 DIPK-NB-474/26 - DATE 13 MAY 2026

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

(See Section 82 Cr. P.C. /84 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Nwajiaku Echezona Obinna @ Big Salim, S/o Nwajiaku R/o RZ-C-82, Mandir Wali Gali, Mahaveer Enclave, Palam, New Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No.510/2025, Dated 02.11.2025 u/s 21/29/27A NDPS Act, P.S. Sagarpur, New Delhi (Anti-Narcotics Cell/SWD) and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Nwajiaku Echezona Obinna @ Big Salim cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Nwajiaku Echezona Obinna @ Big Salim has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Nwajiaku Echezona Obinna @ Big Salim of FIR No.510/2025, Dated 02.11.2025 u/s 21/29/27A NDPS Act, P.S. Sagarpur, New Delhi (Anti-Narcotics Cell/SWD) is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 14.07.2026. By Order

Sh. Jitendra Pratap Singh
 Ld. Additional Special Judge, NDPS Act
 Room No. 35, P. Building
 Patiala House Courts, New Delhi
 DP/6250/SW/2026

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, CONSTRUCTION CIRCLE U.P. JAL NIGAM (URBAN)
 NEAR MANOHAR BHUSHAN INTER COLLEGE JAL NIGAM COLONY, GANDHI NAGAR BAREILLY (U.P.). Mob: 9473942568
 E-mail: se4_upjnibly@yahoo.co.in

Letter No.: 209/M-16/31
 Dated: 11.05.2026

E-TENDER NOTICE
 On behalf of U.P. Jal Nigam (Urban) online E-tenders for execution of Investigation and survey (on GIS basis) of the project area including soil investigation if required, Engineering Design (hydraulic and structural) as required, Procurement of all labour & material, T&P etc. and construction of various components complete for Interception and Diversion Works of tapping drain "USED WATER MANAGEMENT AT KACHHLA, DISTRICT-BUDAUN" including successful testing and commissioning of said work on percentage rate "Turn-key basis" under SBM (U)-2.0 Programme. Bids are invited in two bid system on percentage rate basis from eligible, reputed and experienced bidder. E-tender documents will be available for download from Date 20.05.2026 at 17:00 Hrs., Pre-Bid meeting will be held on Date 28.05.2026 at 12:30 Hrs. in the office of under signed. E-bid can be submitted till Date 15.06.2026 up to 15:00 Hrs. and technical bid shall be opened on 15.06.2026 at 16:00 Hrs. in the office of the Superintending Engineer, Construction Circle, U.P. Jal Nigam (Urban), Bareilly in presence of contractor or their authorized representative. E-tender Cost is Rs. 10000.00+GST @18%. Details are available On U.P. Govt. <http://etender.up.nic.in> & U.P. Jal Nigam (Urban) website <http://www.jn.upscd.gov.in>.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, CONSTRUCTION CIRCLE U.P. JAL NIGAM (URBAN)
 NEAR MANOHAR BHUSHAN INTER COLLEGE JAL NIGAM COLONY, GANDHI NAGAR BAREILLY (U.P.). Mob: 9473942568
 E-mail: se4_upjnibly@yahoo.co.in

Letter No.: 205/M-16/27
 Dated: 11.05.2026

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NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY

Open Tender Notice No.: SRDEE-TRD-IZN-2026-27-T06
 Date: 13.05.2026

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/ TRD, North Eastern Railway, Izzatnagar for and on behalf of President of India, invites sealed "OPEN" E-Tender for the following work: S.No. 1; Name of work: OHE related works during Interlocking of 19 nos. LC Gates in various section of IZN Division. Tender reference no.: SRDEE-TRD-IZN-2026-27-T06; Approx. Cost (in ₹): ₹42,56,412.88; Earnest money/ Bid Security (in ₹): ₹85,100/-; Cost of tender documents (in ₹): 00; E-Tender closing date and Time: 05.06.2026 at 15:00 hrs.; Completion period: 12 Months. E-Tender Online will be submitted upto 15:00 hrs. on date: 05.06.2026. For full details and submission of bid kindly visit the Official website of Indian Railways i.e. www.irops.gov.in.

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/ CPRO/EL-4 TRD, Izzatnagar
DO NOT SMOKE BIDI/CIGARETTE IN TRAINS

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE

SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE (APPROX.) CLOSING DATE	AMOUNT / END (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, NARNAUL	REPAIR OF MANHOLES, ROAD GULLIES AND SLABS AT VARIOUS LOCATION IN HUDA SECTOR, MC NARNAUL - 2 WORKS	11.05.2026 26.05.2026	Rs. 10,56,571/-	https://tenders.hry.nic.in	701548995 eo-narnaul@ubharyana.gov.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in No. 45120/HRY

Chola CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED

Registered Office at: "CHOLA CREST", 3rd floor, C54 & C55, Super B - 4, Thiru Vi Ka Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032

DEMAND NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT 2002

You, the under mentioned Borrower / Co-Borrowers is hereby informed that the company has initiated proceedings against you under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and that the Notice under 13 (2) of the Act sent to you by Registered Post Ack. Due for Borrower/s has been returned undelivered. Hence, you are hereby called upon to take notice and pay the outstanding loan amount mentioned against the said account with interest accruing there from within 60 days from the date of this publication, failing which the company will proceed against you by exercising its right under Sub-Sec (4) of Section 13 of the Act by enforcing the below mentioned security to realize its dues with interests and costs. It is needless to mention that this notice is addressed to you without prejudice to any other remedy available to the company.

Sl. No.	Loan Account No. & Name and Address of the Borrower / Co-Borrowers	Loan Amount	Date of Demand Notice & Amount Outstanding
1.	Loan No. EF01NIO000062977 1. M/s. K.S.Engineering, (Borrower) Plot No -265 Udyog Kendra Extn -1 Ecitech-3 Greater Noida Gautam Buddha Nagar Kendra Extn Gautam Buddha Nagar Uttar Pradesh 201306 2. Mr. Kuldeep, (Co Borrower) D 548 G/F Janta Flat Sec-3 Greater Noida West Bishrakh Gautam Buddha Nagar,Uttar Pradesh-201306 3. Mrs. Anju, (Co Borrower) D-034 Greater Noida West Sec-3 Bishrakh Jalapur Po Bishrakh Dist Gautam Buddha Nagar,Uttar Pradesh-203207	Rs. 39,21,033/-	20.04.2026 & Rs. 34,21,176/- as on 20.04.2026 with further interest thereon. NPA Date : 06.04.2026

SCHEDULE OF MOVABLE ASSET: Kingsten Brand, CNC Vertical Machining central Model: KVM-1370
 Date : 14.05.2026
 Place : Uttar Pradesh
 Authorized Officer
 For Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited

BANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED

(Wholly owned Government of Karnataka undertaking)
 (CIN-U04010KA2002SGC030438)
 No:BESCOM/CGM(Proj)/DGM-1/AGM1/BC-14/26-27/CYS-50 Date:12.05.2026

NOTIFICATION INVITING TENDER (Through KPP Portal)

BESCOM invites a tender for the following work on Total Turnkey Basis under Percentage Quoting System.

Sl. No.	Tender Enquiry No	Name of the Work
1	BESCOM/2026-27/EL/WORK_IDENT1097	Construction of a New 11 KV feeder from 220/66/11 KV SRS, Davanagere to the proposed EV Charging Station of KSRTC under the PM e-Bus Sewa Scheme at Davanagere for arranging power supply to an extent of 3000 kVA in favour of the Divisional Controller, KSRTC Division, Davanagere, under Deposit Contribution Works.
2	BESCOM/2026-27/EL/WORK_IDENT1098	Construction of a New 11 kv feeder from the 66/11 kv Sub-Station, Tumkur to the proposed EV Charging Station of KSRTC under the PM e-Bus Sewa Scheme at Tumkur for arranging power supply to an extent of 3000 kVA in favour of the Divisional Controller, KSRTC Division, Tumkur, under Deposit Contribution Works.

Calendar of Events: 1) Availability of Bid documents 18.05.2026 onwards. 2) Last date for submission of Bid queries: 29.05.2026 before 17:00 Hrs. 3) Pre-Bid Meeting: 30.05.2026 at 11:00 Hrs. Venue of Pre-Bid Meeting: O/o Chief General Manager (Ele), 4th Floor, Project Section, B Block, Corporate Office, BESCOM, K.R Circle, Bengaluru-560001. (4) Last date & Time for Bid Submission: 18.06.2026 at 15:00 Hrs. (5) Opening of Technical Bids: 19.06.2026 at 15:30 Hrs.

The bid documents can be downloaded and necessary assistance can be obtained through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (KPPP) from the Website <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>
 KPP Portal Help Desk: Phone No: +91-8046010000/ +91-8068948777
 E-mail: support@prochelpdesk.com

Aspiring bidders needs to be registered on Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (KPPP). Bidders can take the assistance from the KPP during office working hours.

For any BESCOM related Complaints Call: 1912
 Please Download BESCOM Mitra Mobile App
 Sd/-
 Chief General Manager (Ele),
 Projects, BESCOM

EXPRESS investigation [FROM PAGE 1 | FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM]

How funds meant for elite athletes, infra also went to cricket boards in Maldives, Caribbean

AMONG THE well-known sports missions funded by NSDF: the flagship Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) for elite athletes. Among the not-so-well-known beneficiaries: facilities for senior bureaucrats, two RSS-linked institutions in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, and even some lesser-known cricket boards in Asia and the Caribbean.

The NSDF fund is governed by a 12-member Council under the Union Sports Minister (see adjacent story). But the body that clears grant proposals is a six-member committee of officials under the Sports Ministry — from the same system that benefits from the grants.

Consider this:
● Between 2021 and 2025, over Rs 6.2 crore from the NSDF went to the Civil Services Officers' Institute (CSOI), the Central Civil Services Cultural and Sports Board (CCSCSB) and for the New Moti Bagh Residential Complex from a sanctioned total of over Rs 6.7 crore, Sports Ministry records show.

● During the same period, the records show that two RSS-affiliated organisations received approximately Rs 2.66 crore to conduct tournaments and build facilities from a sanctioned amount of Rs 5.07 crore.

● The Sports Authority of India (SAI), through the NSDF, also spent approximately Rs 1.08 crore on "procurement of gifting of cricket items" to cricket boards in the Maldives, Jamaica and St Vincent and the Grenadines.

These expenditures are significant because they coincide with a sharp fall in contributions to the fund — from Rs 85.26 crore in 2023-24 to Rs 37.02 crore in 2025-26 (see adjacent story).

So much so that a Parliamentary Standing Committee raised the red flag. Calling for "greater regulations of the NSDF", its report tabled in the Lok Sabha in August 2025 said: "The Committee has been given to understand that in previous years' grants, these funds have been given to the residential colonies and civil services associations. The Committee recommends that this practice should be avoided."

Sports money for officers' colony

Nothing illustrates the diversion more literally than the swanky facilities in Delhi's New Moti Bagh.

Records show that around mid-2024, the six-member committee that screens NSDF grant applications received a proposal from the residential colony for some of the country's most senior bureaucrats — centrally located, tightly guarded and spread over 100 acres.

The request was not the first of its kind. Records show that on July 31, 2019, SAI had already sanctioned Rs 2.8 crore from the Khelo India scheme for the "creation of sports infrastructure at New Moti Bagh Complex, New Delhi".

On June 7, 2024, another grant of Rs 2.2 crore — this time from NSDF — was approved for "Residents Welfare Association, Moti Bagh". The purpose: "For upgradation/ renovation of sports infrastructure at New Moti Bagh Residential Complex, New Delhi". Of this, Rs 1.1 crore was released in 2024-25 and Rs 88 lakh in 2025-26 — the second instalment arrived when contributions to the NSDF were at their lowest since 2021-22 (see chart).

The sports complex itself can rival any top facility in the country: badminton courts with wooden flooring, a squash cubicle, a temperature-controlled swimming pool with a transparent canopy, a gym, a billiards room and two tennis courts. According to SAI's project status report, the tennis courts had already been part of the 2019 Khelo India project. Five years later, the same hard courts were upgraded again.

Sudhanshu Pandey, president of the New Moti Bagh Residents' Welfare Association (RWA) and election commissioner for Union Territories, said he had not read the Parliamentary committee's report and did not offer any comments on its observations.

He said the RWA appointed NBCC, the agency that developed the colony, to execute the project. "It prepared a DPR (Detailed Pro-



(Clockwise from top) View of the clubhouse at New Moti Bagh; table tennis facility at the Civil Services Officers' Institute (CSOI); tennis court at the New Moti Bagh clubhouse. MIHIR VASAVDA

SPORTS FUND FOR OFFICIALS

YEAR	ORGANISATION	SANCTIONED AMOUNT
2021	Civil Services Officers' Institute	₹3.01 crore
2021	Central Civil Services Cultural and Sports Board	₹1.55 crore
2024	Residents Welfare Association, Moti Bagh	₹2.20 crore

SOURCE: SPORTS MINISTRY RECORDS

ject Report), which got approved by SAI, then the Sports Ministry evaluated it and sanctioned the money. The capital expenditure came from there. Where the money comes from, that is for the Government to decide," Pandey told *The Indian Express*.

On access to the complex's facilities, Pandey said they are available to "residents of the colony, other government officers staying outside and private citizens". "But we do proper screening, so that the right kind of people only join. We organise a lot of activities. Recently, we organised a sports competition. It was almost spread over a month, in all the sports. We also organised a marathon. So, our focus is basically to promote fitness, to promote sports. So, a lot of children of civil servants use the facilities, and naturally, they get attracted, and some of them also excel," he said.

Asked about the propriety of drawing from a fund mainly meant for sports persons, Pandey said, "Residential colonies are also developed by the Government and a part of that overall welfare activity." He said: "Otherwise, such huge Government colonies would not have been developed like Sarojini Nagar, New Moti Bagh, Netaji Nagar, and so many. And the sports facilities are one of the integral facilities that are required. Sports facility and creating that awareness about the emotional health, mental health, physical health, which essentially saves a lot of health expenditure indirectly also."

According to the official website of the Sports Ministry, NSDF aims to mobilise "resources from Government as well as non-government organizations and individuals to provide required support for promotion of specific sports disciplines and improving performance of Indian sports in the major

international events. Institutions, government and non-government organizations exclusively dealing with promotion of sports and individual sports persons of outstanding ability will be eligible for getting financial assistance from NSDF for specific projects".

It states that the fund was established in 1998, under the Charitable Endowments Act 1890. "The NSDF supports sports persons to excel in the field by providing opportunities to train under coaches of international repute with technical, scientific and psychological support and also in getting exposure to international competitions," it states.

"Financial assistance is also provided to specific projects for promotion of sports and games sponsored by reputed Organizations/ Institutes, provided the facilities so created are made available to a sizeable population of the area/region," it states, adding that the NSDF office is located in Shastri Bhavan in the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

The Sports Ministry did not respond to an emailed questionnaire from *The Indian Express*, seeking its response to the key findings of the investigation. CSOI general manager, Col. Vijay Yadav (ret), declined to comment. CCSCSB did not respond to requests for comment.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, a former Sports Ministry official said it was "unethical" to dip into NSDF for projects serving bureaucrats that are not open to the public. On the "gifts" to cricket boards abroad, the official said the purpose was to "promote international cooperation, which is one of the key objectives of the NSDF". But, he said, "The argument would hold water if the NSDF money was used to promote indigenous sport in other countries.

Why the taxpayers' money is used to support cricket in other countries, when the Government doesn't even fund cricket in India, remains a question."

Their clubs and institutes benefitted, too

The diversion was not confined to where bureaucrats live.

Records for the past five years show that for infrastructure, equipment and sports promotion, the NSDF released a total of Rs 34.18 crore (2021-22), Rs 16.97 crore (2022-23), Rs 73.18 crore (2023-24), Rs 22.29 crore (2024-25) and Rs 27.31 crore (2025-26). Consider where some of it went, according to Sports Ministry records:

● On March 10, 2021, the NSDF sanctioned Rs 3.01 crore for "construction/ renovation of the sports facilities at the campus with gym equipment, etc" at CSOI, an exclusive facility for bureaucrats in the heart of the capital. The institute received the first tranche of Rs 1.5 crore in 2021-22 and its second instalment of Rs 1.2 crore in 2024-25.

● On December 20, 2021, Rs 1.55 crore was approved for the "construction/ renovation of sports facilities" at the CCSCSB campus, also in Lutyens' Delhi. The CCSCSB, which functions under the Directorate of Personnel and Training (DoPT), received Rs 77.65 lakh in 2021-22 and a second instalment of the same amount in 2023-24.

Take the case of 2021-22, when total donations to the NSDF stood at Rs 15.13 crore — the lowest in five years. The Government contributed Rs 5 crore, taking the total corpus that year to Rs 20.13 crore. Records show that more than 10 per cent of this amount was used to upgrade facilities for civil servants.

Records show it was not just facilities for bureaucrats:

● In 2024-25, RSS-affiliated Vanvasi Kalyan Parishad at Kotra in Udaipur received Rs 2.41 crore for the construction of a spectator's gallery with a utility building, resurfacing of an athletic track and a practice football ground. The sanctioned amount, in March 2024, was Rs 4.82 crore. The Par-

ishad runs sports centres, hostels, and health care centres, among other things, for scheduled tribes across Rajasthan.

Similarly, Sangh-linked Vanvasi Kalyan Samiti in Chhattisgarh's Jashpur, which 'works towards the upliftment of the tribal communities', according to its website, received Rs 18.75 lakh to conduct national-level competitions in Raipur. In 2025-26, the same organisation received Rs 6.25 lakh to organise a tournament.

Ex-Minister's state got a share

Not all the money went to organisations outside the national sporting ecosystem — even if it covered the then Sports Minister's home state.

● In 2021-22, with Kiren Rijiju as Sports Minister, Rs 5.93 crore was approved on June 4 for "civil work and installation of open-air gym at 26 District HQ" across Arunachal Pradesh — of this, Rs 2.96 crore was released that same year and Rs 2.37 crore in 2023-24. On March 16, 2022, a further Rs 2.25 crore was sanctioned for the "construction of two-court badminton hall at 15 locations" in the state.

● In 2022-23, when contributions to the NSDF peaked at Rs 85.26 crore, the Government spent Rs 73.18 crore on infrastructure, equipment and sports promotion.

Nearly half of this went towards constructing hostels at SAI's Bengaluru centre and Gwalior's Lakshmi Bai National Institute of Physical Education and Sports, and establishing a high-performance centre at SAI, Sonapat. That year, the cricket associations of Jamaica and St Vincent and the Grenadines received "cricket items" worth Rs 46.23 lakh and Rs 8.79 lakh, respectively, as "gifts".

● In 2024-25, the Rohan Bopanna Tennis Development Foundation received Rs 2.7 crore. In 2025-26, the SAI-Gopichand Academy in Hyderabad received Rs 1.38 crore "for training of players and ancillary expenses — recurring cost".

In this context, the Parliamentary committee's recommendations were unambiguous: "...these CSR funds should strictly be utilised in development of sports, infrastructure, coach etc".

NSDF: 12-member Council, 6-member panel of bureaucrats

Who runs the fund?

The fund is governed by a Council headed by the Union Sports Minister — currently Mansukh Mandaviya. The Council also includes top office-bearers from Public Sector Undertakings, which are the biggest donors to the NSDF, industry bodies like FICCI and CII, private-sector representatives and sports ministry officials.

Its current members are: Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya (Chairperson); MoS Sports Raksha Khadse (Vice-Chairperson); Sports Secretary Hari Ranjan Rao, who is also Sports Authority of India (SAI) DG; Additional Secretary and financial advisor to sports ministry; representatives from Railway Sports Promotion Board and All India Police Sports Control Board; CMDs or MDs of The New India Assurance Co Ltd, Indian Oil Corporation Ltd, ONGC Foundation, REC Foundation and NTPC Foundation; and, a Sports Ministry joint secretary.

Who decides where the money goes?

Day-to-day operations and grant approvals are handled by a six-member executive committee chaired by the Sports Secretary. Its other members are SAI Director General, SAI Executive Director (Teams), Financial Advisor to Sports Ministry, a Sports Ministry Joint Secretary and a Sports Ministry Director.

How can you apply for a grant?

Athletes and organisations seeking NSDF funds must submit a prescribed application form along with a detailed project report. The application is submitted to the SAI and the concerned national sports federation, who are required to present their comments within 15 days of receiving the proposal.

Parliament panel's red flag: Fund is shrinking, use it responsibly

What's really worrying, the panel said, was that while the private sector has largely kept its distance from the Government-led initiative, even Public Sector Undertakings are pulling back now.

The numbers spell out the trend (see chart):

● In 2023-24, ten government-backed institutions donated approximately Rs 84.79 crore of the Rs 85.26 crore the NSDF received that year. Coal India alone contributed Rs 47.85 crore.

● By 2024-25, the number of contributing PSUs had dropped to six, accounting for roughly Rs 69.89 crore of a total Rs 70.16 crore.

● In 2025-26, the six PSUs remained but the total contributions fell to Rs 37.02 crore, of which they provided Rs 34.79 crore.

The private sector, in each of these years, was nearly absent. The fund's shrinking base makes the diversions investigated by *The Indian Express* harder to defend. As the money coming in dips, the share being spent on bureaucrats' colonies and civil services clubs, which have nothing to do with competitive sport, grows more difficult to justify.

The Parliamentary standing committee that examined the fund's finances found a telling illustration of the problem.

During depositions, Sports Ministry officials acknowledged that while SAI's centre in Bengaluru received CSR funding of Rs 5 crore, a private badminton academy in the same city received Rs 25 crore. "The Committee is constrained to observe that corporates are showing more faith and inclination towards funding a privately run sports body than SAI," the report, tabled in the Lok Sabha in August 2025, noted.

The 31-member all-party panel, chaired by Congress MP Dignvijaya Singh and including BJP MPs such as Ravi Shankar Prasad and Sambit Patra, recommended that the Government take up the matter with the Ministry of Finance or the Ministry of Corporate Affairs "so that suitable amendments be effected in CSR rules/regulations in such manner that Government Institutions may be equal beneficiary of the CSR funding in the area of sports".

Its conclusion: "...these CSR funds should strictly be utilised in the development of sports infrastructure, coaching, etc."

THAILAND OPEN SUPER 500

Wanton drift caused by an AC blower blows up Anmol's chance against Yufei

Shivani Naik

Mumbai, May 13

IT WASN'T the cliché of a choke, but on the contrary, a gust from an A/C blower that saw Anmol Kharb go from leading 21-19, 13-21, 11-2 to losing that last set 18-21 against former Olympic champion Chen Yufei.

"No excuses, I'm really not happy and very disappointed with how I played after 11-2 up," Anmol would say, after her Round 1 hopes of a Top 5 scalp went up in the air literally at the Super 500 Thailand Open. "I feel like this was my match. But I got to know after the loss that my shuttle control is not good at all. I need power in my smashes, because she was picking up everything and needed speed on the court," said the 18-year-old, who was beating herself up over the lost opportunity.

Yufei is perhaps the toughest opponent

mentally and tactically that Anmol has played up till now, but the Haryanvi was confident of playing a fight going into the match. "I had given her in Singapore and it was a close 23-21 match too. I knew I could give her a tough fight," she said of the Tokyo Olympics champion, who had defeated Tai Tzu Ying in that final.

Anmol, who won the National Badminton title at 16, and then proceeded to help India claim the women's Asian team title, had put the Chinese former World No 1 under the pump with a spirited display to lead 21-19, 13-21, 11-2. But a change in sides, and an A/C blower would send her earlier effective tosses long, as she gave away 19 points thereafter and managed to score only 7.

She didn't blame the drift - Anmol simply said she was not good enough yet, to control the shuttle in suddenly windy conditions. "At 11-2, I was 70% sure I could



Anmol Kharb in action. FILE

win. But when the sides changed, I made a lot of unforced errors. I'm very angry about those," she said. She did try everything that involved keeping the shuttle away from Yufei—who herself had lapsed to 2-11 due to the same drift. When Anmol slowed it

down, the smashes were going to Yufei's hand, when she pushed them parallel, they were floating out over the baseline.

You don't become an Olympic champion by giving up at 2-11 in the first round of a Super 500, where you are seeded second. Yufei was meticulous in not lifting, and did everything to simply pull Anmol to the net, knowing the shuttles were flying out of bounds above her head.

The A/C blowers weren't consistent either. Anmol's basic strategy had been to get Yufei moving around. "She has great wrists. Anything in her hand is finished for the opponent," Anmol described. Playing a rich mix of fearless half smashes to the front court and attacking tosses and clears to the back, she managed to wrong foot the Chinese known for her stellar footwork. Anmol peppered her with loopy tosses and clears, but it was the cross drops and half

smashes that had the Chinese stuttering in two minds at the front court.

The Chinese pumping her fist and roaring towards the end - was a clear sign that Anmol had her in a bind, sending her back and front. "The attacking tosses packed Yufei back, the slices and drops tugged her front. "When the sides changed, I couldn't hot the tosses for winners. Slow ones were going to midcourt. Only option was the net - where she's much better than me," Anmol would concede.

Srikanth defeats LKY

That one win could've changed the trajectory of his career, though Kidambi Srikanth had come up against Loh Kean Yew who was the hurricane of Huelva at that World Championship in Spain circa 2021, with his speedy game. Five years on, Srikanth finally defeated the Singaporean, who

was eighth seed at the Thailand Open, leading start to finish, first point to last, in a low stakes breeze of a win, that makes badminton watchable in a stand-alone way.

The Indian, now 33, was pumped up alright against the 28-year-old, a freakish player who won the World's and then not much else. But in his hailstorm of slam bang smashes at Huelva, with not much else in his game, he had denied the Indian a second World title for India. When the win finally came at Thailand, it was a walk in the park for the Indian who jauntily bounced around the court and smashed at will. Just the once, Loh defended astonishingly as Srikanth rained down 5 different smash attempts, and the Indian allowed him to come up from 9-19 to 13-19, with a blitz, but Srikanth was strolling by then.

Srikanth, who has re-entered Top 30, plays Taiwanese Su Li Yang, ranked No 47.

Sale of IPL passes: Police ask DDCA officials to join probe

Mahender Singh Manral
New Delhi, May 13

DAYS AFTER arresting four men for allegedly selling complimentary IPL match passes and premium tickets to people involved in online live betting/satta operations inside stadiums, the Delhi Police Crime Branch has served notices to four Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA) officials, asking them to join the probe on Thursday.

Investigators found that those arrested from outside the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi were selling complimentary passes for up to Rs 20,000 each and also selling premium tickets at a profit and then giving a cut to certain DDCA officials.

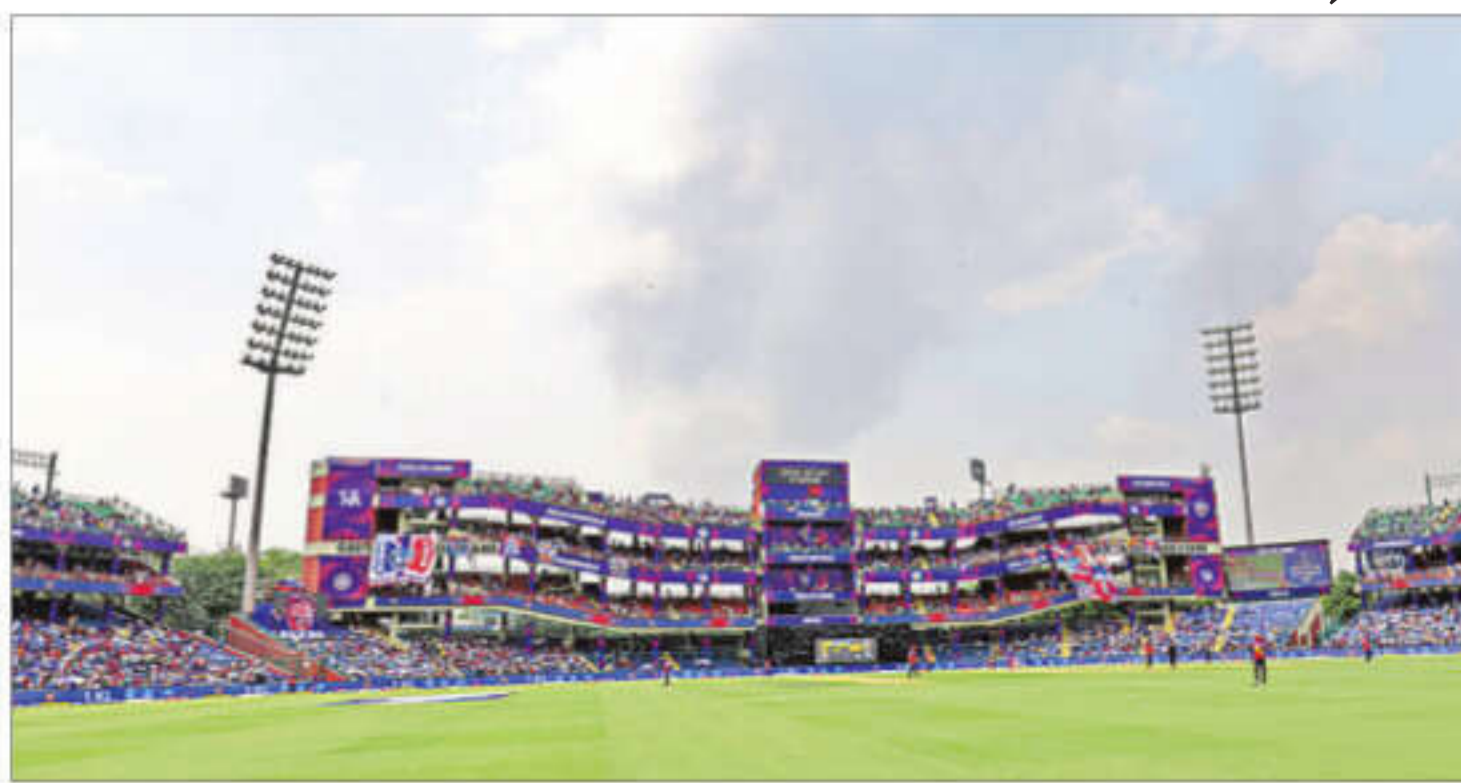
Pan India network

DCP (Crime Branch) San-

jeev Kumar Yadav said the accused were involved in black marketing IPL tickets across India and travelled by air to different cities where IPL matches were held. This operation, across states, has been happening for 10 years, The Indian Express understands.

"They allegedly procured tickets and complimentary passes through various persons. The role of others associated with this syndicate is also under investigation. They also supplied premium tickets at exorbitant prices to people involved in online live betting/satta operations inside stadiums, as well as to pickpockets and other criminal elements," Yadav said.

"To gain credibility and lure cricket enthusiasts, the accused falsely projected themselves as authorised representatives of the cricket administration and



The accused were involved in black marketing IPL tickets across India and travelled by air to different cities where IPL matches were held. CREIMAS FOR BCCI

event management authorities. They are currently in police remand, and further investigation is underway to identify

others involved in the procurement and illegal sale of tickets," Yadav said.

On Friday, three men ident-

ified as Mukeem, 35, from Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh; Gufran alias Sajid, 36, from Jamia Nagar; and Md. Faisal, 38, from

Seelampur, were arrested outside the Arun Jaitley Stadium in Central Delhi.

Following their questioning and the discovery of fresh evidence, the investigation team made another arrest on Tuesday, detaining Pankaj Yadav, who worked as a supervisor at a petrol pump outside Arun Jaitley Stadium.

Serial offenders

"It has also come to notice that criminal cases related to ticket black marketing had previously been registered against them in Delhi, Punjab and Haryana. One case of ticket black marketing during the Auto Expo in Faridabad was also registered against them," DCP Yadav added.

Police have recovered 54 IPL match tickets, 33 complimentary passes and Rs 25,000 in cash from their possession.

Double Oly medallist Sreejesh hurt over his contract non-renewal



PR Sreejesh joined Indian junior team in 2024 as head coach. HI

Express News Service
New Delhi, May 13

FORMER INDIA goalkeeper and double Olympic medallist PR Sreejesh on Wednesday said his stint as coach of the junior men's hockey team was seemingly coming to an end. The reason, he stated in a post on X, was to make way for a foreign coach.

In his post, he pointed out that his team had reached the podium in all five tournaments, the highlight being the bronze medal finish at the Junior World Cup last year in Tamil Nadu, it had competed during his tenure of one-and-a-half years. "It's seems like my coaching career comes to an end after 1.5 years, during which we played 5 tournaments and secured 5 podium finishes, including a Junior World Cup bronze medal. I have heard about coaches getting fired after bad performances. But this is the first time I am experiencing being removed to make way for a foreign coach," Sreejesh wrote.

The reason for his ouster, he believes, is that the senior men's coach Craig Fulton, wants a foreign counterpart at the junior level, too.

"The Hockey India President stated that the chief coach of the senior men's team prefers a foreign head coach for the junior team, believing it will help develop Indian hockey from the junior level through to the senior level. Hence, the continued preference for foreign coaches — Can't Indian coaches develop Indian hockey?" he contended.

HI, though, clarified in a press release that the star goalkeeper was not "fired" but his tenure had ended in December 2025 as per contract. Subsequently, a new appointment was made following a formal selection process. "As per protocol the position was advertised and applicants were shortlisted and finalised as per a proper selection process basis merit. A coach with distinguished qualifications has been selected as a result of this pro-

In his X post, he pointed out that his team had reached the podium in all five tournaments, the highlight being the bronze medal finish at the Junior World Cup last year

cess and will be announced shortly," HI stated.

Sreejesh, however, recalled a conversation during his meeting with Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya. "I was told, 'Sreejesh, we need coaches like you to step up and lead our country as we prepare for 2036'. However, Hockey India continues to place its trust in foreign coaches over Indian ones across all four teams," read Sreejesh's post.

HI also mentioned that Sreejesh had been offered the role to coach the development team, but he refused. "We have in no terms 'fired' Sreejesh and in fact had offered him the position of Coach for the Development team, which plays a critical role for LA 28 and the next olympic cycle as well." "This would have furthered his experience and exposure as a coach. However, he did not accept this position despite being asked to reconsider the decision," it added.

HI reiterated that it has never told him that Fulton prefers foreign coaches. "In no terms has it ever been conveyed to him that there has been any preference for a foreign coach by the chief coach. We are collectively working towards the vision of our government to build a pathway towards 2036 and a big part of that process is to develop our Indian coaching talent," the statement read.

"We have in fact aligned Indian coaches to our chief coaches in our training camp to enhance their exposure and skills further. Hockey India remains committed to the growth of Indian hockey and all our decisions are part of a concerted effort to achieve that," it added.

Swiatek sweeps past Pegula to enter Italian Open semifinals

Reuters

Rome, May 13

THREE-TIMES Italian Open champion Iga Swiatek was at her ruthless best as she dismantled American fifth seed Jessica Pegula 6-1 6-2 to reach the semi-finals of the WTA 1000 clay-court tournament on Wednesday. The Polish fourth seed, a six-time Grand Slam champion, picked up exactly where she left off after her emphatic win over Naomi Osaka in the previous round. Against Pegula, she raced to a 5-0 lead before the American managed to avoid a bagel.

Swiatek never loosened her grip on the match, conceding three games overall as the second set followed a similarly one-sided pattern. She finished with 15 winners compared to Pegula's six. The victory marks Swiatek's first win over a top-10 opponent this year and continues an encouraging upswing after she began working last month with Francisco Roig, the former coach of her idol Rafa Nadal.

"I feel much better," Swiatek said. "I have a lot of confidence in my shots. I used that from the beginning of the match today and kept putting pressure on Jessie, so I'm really happy with how I played."

A title in Rome would come as a timely lift for the 24-year-old ahead of the French Open, where the main draw gets underway on May 24. Swiatek had been forced to retire from her previous tournament, the Madrid Open, in the round of 32 due to illness, leaving the court in tears. Her path has also opened up significantly in Rome. With world number one Aryna Sabalenka knocked out in the third round by Romania's Sorana Cirstea.

INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Kohli turns back clock, shows he remains the 'chase master'

Talisman stamps his class with an unbeaten 105 off 60 balls as RCB achieve 193-run target

SYNOPSIS: Kohli's masterful century leads Royal Challengers Bengaluru to the top of the points table.

Shankar Narayan
Mumbai, May 13

PRIOR TO Wednesday's match, Virat Kohli had endured a quiet run by his own standards. But with the top spot on the line, he rose to the occasion in a run chase against Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR), taking Royal Challengers Bengaluru to the top of the IPL 2026 points table.

Masterful Kohli

Virat Kohli came into Wednesday's game under a bit of pressure after getting out for ducks in his previous two innings. So when he finally got off the mark off Saurabh Dubey's last ball of the opening over against KKR in Raipur, the reaction said plenty - Kohli punched the air with a fist pump that showed how much it meant. Chasing 193 in Raipur, RCB needed Kohli to steady the innings and take the chase deep, something he has done countless times over the years.

After a quiet start, the 37-year-old quickly settled into his rhythm. He flicked Vaibhav Arora through midwicket, punched another boundary

square on the off side and then pulled Kartik Tyagi over deep fine leg for six as RCB kept up with the asking rate.

There was very little panic in his batting. Kohli rotated strike regularly against Sunil Narine and waited patiently for loose deliveries from the seamers. Most of his runs came through timing and placement rather than risky shots.

His half-century came off 32 balls in the 10th over when he pulled Cameron Green through the leg side for a couple. Little did KKR know then that Kohli was only getting started.

From there, Kohli shifted gears beautifully. He picked gaps regularly against Sunil Narine and Anukul Roy before taking apart Vaibhav Arora and Kartik Tyagi at the death. There was elegance and authority in equal measure; a wristy whip over deep midwicket off Tyagi for six, a clean loft straight down the ground off Roy and several trademark punches through the off side.

Unlike his measured start, the second half of the innings carried far more intent. Yet, Kohli never looked rushed. He stayed in control, kept finding boundaries at the right moments and steadily moved towards another landmark.

His ninth IPL century came off 58 balls in the 19th over when he drove Arora calmly to long-off for a single. There was



Virat Kohli scored his ninth century of IPL. CREIMAS FOR BCCI

no wild celebration, only a raise of the bat and applause from the RCB dugout after a vintage Kohli knock.

Angriksh impresses

A day before KKR faced RCB, Shane Watson had spoken warmly about Angriksh Raghuvanshi's talent, saying the youngster reminded him of a teenage Sanju Samson.

On Wednesday night, the 21-year-old showed exactly why the former Australia all-rounder rated him so highly.

Walking in during the third over after Finn Allen's early dis-

missal, Raghuvanshi found himself in a difficult situation almost immediately when captain Ajinkya Rahane fell soon after as well. KKR suddenly needed someone to steady the innings, and the youngster responded with a calm, mature knock that became the backbone of their 192-run total.

His 71 off 46 balls was not filled with reckless hitting. Instead, it was built on timing, balance and an ability to adapt quickly to different bowlers and conditions. Raghuvanshi absorbed the early movement against the seamers before grad-

• IPL table

Teams	M	W	L	PTS
RCB	12	8	4	16
GT	12	8	4	16
SRH	12	7	5	13
PBKS	11	6	4	12
CSK	11	6	5	12
RR	11	6	5	12
DC	12	5	7	10
KKR	11	4	6	9
MI	11	3	8	6
LSG	11	3	8	6

M: MATCH; W: WIN; L: LOSS; PTS: POINTS;

ually opening up his strokeplay. Alongside Cameron Green, he stitched together a crucial 68-run stand for the third wicket that helped KKR recover after the early setbacks. He got going by pulling Jacob Duffy over deep midwicket for six before settling into a rhythm against the rest of the RCB attack.

He looked equally comfortable against spin. He swept Krunal Pandya for a towering six over deep square leg and later produced one of the shots of the evening by making room and lofting the left-arm spinner beautifully over extra cover for another maximum. His fourth half-century of IPL 2026 came off just 32 balls, and even after Green departed, he adjusted his role smartly during a 76-run partnership with Rinku Singh, allowing the senior batter to attack harder at the death.

BRIEF SCORES: KKR 192/4 in 20 overs (Angkrish 71, Rinku 49; Bhuvneshwar 1/34) lost to RCB 194/4 in 19.1 overs (Kohli 105 not out; Kartik 3/32) by six wickets.

Ronaldo made to wait for first league title after bizarre own-goal

Associated Press

Washington, May 13

FOR CRISTIANO Ronaldo, winning a first league title in Saudi Arabia isn't coming easy.

The Portugal superstar was a matter of seconds away from securing the victory needed to clinch the Saudi Pro League with Al-Nassr on Tuesday, with his team leading fierce rival Al-Hilal 1-0 in the eighth and final minute of stoppage time.

With Ronaldo looking nervous on the bench - the 41-year-old striker had been substituted by that point - and some Al-Nassr fans hardly able to watch, Al-Hilal sent a long throw-in into the area and Al-Nassr goalkeeper Bento, in an attempt to catch the ball, fumbled it backward and into his own net.

The match finished 1-1, the title race was still alive and Ronaldo looked distraught as he sat in the dugout, consoled by teammates.

"The dream is close," Ronaldo wrote in a post to his more than 100 million followers on X after the match. "Heads up, we have one more step to take!" Al-Nassr hasn't won the Saudi league since 2019, more than three years before Ronaldo joined the club in a game-changing signing for the



Cristiano Ronaldo will have to wait for his first Saudi Pro League title. AP

country as it looked to become a major player in world soccer.

That drought is still likely to end, despite the derby drama on Tuesday.

Al-Nassr leads Al-Hilal by five points and will guarantee winning the league by beating relegation-threatened Damac at home in the final round on May 21.

Al-Hilal has two games remaining, the first against Neom on Saturday. Win that and the second-place team will be two points behind Al-Nassr heading into the final round.

By then, Ronaldo - the five-time world player of the year - might have won his first major trophy with Al-Nassr, which

faces Japan's Gamba Osaka in the Champions League Two final in Riyadh on Sunday.

After the club season finishes, Ronaldo will head to a sixth World Cup with Portugal - and is free to play in the team's first game after FIFA, in a rare move, deferred two games of a three-match ban for his red card in a qualifying game.

He has said this will definitely be his last attempt at winning the biggest prize in soccer, but it remains unclear for how long he will continue playing.

Ronaldo still has one more year remaining on his deal with Al-Nassr and is closing in on 1,000 career goals

• SWAPAN SADHAN BOSE: 1948-2026

'For the sake of players, Tutu da would do anything'

Rohit Mundayur
New Delhi, May 13

WHEN IM Vijayan thinks of Swapan Sadhan 'Tutu' Bose, he thinks of a scooter.

It was 1991. Vijayan was a trailblazing young forward playing for Kerala Police Football Club when Bose came calling. He was brought home, into a nice big house, and offered a deal. "He said he will get me a bike if I score three goals against East Bengal," Vijayan tells The Indian Express. "At the time I used to roam around in a taxi."

Vijayan scored two goals. Bagan won by a two-goal margin. He went back to Bose. "I said, Tutu da I did score two goals right. How about that bike?" Bose considered this. Then: "Ok then, I'll get you a scooter." "And that scooter me and Sathyettan used everyday to go to practice," Vijayan says. "For the players, he would do anything."

Bose, who died on Wednesday, May 13, 2026, was Mohun Bagan's effective supremo for the better part of 36 years — from 1989 until his retirement from all positions in April 2025. He was in his element recruiting players and firing them up ahead of the derby against East Bengal, the club's eternal rivals. Through the National Football



Swapan Sadhan Bose served Mohun Bagan for 36 years. EXPRESS

League, the I-League and eventually the Indian Super League, Bagan remained one of the most sought-after destinations for players across the country. Where the name of the club didn't do the job, Bose's charisma did the rest.

Bhaichung Bhutia — India's next great goalscorer after Vi-

jayen — found that out in 2002, when his stint with English club Bury FC had just ended. Bose called him to Dubai. "I flew down, spent about three to four days with him," says Bhutia. "His death is a big loss. Such a passionate owner. Committed. And a great character. For me, I signed for



“I said, Tutu da I did score two goals right. How about that bike? Ok then, I'll get you a scooter. And that scooter me and Sathyettan used everyday to go to practice.”

IM VIJAYAN,

ON TUTU BOSE PROMISING A BIKE FOR THREE GOALS AGAINST EB.

Mohun Bagan just because of him. He convinced me."

It is not that the moves always worked. Bhutia was injured for much of the 2002-03 season. When Bose brought him back in 2006, he was characteristically bold about it. "We have promised a dream team this season and what better strike duo can you expect other than Baichung Bhutia and Jose

Barreto," he said. Bagan finished eighth that season, one place above the relegation zone.

Ishfaq Ahmed, one of the players Bose signed alongside Bhutia in 2006, says even in those difficult times, the crowds never turned on him. "He was respected by fans even if the club was not doing well performance-wise. He could talk to people at those times and still make them cheer and believe," Ishfaq told this paper.

The biggest strain on that relationship came in January 2020, when Mohun Bagan announced a merger with ISL side ATK — a move that eventually led to the club's football department being renamed Mohun Bagan Super Giant. Some of the more passionate fans were vocal in their anger, and Bose drew his share of it.

Yet the outpouring on those same platforms on Wednesday — coupled with the lengthy queues outside the Mohun Bagan club tent where his mortal remains were kept — showed how little those rocky periods mattered in the end. What endured were the decades of administrative stability, a rarity in Indian football. And the stories. A scooter instead of a bike. A few days in Dubai. A crowd that kept believing.

"For the players, he would do anything."