

GOOD MORNING ANDHRA

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Changing Or Not Changing MLAs – What Is Right?

Guntur, Dec 12 (GNS) Ever since BRS lost the Telangana Elections, there has been a discussion about what prompted the change of Power. One of the prime reasons cited is not changing the sitting MLAs who were facing severe anti-incumbency. And then, there is news that YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is changing around 100 MLA candidates to counter that factor. In the first trench, he announced eleven new in charges. That has propelled a new discussion about whether changing the candidates is good or bad. The issue is a double-edged sword. If there is anti-incumbency over the sitting MLAs, obviously public will vote against the candidate. The 2019 elections happened in Jagan's name. People voted for Jagan irrespective of the candidates. But 2024 is go-



ing to be different. It will be like any other election and candidates will also play a big role in this election. So, changing candidates is inevitable. But then, it can also

backfire. The ousted MLAs will not sit idle. In these five years, they have earned money and muscle. They will not co-operate with the candidates and will also work against the party defeating the purpose of the election. This is not going to be a wave election like 2014 and there is a significant amount of anti-incumbency on Jagan.

Central BJP observers led by Rajnath Singh arrive in Jaipur amid suspense over CM face

Jaipur, Dec 12 (GNS) The central BJP observers led by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh arrived here on Tuesday to oversee an all-important legislature party meeting where the state's next chief minister will be picked.

They were welcomed at the airport by state party president C P Joshi and former chief minister Vasundhara Raje.

All of them went straight to a hotel near the airport and held a meeting there. The BJP legislature party meeting will be held at the party office at 4 pm to pick the state's next chief minister.

The newly elected MLAs have already reached the party office for the meet-

ing. After the announcement of the chief minister, a delegation will go to the Raj Bhawan to stake claim to form the government.

Asked about the probable candidate for the chief minister's post, party leaders maintained that the decision of the high command will be acceptable to all.

The BJP won 115 seats out of the 199 that went to polls. Polling was postponed in one constituency due to the death of a candidate.

Citizenship Act: Not possible to collect data of illegal migrants in country, Centre tells SC

New Delhi, Dec 12 (GNS) The Centre has told the Supreme Court that it is not possible to collect data on illegal migrants living in various parts of the country as the entry of foreign nationals is clandestine and surreptitious.

grants in Assam, the Centre said 17,861 people have been granted citizenship under the provision.

Answering the court's query posed on December 7, the Centre said 32,381 people have been detected as foreigners under the orders of the foreigner's tribunal concerning the period of 1966-1971.

Replying to the court's query about the estimated

inflow of illegal immigrants into India, including but not confined to Assam after March 25, 1971, the Centre said illegal immigrants enter the country without valid travel documents clandestinely and surreptitiously.

"The detection, detention and deportation of such illegally staying foreign nationals is a complex ongoing process. Since entry of such foreign nationals into the

country is clandestine and surreptitious, it is not possible to collect accurate data of such illegal immigrants living in various parts of the country," the Centre said.

The government said in the past five years from 2017 to 2022, 14,346 foreigners were deported.

Giving some figures, the Centre said 100 foreign tribunals are presently working in Assam and as of October 31, 2023, more than 3.34 lakh cases have been disposed of and still 97, 714 as on October 31.

It said the number of cases pending before the Gauhati High Court, arising from the orders of the Foreigners Tribunal is 8,461 as of December 1, 2023.

The government gave details about the working of the Assam Police, fencing of borders, border patrols and other mechanisms adopted to dissuade infiltration.

On December 7, the top court directed the Centre to provide data on the number of Bangladeshi immigrants granted Indian citizenship in Assam between January 1, 1966 and March 25, 1971.

A five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud, which is hearing a batch of pleas on the validity of section 6A of the Citizenship Act had asked the state government to provide the data to the Centre for filing an affidavit.

Jagan's 20KM Trip Chopper Coming 200KM

Guntur, Dec 12 (GNS) One of the main complaints against AP CM Jagan Mohan Reddy has been his extensive usage of helicopters even for brief journeys and trips. The logistical costs of these trips are costing the state exchequer a fortune every year. For instance, here is a new example. Jagan is to take part in a public meeting in Kurnool on 19 December. He will have to travel a mere 20 KM to go from the Kurnool airport to the place of the meeting. But even for this 20 KM trip, the officials are bringing in a helicopter for Jagan's convenience. There is a national highway connecting the airport and Kurnool town. It is easily accessible for the CM convoy. But Jagan has opted



to board a chopper instead for this brief trip. The more shocking thing is that this chopper is being brought from Hyderabad or Vijayawada. Either way, the chopper will have to travel 200 KM to reach Kurnool. The round trip will be around 400 KM including

CM's commute. All these costs will be levied on the state exchequer and could end up costing lakhs of rupees. These logistical costs could've been avoided had Jagan opted to use his convoy for the brief 20 KM journey, but that isn't the case here.

Amit Shah doesn't 'know history, keeps rewriting it': Rahul slams Home Minister over Nehru criticism

New Delhi, Dec 12 (GNS) Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday hit back at Home Minister Amit Shah for his attack on India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, saying the BJP leader probably does not know history and "keeps rewriting" it.

Gandhi also said the whole matter was about distracting from the issue of caste census and in whose hands the country's money is going.

Speaking in the Rajya Sabha on Monday, Shah had blamed Nehru for the Kashmir problem, pointing to the "mistakes" of ordering an "untimely" ceasefire and taking the issue to the United Nations.

Asked about Shah's remarks, Gandhi said, "Pandit Nehru dedicated his life for this country. He was in jail for years, Amit Shahji probably does not know history. I don't expect that he would know history as he keeps rewriting history."

"This is all about distraction, basic issue is of caste



census and participation, in whose hands is the money of the country going. They (BJP) don't want to discuss this issue, they are afraid of it and run away from it," the former Congress president told reporters outside Parliament.

He said Congress will take forward this issue and ensure that poor people get their rights.

Asked about the BJP making tribal and OBC CMs in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, Gandhi said, "Ours was also an OBC (CM in Chhattisgarh), they have

also made OBC (CM in Madhya Pradesh), that is not the issue. The question is what is the participation (of OBCs) within the structure."

"The Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) is an OBC but the government is run by 90 officers. Out of the 90 officers, three are OBCs and their office is in the corner. My point is what is the participation of OBCs in the institutional system, what is the participation of Dalits, Adivasis, that is the main question before the country," he said.

Gandhi alleged that to distract from the main issue, the BJP would speak about Nehru or someone else at another time. The issue is about participation, he added.

Shah on Tuesday attacked the opposition, saying it is unable to see the change on the ground in Jammu and Kashmir after the scrapping of Article 370 and claimed the entire country has understood that it was Nehru's "mistakes" on Kashmir that led to the suffering of people of Jammu and Kashmir.

I-T raids in Odisha: Congress' 'shops of corruption' should be shut, strict action underway, says Rijiju

New Delhi, Dec 12 (GNS) Hitting out at the INDIA bloc, Union Minister Kiren Rijiju on Tuesday said the Modi government's resolve to continue tough action against corruption with renewed vigour is the only reason for opposition leaders to unite and step up their attack on central probe agencies.

Addressing a press conference, Rijiju and BJP leaders Sangita Singhdeo, Rameshwar Teli and Nisith Pramanik said the haul of Rs 351 crore from premises linked to Congress MP Dhiraj Prasad Sahu was not a one-off.

There are cases against leaders of opposition parties, including those from Bihar, West Bengal, Rajasthan and Delhi, they added.

"The very many 'shops of corruption' opened by the Congress should be shut down.

Strict action is being taken," Rijiju told reporters here.

"It would not be wrong to say that the coming to-

gether of the INDI Alliance has nothing to do with democracy but it's a union of corrupt people for the betterment of the corrupt by the corrupt people," he added.

He said till now, more than Rs 351 crore has been unearthed from a member of the Congress in Jharkhand.

"The Congress should be called the corruption party because the Congress is the root of corruption," Rijiju said.

The cash seizure in the Income Tax department's searches against Odisha-based Boudh Distillery Private Limited owned by the family of Sahu -- the Congress' Rajya Sabha MP from

Jharkhand -- has been calculated at Rs 351 crore and is the "highest-ever" haul in a single action by any probe agency in the country, official sources said on Sunday.

Rijiju further said Rs 42 crore was recovered from the relative of a Congress leader in Bengaluru; in West Bengal, several ministers in the Mamata Banerjee government are involved in corruption; in Tamil Nadu, Senthil Balaji, a minister, is in jail and the party that calls itself "staunchly honest (kattar imandar)" has found several of its leaders in jail.

Rijiju said Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave several

guarantees to the people -- to make India a developed nation by 2047, make it the third largest economy in the world, and ensure that government benefits reach the public.

"Another guarantee was action against every corrupt person. That is why you must have seen Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and his friends hate Modi a lot. The anger is because of the strong action against corruption," he said.

Rijiju said corruption increased during the Congress regimes because the party believes in the principle of perpetuating corrupt practices.

In just 9 Months, Jagan photo lost face value?

Vijayawada, Dec 12 (GNS) In the MLA quota MLC elections that happened in March this year, three MLAs crossvoted for the TDP candidate. TDP's Panchumarthi Anuradha won as an MLC despite her party having no strength. Anam Ramanarayana Reddy (Venkatagiri Assembly Constituency), Mekapati Chandrasekhar Reddy (Udayagiri Assembly Constituency), Kotamreddy Sridhar Reddy (Nellore Rural Assembly Constituency) and Vundvalli Sridevi (Tadikonda Assembly Constituency) have cross-voted for the party. YSR Congress had to suspend them from the party.

Back then, the party tried to downplay the revolt saying that in YSR Congress, candidates do not matter. "YSR Congress won 151 seats in 2019 elections.

People did not vote for the candidates. They just voted for Fan symbol seeing Jagan Mohan Reddy. Jagan



is the candidate in all the 175 seats.

The same scenario will happen in 2024 as well. Candidates hardly matter. So, MLAs leaving the party does not matter," they said with a brave face. But then, everything changed in less than a year. All of a sudden,

we see Jagan Mohan Reddy changing party in-charges and speaking about caste equations.

Eleven in-charges were changed and there are reports that candidates in around 100 seats will be changed. From the stage -- candidates do not matter,

Jagan will bring votes', YSR Congress has come to the stage where candidates have to be changed. That itself is an indication of severe anti-incumbency against Jagan Mohan Reddy and the desperate measures the Chief Minister is taking to save face in 2024.

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EDITORIAL

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Dodgy Politicians

Doing everything they should not be doing, and not doing anything they should be doing—that is the defining feature of our political masters. They should be focused on policing; they do moral policing instead. They should try to protect our health and lives from any danger, including pollution, but they spend their time and taxpayer money to subsidise pilgrimages. They should strive for fiscal prudence, supply-side reforms and business-friendly policy framework, but they indulge in fiscal profligacy, demand-side economics, and freebies. On the eve of the Cricket World Cup 2023 final, the Delhi government announced that November 19 would be a dry day on account of Chhath Puja. This caused consternation among the cricket buffs who wanted to enjoy the match with drinks, and also among the restaurateurs who had made special arrangements like big TV screens for the occasion. Thankfully, only liquor outlets were shut; restaurants and pubs were allowed to sell alcohol. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which runs the governments in Delhi and Punjab, is keen to guard the morals of Delhiites; but it has shown little intention and competence to check the menace of stubble burning in Punjab. Doing things it shouldn't be doing, and not doing things it should be. Other parties are no better. Early this month, there was a news report about a man who ran from pillar to post for eight years to ensure justice for his son who was killed in a hit-and-run case at Gurgaon in Haryana in June 2015. The father did what the local cops should have done. "After finding broken car parts at the accident site, he approached Maruti Suzuki for help in identifying the car. Despite multiple court petitions and reprimanding the police for their negligence, the investigation was not carried out. However, a recent court order has directed the police to re-investigate the case, leading to the filing of a chargesheet against the vehicle's owner," the report said. The Bharatiya Janata Party-led government in Haryana seems more interested in imposing bans during religious festivals than in catching criminal offenders. Doing things it shouldn't be doing, and not doing things it should be. Across the length and breadth of the country, politicians are interested mostly in issues which have no bearing on the lives of people, like the promotion of Indian languages, removal of colonial legacy, and caste survey. At the same time, they remain unconcerned about real issues like the deadly smog in north India during winters, unabated pollution degradation of the environment in general, and jobless growth. Paradoxically, the biggest culprits are not politicians but intellectual elites—certainly a large section among them. Public intellectuals and other opinion makers suffer from thinking paralysis: the thinking process that shaped economic policy and governance in the pre-1991 statist-socialist era has been thoroughly discredited because socialism itself has been discredited and yet, the same thinking process dominates in post-reforms India. This is not to say that nothing has changed in terms of public discourse in the last 32 years. When economic reforms were launched in the summer of 1991, Leftists raised a stink. The International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and multinational corporations were portrayed as the avatars of East India Company that would recolonise the nation, decontrol was dubbed as a surrender to India Inc, disinvestment was presented as the 'selling family silver to pay the grocer's bill', and long was the list of the decisions and actions undertaken by the P.V. Narasimha Rao government. Swadeshi zealots joined in the fun. Thankfully, such noises are few and far between today. For instance, there was hardly any fuss when the Narendra Modi government privatised Air India in January 2022. Opinion makers failing today is not in opposing reforming measures and other good moves, it lies in not promoting reasonable ideas and economic liberalisation. As a consequence, the climate of opinion remains conducive for the abominations like freebies and big government moves like the old pension scheme. After all, every politician has to say and do things which are amenable to the prevalent climate of opinion. Intellectual elites in our country have failed to effect such a climate change. Compare the situation in India with that in Argentina. President-elect Javier Gerardo Milei has risen because—and not in spite—of his promise to drastically reduce the size of the government. He wants to check high inflation by disbanding the central bank and dollarising the economy. While in India, politicians prefer socialist policies resulting in rigid labour laws and greater government intervention in the economy, Milei promised the opposite—and won the election. Apparently, this happened because a large section of the thinking and influencing class in Argentina—once wedded to socialism as in other South American countries and India—has given up its fascination with socialism. Unfortunately, this is not the case in our country. Unsurprisingly, politicians continue to take the easy path of fooling people by promoting sentimentalism, moralising, and lethal populism.

Reincarnation of Tibetan Lama: A Matter of Faith, Not Political Tool

New Delhi, Dec 12 (GNS)

An article published in Global Times, a Chinese government mouthpiece, titled 'How reincarnation system in Tibetan Buddhism is often misunderstood in the West?' is nothing more than an old style communist intellectual propaganda tool to control the Tibetan mind through control of the reincarnation process of Tibetan Buddhist traditions. The Chinese mindset has been excessively preoccupied with the issue of reincarnation and hence such rhetoric once in a while to keep the issue alive.

The Chinese government's attempt to control the reincarnation system in Tibetan Buddhism is a severe violation of religious freedom rooted in historical ignorance and political self-interest. This tradition of recognising tulkus, or reincarnated teachers, predates Chinese communist rule by over half a millennium. The party's claims that past dynasties have set historical precedents for state oversight lack nuance and context around the power dynamics at play. Its arguments demonstrate a superficial understanding of Tibetan Buddhist theology surrounding rebirth.

The Chinese government passed a law in 2007 that allows them to approve the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama, which has been rejected by the Dalai Lama and the exiled Tibetan government. This law is known as the "Ordinance on the Management of the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas" and it stipulates that the reincarnation of high-ranking Ti-



betan Buddhist lamas, including the Dalai Lama, must be approved by the Chinese government. The law also states that the reincarnation of a living Buddha must be based on "historical conventions" and must follow "national laws and regulations."

The Chinese government argues that this law is necessary to prevent fraud and ensure the continuity of Tibetan Buddhism, but the Dalai Lama and many Tibetan exiles view it as an attempt by the Chinese government to exert control over Tibetan Buddhism and the selection of the Dalai Lama. They argue that the Chinese government has no authority to interfere in the religious affairs of Tibetan Buddhism and that the selection of the Dalai Lama should be left to the Tibetan Buddhist community. The piece in The Global Times asserts global

sympathy for Tibet and is based on misunderstanding complex Buddhist doctrines. It presents China as generously elucidating the truth that the world fails to comprehend. However, the religious persecution at stake is unambiguous. The world rightly condemns China for eradicating Uyghur culture. Now the state has turned towards controlling the soul of Tibetan identity – religion incarnate in its leaders. Should the party judge the merits of a faith, which Beijing tried to decimate, by destroying Buddhist monasteries and persecuting monks over decades? Its genteel rhetoric masks the offense of atheists installed as puppet overlords, meddling in theological succession. China simply cannot "participate according to law and historical precedent" in a 680-year religious custom

its 75-year regime does not fathom or respect. Historical records of past emperors granting honorary titles to tulkus pale in context next to the totalitarian intrusion underway. The power dynamic differs drastically from isolated diplomatic gestures in the vast span since Yuan rule over Tibet began in the 13th century. Regardless, no secular ruler can morally police the inward sphere of any faith, let alone one system intertwined with culture for over half of China's entire existence as a nation. To now renounce their spiritual legitimacy is textbook cultural genocide.

The tradition of reincarnated lamas in Tibetan Buddhism predates the founding of the People's Republic of China by over 600 years. This reincarnation system, known as tulku, has its origins in the 12th century with the first

Karmapa lama. Figures like the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama represent the highest and most prestigious lineages. In contrast, the Chinese Communist government only came to power in 1949. Its attempts to interfere with and control the reincarnation process after less than 75 years lack legitimacy.

At the heart of tulku is a belief in rebirth – that enlightened beings can choose to take the re-embodied form to continue guiding devotees. This acceptance of past and future lives is core to Buddhism, based on the teachings of Buddha himself. According to scriptures, Buddha lived 547 previous existences before achieving enlightenment. The stories of these lives, like those of the Jataka Tales, emphasise the long history of reincarnation beliefs predating Chinese communist rule.

If international leaders and human rights advocates turn a blind eye to the CCP subverting an entire faith to serve its self-interest, it sets a frightening precedent. Totalitarian regimes should never have such power to rewrite theology and install puppet leaders of their choosing. This is the dystopian level of psychological control and oppression – reprogramming a religion's foundation for political gain.

The Dalai Lama has served as the foremost face of Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan national identity for generations. But much deeper spiritual traditions and religious autonomy are under attack across all Tibetan Buddhist schools by CCP meddling in reincarnation. By seizing unfair process control over identifying and installing their preferred tulkus, the Party can dominate Tibet through a stranglehold on the soul of its culture – religion itself. No secular ruler should dictate the inner workings of faith in this way.

If the Chinese government were to respect human rights and religious freedoms – as it claims despite repeated violations – it would allow Tibetan Buddhists unfettered self-determination over centuries-old spiritual customs. Tulku traditions predate communist China tenfold. By what authority does the CCP deem itself the supreme arbiter of living Buddha succession and Tibetan Buddhist affairs? None, besides might, which spells catastrophe for religious liberty everywhere if accepted blindly.

'At Direction of Kerala CM', Goons Try to 'Physically Hurt' Guv Arif Khan; Union Minister Takes 'Hammas' Dig

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 12 (GNS) Dramatic scenes were witnessed in Thiruvananthapuram after Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan was "hurt physically by goondas". He was on his way to the airport to board a flight to Delhi. While Union minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar alleged that chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan's 'Nava Kerala' is about "welcoming terrorist Hamas", Minister of State V Muraliedharan met Khan at Kerala House on Tuesday.

"Police was made ineffective to suit the interest of the CM. This shows what the situation has Kerala. The Governor is taking firm stand against corruption and nepotism of Vijayan government. This has made them take to streets by protesting in such a manner," Muraliedharan said after meeting Khan.

Students' Federation of India (SFI) state secretary PM Arsho, meanwhile, accused the Governor of nominating people from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) to the senate, by using his powers as a chancellor. Arsho alleged that Khan is not following any guidelines.

"Black flag protest will continue. This protest is to ensure that the higher education is not saffronised," the SFI state secretary said.

The incident took place on Monday evening in Thiruvananthapuram. The Governor stormed out of his vehicle, and said people who came in cars hit his vehicle

on both sides fled when he stepped out to question them.

Sources said that police is all set to book seven SFI workers under section 124 of the IPC (assaulting governor).

"Today the 'goondas' are trying to rule the roads of Thiruvananthapuram. Just because I don't get affected by pressure tactics, they will try to threaten me?" Khan asked.

He further questioned, "Is it possible that if a CM programme is going on, cars with protesters will be allowed there? Will they (police) allow anybody to come near the car of the CM?"

"Here cars of the protesters were standing there and police pushed them into their cars and they ran away. So, it is the CM, I am saying it clearly, who is conspiring and sending these people to hurt me physically," the Governor alleged.

He further contended that if the CM disagrees with him on something, that does not mean the Marxist veteran should "hatch conspiracies" to hurt him physically.

Khan also claimed that the constitutional machinery appeared to be collapsing in the state. He told reporters that the protesters not only waved black flags at him, they also hit his vehicle from both sides.

"Then I got down from my car. Then why did they run away? They were all sitting in a car, which means the police knew. But what will

the poor police do when the CM is directing them?" Khan said.

A report in PTI quoted its sources in Raj Bhavan as saying that black flags were waved at Khan at three places and out of them at two his car was hit by the protesters.

Police, on the other hand, said that the Governor's vehicle was blocked by the SFI activists only at one place and seven people of the student outfit have been arrested.

In the other two incidents, only black flags were waved and in connection with that around 10-12 SFI activists have been taken into custody. Cases under the relevant provisions of the IPC are being registered against them.

Meanwhile, the Congress, the UDF opposition led by it and the BJP too accused CM Vijayan of being behind the alleged attack on the Governor. They also alleged a breakdown of law and order in the state.

Leader of Opposition in the state assembly V D Satheesan said such allegations against a CM was a first in the history of the state and questioned whether attempt to murder cases would be registered against the SFI activists who blocked the Governor's vehicle.

Satheesan also took a dig at the CM by asking who should "rescue" the SFI activists who jumped in front of the Governor's vehicle and waved black flags at



him.

Vijayan has been repeatedly stating that the Youth Congress and Kerala Student Union (KSU) activists, who had allegedly jumped in front of the bus in which he and his cabinet were travelling, were "rescued" by DYFI and CPI(M) workers by forcibly pushing them out of the way.

The CM's "rescue" remark had first come after Youth Congress and KSU activists were allegedly beaten up by DYFI and CPI(M) workers for waving black flags at his cavalcade in Kannur. He has subsequently reiterated it several times.

Satheesan also accused the CM of having 'double standards'.

Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) chief and MP K Sudhakaran said it was a "black day" for the state and that the law and order has broken down as the Governor was allegedly "attacked" in the middle

of the road. He alleged that the SFI's actions were with the knowledge of the CM.

The KPCC chief further alleged that the police team accompanying the Governor "rescued and released" the SFI activists instead of protecting Khan.

He sought immediate and strict action against the police officers allegedly involved in it.

Sudhakaran also called the protesting SFI activists as 'chavars' or suicide squads, a term that was used by the Left front for the Youth Congress and KSU workers who waved black flags at the CM.

BJP state chief K Surendran too spoke along similar lines when he said the alleged "attack" on the Governor was with the CM's knowledge.

He alleged that the CPI(M) was aggrieved by the recent Supreme Court verdict quashing re-appointment of the Kannur Univer-

sity VC and berating the state government for its interference.

So, the Left party resorted to the "primitive" move of "attacking" the Governor, Surendran alleged.

He further claimed that the incident occurred with the connivance of the police which indicates a breakdown of law and order in the state and added that BJP cannot stand by and watch the Governor getting "attacked".

This is the second consecutive day when SFI activists waved black flags at the Governor.

The black flags were waved at the Governor near Vazhuthacaud in the state capital when Khan was on his way to an event organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry on Sunday.

Eighteen activists of the Students Federation of India (SFI) were arrested in connection with that incident.

From Indira's Dismissal of VC Shukla to Rahul vs Amarinder, Congress Hasn't Exactly Cherished Powerful CMs

New Delhi, Dec 12 (GNS) The Congress was quick to taunt the BJP for not repeating Shivraj Singh Chouhan as Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister for a fifth term, going instead for a relatively newer pick in Ujjain MLA Mohan Yadav. "This is how they treat their chief ministers who take their party to victory and are seniors," said Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi at a press conference on Monday.

But the grand old party's track record on the treatment of its chief ministers, and even Union ministers, hasn't been squeaky clean either. While Jawaharlal Nehru preferred to work with strong Chief Ministers, his daughter Indira Gandhi, few months into her prime ministership, became uncomfortable with assertive Chief Ministers as well as some of her own powerful ministers.

The most ruthless was her dismissal of close aide and Union Civil Supplies Minister VC Shukla two minutes into a meeting she called him for early in the morning.

In the 11 years of her rule between 1966 and 1977, at least seven Chief Ministers were dismissed by her as she was not comfortable with their power.

Sonia Gandhi's tenure as Congress chief began well. But there have been instances where she fell for the 'wrong advice', especially when aides told her that some Chief Ministers with a mind of their own could spell trouble for the central lead-



ership. This is increasingly the case as the party finds itself weakening at the national-level.

The most powerful Congress CM that Sonia Gandhi had to contend with during her leadership of the party was Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister R Rajashekhar Reddy. Following Reddy's death in a plane crash in 2009 while still in office, the party just withered away in Andhra Pradesh. Rajashekhar Reddy's cult following was said to be one of the reasons why his son Jagan Mohan Reddy was not made CM after his father's death. The top brass was reportedly advised that he too could become as powerful as his father.

The party's experiments with appointing amicable and

docile chief ministers like K Rosaiah and Kiran Kumar Reddy ended in disaster, and the Congress has not won Andhra Pradesh since.

In 2005, Bhajan Lal, who was the strongman of Haryana politics, was not repeated as CM despite the party winning. The party chose Bhupinder Hooda instead. Bhajan Lal never forgave and forgot. It's been a series of experiments in CMs since then.

However, the most glaring and recent example of the party cutting a powerful Chief Minister to size has to be that of Captain Amarinder Singh in Punjab.

A man with a mind of his own, who repeatedly opined that Rahul Gandhi has a long way to go in politics, Singh was eventually forced to re-

sign. The reason cited was that he worked in a coterie and had lost support of his MLAs.

But those with access behind the scenes say the MLAs would happily have worked with the Captain had it been conveyed to them that the party leadership had no issues with him. Charanjit Singh Channi was made the Chief Minister and the CM face in elections, making it easy for rival Aam Aadmi Party to storm to power. Weak, almost subservient to the high command, Channi lost his gaddi (seat) and Punjab for the Congress.

As the Congress weakened nationally in 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections, so did its ability to dictate terms on who can be CM. Political compulsion tied the hands of

the Gandhis. Ashok Gehlot, Bhupesh Baghel and Siddaramaiah were made CMs in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Karnataka, respectively. This gave rise to more dissent and showed that the Gandhis could not always get their way.

Apart from Siddaramaiah in Karnataka, the Congress has two chief ministers in the saddle now — Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu in Himachal Pradesh and Revanth Reddy in Telangana.

There's no denying that the two are in top posts, but is also evident that both Sukhu and Reddy are Gandhi family loyalists and unlikely to break ranks. So while Congress can claim to pick grassroot chief ministers, loyalty is a big deciding factor.

Google's Epic legal defeat threatens \$200 billion app store industry

New Delhi, Dec 12 (GNS) Google's legal defeat at the hands of Fortnite maker Epic Games Inc. threatens to roil an app store duopoly with Apple Inc. that generates close to \$200 billion a year and dictates how billions of consumers use mobile devices.

The loss — handed down by a San Francisco jury on Monday — is a blow to the two companies' business model in apps, where they charge commissions of as much as 30 per cent to software developers who typically have few other options.

Epic has spent years railing against the practice and got a federal jury to agree that Alphabet Inc.'s Google unit had acted unfairly as a monopoly. The case is likely to accelerate the weakening of app store rules, which have already come under fire from regulators and lawmakers around the world.

"The dominoes are going to start falling here," Tim Sweeney, chief executive officer of Epic, said in an interview after the verdict. "The end of 30 per cent is in sight."

Though Apple won a similar case against Epic in 2021, that ruling was made by a single judge. The nature of the Google suit — where a jury sided unanimously with Epic — let actual consumers weigh in on the world of smartphone apps. In under four hours of deliberations, they found that Google had engaged in anticompetitive conduct, harmed Epic and illegally forced its own billing system on developers.

The battle began in 2020, when Fortnite was kicked off



the Apple and Google Play app stores because the game developer had secretly installed its own payment system. The idea was to bypass the up-to-30 per cent revenue share that the two tech giants take from in-app purchases and subscriptions on their platforms. In response, Epic sued both companies.

Google also has drawn criticism for making side deals with big developers like Spotify Technology SA where it offers lower commissions. In Monday's decision, the jury found that Google shouldn't require Android app developers to use its billing system for software sold through its store — and that it shouldn't offer custom agreements to certain developers.

"The immediate aftereffect is we will see a shift in the marketplace where big tech companies will have to make accommodations — whether it is more access, better terms, more options for developers — to stave off legal exposure," said Paul Swanson, a partner at Holland & Hart who specializes in technology and antitrust law.

The case also under-

scores a sentiment among many consumers that major technology companies have gained too much power. Google also faced scrutiny from a Justice Department judge this fall over its power in search, though the outcome of that trial won't be clear for months.

Epic's Sweeney predicted that — as Google starts making changes to its operations and public pressure mounts — its app store peer will be forced to act as well. "The same thing will start happening with Apple," he said.

And that will ultimately help consumers, Sweeney said. "The economics is real," he said. "When you remove a 30 per cent tax from an ecosystem, consumer prices will get better. Or quality will get better and selection will increase."

During the case, Epic highlighted agreements Google reached with top game developers, including Activision Blizzard Inc. and Nintendo Co., for smaller fees. Every developer should now demand one of those deals, Sweeney said.

There's a fortune at stake for both Apple and Google.

In-app spending is forecast to reach \$182 billion next year and \$207 billion in 2025, according to research firm Sensor Tower.

Already, the Digital Markets Act in the European Union will spur changes. For the first time, Apple will need to allow third-party app stores and billing systems in the region.

Even before that law takes effect next year, the two companies have been making adjustments. Apple now lets so-called reader apps — such as software for cloud storage, watching video and reading books — link to outside websites to let users pay. That bypasses Apple's revenue cut.

Both Apple and Google also have changed their policies to take a commission on subscription apps. And Apple has been forced to let dating apps in the Netherlands bypass its billing system.

But the Epic win against Google has the potential to bring major changes to the companies' home country. That includes shifting internet software back to a more open environment, rather than the app stores'

closed ecosystems, according to Stanford Law professor Mark Lemley.

"The last two decades have seen a profound shift away from the open internet towards walled gardens," Lemley said. "That is one of the things that has kept the internet market so concentrated. This verdict just knocked a big hole in the garden wall."

Though Apple won nine out of 10 counts against Epic when that decision was made in 2021, one issue is still up in the air: whether Apple should let all third-party developers point customers to websites to pay for purchases, bypassing Apple's fees. It may now be harder for the iPhone maker to avoid that fate.

Google, which plans to appeal its verdict, said it "will continue to defend the Android business model and remain deeply committed to our users, partners and the broader Android ecosystem." Apple didn't respond to a request for comment.

Apple has said it doesn't have any side deals with developers, though it offers discounted rates to some video streaming partners like Amazon.com Inc. During the trial, Epic's lawyers said Google also didn't properly retain some internal records relevant to the case.

"I don't think there's much of a debate that the monopoly finding with Google holds true with Apple too," said Jason Kint, CEO of Digital Content Next, a trade association for digital content companies. "The distinction that will be pored over is whether or not Apple abused that."

Adani Group contractor probed by govt resurfaces under a new name

Mumbai, Dec 12 (GNS) The Adani Group has been maintaining its relationship with a controversial contracting firm controlled by a Taiwanese family, with previously unreported regulatory filings showing how the connection has evolved amid a government investigation and auditor scrutiny.

The contracting firm — Howe Engineering Projects (India) Pvt Ltd. — contains the core operations of a business called PMC Projects Pvt Ltd. that India's government alleged in 2014 was being used by billionaire Gautam Adani's empire to siphon money overseas. Adani denied all wrongdoing and the probe's findings were dismissed in 2017 by an adjudicating body.

In April 2016, PMC's engineering business was folded into Howe, according to court filings. Howe has remained an Adani contractor for some of the largest ports and railway lines presently under construction in India, recent filings analyzed by Bloomberg show.

Deloitte's inability to determine whether Howe should be labeled a related party was why the auditor raised red flags about payments by Adani's ports company to the contracting firm in May. The accounting giant then resigned as the auditor for Adani Ports & Special Economic Zone Ltd. in August, saying it didn't have sufficiently wide oversight over the broader conglomerate's accounts.

Howe puts a spotlight on the challenges shareholders continue to face in understanding how money flows through Adani companies nearly a year after allegations of fraud by short seller Hindenburg Research. Adani has denied all Hindenburg's allegations. Hindenburg took direct aim at PMC, alleging it was an Adani related party "used to suck money out of the Adani Group's publicly listed entities." Its report didn't mention Howe.

In an email, a spokesperson for the Adani conglomerate said that Howe and PMC are independently operated and managed companies, aren't Adani related parties and all transactions are compliant with the law. "The commercial and business transactions undertaken by the Adani entities for project management services were entered into in the ordinary course of business at arm's length basis," the statement said.

India's securities regulator has been conducting a probe into Hindenburg's allegations about Adani. While the agency hasn't announced its findings yet, it has said that its investigations will examine potential related party transactions among other issues.

PMC Projects and Howe are both owned by an entity registered in Mauritius, which is in turn owned by Taiwanese entrepreneur Chang Chien-ting, filings show. Chang along with his father Chang Chung-ling has had lengthy financial dealings with Adani companies.

When companies identify contractors as related parties during the accounting process, the payments are subject to a much higher level of scrutiny from auditors and the board. However, since Adani has said Howe and PMC aren't related parties, the group isn't required to put the Howe payments through these added checks.

Bloomberg visited the office of Hi Lingos Co Ltd., a firm where Chung-ling, the father, is the registered owner in Taiwan. There was only one large logo by the entrance of its office: Adani.

A secretary at the office said that Chung-ling declined to be interviewed. When Bloomberg called a number it was given for the son, the man who answered first asked: "How did you get my number?" but then went on to say that he wasn't Chang.

PMC Projects was founded in 2005 by Dr Malay Mahadevia, a long time senior Adani executive, but its ownership was transferred to multiple entities several times over the years. By 2012, its shares had been transferred to the Changs'

PMC Infra Ltd. in Mauritius, filings show. By 2016, the bulk of its business was housed in Howe — the inflection point after which Howe's revenue shot up.

Bloomberg sent requests for comment to the corporate email addresses of PMC and Howe, but they weren't answered.

Howe is little known in India and there haven't been allegations of illegal business dealings involving it. About \$450 million of Adani advances to Howe were outstanding as of June, according to the documents analyzed by Bloomberg.

Adani had never publicly disclosed the payments to Howe until Deloitte flagged them in May. About \$245 million of refundable deposits was returned by Howe to Adani since then. Contractors typically return these funds once a project is completed or terminated.

"The question is who is getting the money, what work are they doing for Howe and Adani, how is the money being spent?," asks Sharmila Gopinath, a specialist advisor for India at the Hong Kong-based Asian Corporate Governance Association. "What reason is there not to disclose these payments when there are obviously deep ties with these people, with the owner?"

Crucial Questions In recent months, Adani stocks have begun to rebound after losing more than \$150 billion in market value following Hindenburg's allegations. The US government, meanwhile, concluded that Hindenburg's allegations weren't applicable to the conglomerate's ports subsidiary before extending the firm as much as \$553 million for a container terminal in Sri Lanka, a senior US official recently told Bloomberg.

The group has also drawn new global investments. But some of its stocks still remain off their peak, reflecting the questions still hanging over its sprawling businesses.

Howe's Ahmedabad offices are housed inside four floors of a glass building that's a two minute walk away from Adani Groups' head office within Shantigram, a 600 acre township owned and developed by the conglomerate.

It had annual revenue of 32.8 billion rupees (\$390 million) in the last fiscal year, according to its filings. Although Howe has other clients, most of its work is for Adani, according to four people familiar with its operations, who asked not to be named because they weren't authorized to speak to the media. Of the 59 projects listed on Howe's website, 33 belong to Adani.

The conglomerate provides Howe with funds or advances to manage the construction of its ports, and the money is then passed on to sub-contractors, according to the people familiar with its operations. So, while millions of dollars from Adani's publicly traded ports business have flowed into Chang's Howe, where all of it landed remains unclear.

Adani said in its statement that while business and commercial transactions are privileged and cannot be routinely disclosed, they are all "fully compliant with the relevant applicable laws."

Business groups can't automatically be assumed to have acted inappropriately, but possible related party transactions "are a risk because there can be abuse," said Gerhard Schnyder, professor of International Management and Political Economy at Loughborough University in London, speaking broadly on corporate governance.

An Old Hand The older Chang was a director of Adani Global Ltd. in Mauritius in 1997, and of Adani Global Pte Ltd. in Singapore between 2003 and 2005 alongside Gautam Adani's older brother Vinod, according to the conglomerate's public reports.

In 2007, entities controlled by the older Chang owned large blocks of Adani Ports, only to transfer them to entities con-

trolled by Vinod Adani, filings analyzed by Bloomberg show. The father's entities have also owned shares in other Adani businesses.

In August, the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project said in an investigation that the father traded in Adani stock through several offshore entities, pumping up the price in the previous decade and obscuring the true ownership of stock by the group's founders. The origins of the funds used weren't clear, OCCRP said.

The Adani Group has refuted OCCRP's allegations, calling them recycled claims and saying that the expert committee appointed by India's Supreme Court in March found no evidence of price manipulation in Adani companies' stocks.

India's revenue intelligence agency conducted at least three investigations into billing and invoicing at the Adani group between 2014 and 2017. Investigators looked into the relationship between Adani companies and the Taiwanese father-son duo at the time, according to a person familiar with the government probes, who asked not to be named because they weren't authorized to speak to the media.

In a 2014 show cause notice, investigators alleged that Adani companies imported power equipment and other hardware from manufacturers in South Korea and China through Chang's PMC Projects and Electrogen Infra FZE Ltd, a Dubai-based entity ultimately owned by Vinod Adani. They alleged that the invoices used for payments by PMC Projects to Electrogen were inflated, allowing funds from Adani companies to be siphoned abroad.

The Adani Group was cleared of all the allegations made against it in 2017 by an adjudicating authority of the agency and later by a customs tribunal. Investigators at the revenue department tried to mount another legal challenge, but India's Supreme Court dismissed the case, saying that there was no need for interference and upheld the findings of the adjudicating body.

Big Business Although Adani has said Howe isn't a connected entity, Gopinath, the governance expert, says that since Adani was paying the contractor large sums of money and its Taiwanese associates were the ultimate owners of the firm, the transactions should have been declared as related party transactions.

Some of India's rules on the subject can be open to interpretation. For instance, transactions must be disclosed as related party payments when one party has the ability to control or exercise significant influence over the other by participating in its financial and operation decisions.

Accounting experts interviewed by Bloomberg also said that if there is a transfer of resources, shared employees or if directors are appointed to specifically to oversee common projects then they should be seen as related parties and payments to them should be subject to added scrutiny from the board and auditors.

Beyond the big contracts flowing from Adani to Howe and PMC, there has also been a revolving door of employees between the three firms, filings show. Past directors at Howe and PMC were also appointed to the boards of Adani group companies over the years.

"The physical proximity of offices (a standard trade practice in such contracts) or the mere holding of directorship — that too, 17 to 26 years ago — will not make the queried transactions related party transactions," Adani said in its statement.

Gopinath said more scrutiny is needed across India to assess payments by listed companies because investor money is involved.

"We need to tinker with related party transaction regulations because this has opened up a new can of worms," she said about the debate around Adani's disclosures.

SC verdict on Art 370 strengthened spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat'

New Delhi, Dec 12 (GNS) On 11th December, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India delivered a historic judgment on the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35(A). Through its judgment, the court has upheld the sovereignty and integrity of India, something that is cherished by every Indian. The Supreme Court rightly observed that the decision taken on 5th August 2019 was done with the purpose of enhancing constitutional integration and not disintegration. The court has also recognised the fact that Article 370 was not permanent in nature.

Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh's breathtaking landscapes, serene valleys, and majestic mountains have captivated the hearts of poets, artists and adventurers for generations. It is a place where the sublime meets the extraordinary, where the Himalayas reach for the sky, and where the pristine waters of its lakes and rivers mirror the heavens. But, for the last seven decades, these places have witnessed the worst form of violence and instability, something which the wonderful people never deserved.

Unfortunately, due to centuries of colonisation, most notably economic and mental subjugation, we became a confused society of sorts. Rather than taking a clear position on very basic things, we allowed duality, leading to confusion. Sadly, Jammu and Kashmir became a big victim of such a mindset. At the time of independence, we had a choice of making a fresh start for national integration. Instead, we decided to continue with the confused society approach even if it meant ignoring the long-term national interests.

I have had the opportunity of being connected with the Jammu and Kashmir Andolan from a very early part of my life. I belong to an ideological framework where Jammu and Kashmir was not merely a political issue. But, it was about addressing the aspirations of society. Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee held an important portfolio in the Nehru Cabinet and could have remained in government for a long time. Yet, he quit the Cabinet over the Kashmir issue and preferred the tough road ahead, even if it meant paying with his life. His efforts and sacrifice led to crores of Indians becoming emotionally attached with the Kashmir issue. Years later, Atal Ji, at a public meeting in Srinagar gave the powerful message of 'Insaniyat', 'Jamhooriyat' and 'Kashmiriyat', which has also always been a source of great inspiration.

It was always my firm belief that what had happened in Jammu and Kashmir was a great betrayal—to our nation and to the people living there. It was also my strong desire to do whatever I can to remove this blot, this injustice done to the people. I have always wanted to work to alleviate the suffering of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

In very basic words, Articles 370 and 35(A) were like major obstacles. It seemed like an unbreakable wall and the sufferers were the poor and downtrodden. Articles 370 and 35(A) ensured that the people of Jammu and

Kashmir never got the rights and development that the rest of their fellow Indians got. Due to these Articles, a distance was created between people belonging to the same nation. Due to this distance, many people from our nation who wanted to work to solve the problems of Jammu and Kashmir were unable to do so even if they clearly felt the pain of the people there.

As a Karyakarta who has seen the issue closely over the last several decades, I had a nuanced understanding of the specifics and the complexities of the issue. Yet, I was crystal clear about one thing—that the people of Jammu and Kashmir want development and they want to contribute to the development of India based on their strengths and skills. They also want a better quality of life of their children, a life free from violence and uncertainty.

Thus, while serving the people of Jammu and Kashmir, we gave primacy to three pillars—understanding of the citizens' concerns, building trust through supportive actions, and prioritising development, development and more development.

In 2014, just after we assumed office, deadly floods struck Jammu and Kashmir, with a lot of damage in the Kashmir valley. In September 2014, I went to Srinagar to assess the situation and also announced Rs 1000 crore as a special assistance for rehabilitation, signalling our government's commitment to supporting the people during crises. I had the opportunity to meet people from different walks of life and there was one common thread in these interactions—the people not only wanted development but they also wanted freedom from the rampant corruption prevailing for decades. The same year, I decided not to mark Diwali in remembrance of those we lost in Jammu

and Kashmir. I also decided to be in Jammu and Kashmir on Diwali day.

In order to further strengthen Jammu and Kashmir's development journey, we decided that our government ministers would frequently go there and interact with people directly. These frequent visits also played a crucial role in building goodwill in Jammu and Kashmir. From May 2014 to



March 2019, over 150 ministerial visits took place. This is a record in itself. The special package of 2015 was a significant step in addressing the developmental needs of Jammu and Kashmir. It contained initiatives for infrastructure development, job creation, tourism promotion and support to the handicraft industry.

We harnessed the power of sports in Jammu and Kashmir, recognising its potential to ignite the dreams of the youth. Through sporting initiatives, we witnessed the transformational impact of athletic pursuits on their aspirations and futures. Sporting venues were upgraded, training programmes were organised and coaches were made available. One of the most unique things was to encourage the setting of local football clubs. The results were outstanding. The name of the talented footballer Afshan Ashiq comes to my mind—in December 2014 she was a part of a stone pelting group in Srinagar but with the right encouragement she turned to football, she was sent for training and excelled in the game. I recall interacting with her in one of the Fit India

Dialogues where I said its time to move over 'Bend it like Beckham' because it is now 'Ace it like Afshan.' Other youngsters began to shine in kickboxing, Karate and more.

The Panchayat polls were also a watershed moment in the region's quest for all-round development. Once again, we were faced with a choice of either remaining in power or standing by our principles—the choice was never tough and we let go of a Government but preferred that that ideals that we stand for, the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir are given top priority. The success of panchayat polls indicated the democratic nature of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. My mind went back to an interaction I had with Pradhans from the villages. Among other issues, I made a request to them—that at no point must schools be burnt and that must be ensured. I was delighted to see that this was adhered to. After all, if schools are burnt the biggest sufferers are the small children.

The historical day of 5th August is etched in the hearts and minds of every Indian. Our Parliament passed the historic decision to abrogate Article 370. Since then, much has changed in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. The judicial court verdict came in December 2023 but seeing the wave of development across Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh, the people's court have given a resounding thumbs up to the Parliament's decision of abolishing Articles 370 and 35(A) for four years now.

At a political level, the last 4 years have been marked with a renewed faith in grassroots democracy. The women, tribals, SC, ST and marginalised sections of society were not getting their due. At the same time, the aspirations of Ladakh were totally ignored. 5th August 2019 changed that. All

Central laws now apply without fear or favour Representation has also got more widespread—a three tier Panchayati Raj System is in place, BDC elections have been held, and refugee communities who were all but forgotten have begun to enjoy the fruits of development.

Key Central Government scheme have attained saturation levels, thus covering all sections of society. These include Saubhagya, Ujjwala and Ujjwala schemes. Strides have been made in housing, tap water connection and financial inclusion. Healthcare, otherwise a major challenge for the people has witnessed an upgradation of infrastructure. All the villages achieved ODF Plus stats. Government vacancies, which were otherwise a den of corruption and favouritism have been filled in a transparent and process driven manner. Other indicators like IMR have shown betterment. The boost to infrastructure and tourism has been for everyone to see. The credit for this naturally goes to the resilience of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, who have shown time and again that they want only development and are willing to be drivers of this positive change. Earlier, there was a question mark on the status of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. Now, there are only exclamation marks about record growth, record development, record tourist inflow.

In its verdict on 11th December, the Supreme Court has strengthened the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat'—it has reminded us that what defines us is the bonds of unity and a shared commitment to good governance. Today, every child born in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh is born with a clean canvas, where he or she can paint a future full of vibrant aspirations. Today, the dreams of the people are no longer prisoners of the past but are possibilities of the future. After all, Development, democracy and dignity have replaced disillusionment, disappointment and despondency.

Corning to set up Rs 1,000 crore Gorilla Glass facility in Tamil Nadu

New Delhi, Dec 12 (GNS) American Gorilla Glass maker and key supplier of Apple, Corning Inc, is looking to set up a Rs 1,000 crore manufacturing facility in Tamil Nadu, The Economic Times (ET) reported on Tuesday citing multiple sources. The factory will be set up at Pillaipakkam near Sriperumbudur and will employ 300 people.

This will be the first time the company will enter the Indian market. Earlier this year, the Telangana government said that the company would set up a factory there. However, ET reported that the company has picked Tamil Nadu over Telangana due to its proximity to other Apple suppliers like Foxconn and Pegatron.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) is likely to be signed at the Global Investor Meet (GIM) in January. The report did not mention the specific timeline. However, it said that the factory would take one year to be built.

In October, Business Standard reported that India's first high-quality financial

BNP Paribas sells retail broking arm Sharekhan To S Korea's Mirae

Mumbai, Dec 12 (GNS) French banking major BNP Paribas has sold its domestic retail broking unit Sharekhan to South Korean financial group Mirae for an undisclosed sum. BNP Paribas spokesperson confirmed the development in an email to Business Standard but refused to divulge any details. A comment from Mirae Asset Financial Group is still awaited. Paris-headquartered BNP had acquired 100 per cent equity of Sharekhan from a clutch of investors in 2015. The deal size was not disclosed, however, industry players pegged it around Rs 2,000 crore. BNP's acquisition was completed in 2016 after receiving approvals from all regulatory authorities.

Sharekhan was founded in 2000 and was one of the first brokerages to offer online trading. The company has 2.8 million customers and provides a range of investment services. The company claims to execute nearly a million trades a day. Before acquiring Sharekhan, BNP

Paribas in 2007 had picked up a 34 per cent stake in Kochi-based Geojit Securities, which has a market cap of Rs 1,650 crore at present. Post the advent of covid, the investor count in India has more than tripled to over 135 million amid digital onboarding of clients, proliferation of discount brokers and a secular upturn in stock prices. Retail broking industry's topline could more than double over the next five years, estimates consultancy firm Bain & Company. The industry—which facilitates stock market trading for investors—has already seen its revenues double from Rs 14,000 crore during the financial year 2018-19 (FY19) to Rs 27,000 crore in FY23, an annualised growth rate of 17 per cent. "Greater financial literacy, frictionless customer onboarding and proliferating user-friendly digital platforms have led to a substantial jump in the number of young investors, accounting 70-80 per cent of active clientele of digital.

identified list of electronic goods that comprise the downstream value chain of electronic products.

Initially, the smartphone cover glasses will be given premium finishing in the new facility to be built as part of the 70:30 joint venture between Optiemus and Corning. The new entity has been named Bharat Innovation Glass (BIG). The facility may begin operations in 2024 with a production capacity of 30 million pieces for the first phase. Cover glasses for the front and back panels of smartphones will be processed in the Indian factory. The joint venture has sought support from the central government. It has already applied for incentives under the Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors (SPecs).

SPecs provides a financial incentive of 25 per cent on capital expenditure for the

Omidyar Network decides to exit Indian market after a decade of operations

New Delhi, Dec 12 (GNS) Impact investment firm Omidyar Network India, which has a dual-cheque book investment model, is exiting India after a decade of operations, reported TechCrunch.

"Over the last decade, Omidyar Network India has played a critical role in building the impact investment sector, especially focused on the Next Half Billion. We are proud of our work in this space, which is now attracting larger pools of capital from local venture capital or impact investors and domestic philanthropists than ever before. Having achieved our primary objective of catalysing impact, Omidyar Network India will not be making any further investments in India," said a statement issued by Omidyar Network India. "After several months of deliberation, it has been decided that Omidyar Network India will stop making new investments and will

completely transition out of the market by the end of 2024. Over the next two months, the board and leadership team will assess how best to manage the organisation's portfolio while recognising the long and trusted partnerships that the Omidyar Network India team has built," said the Omidyar Group in an internal blog post. The blog further added,



"This decision was heavily informed by the significant change in context and the growth in the economic landscape that the India-based team has experienced since first making investments there in 2010. Today, there is more Indian led philanthropic and venture capital than ever before, the country has a vibrant start-up sector, and several funds

now have a middle and lower-middle income focus as part of their investment strategy."

Backed by eBay founder Pierre Omidyar, the local unit focused on startups based in India. It has made investments in several noted startups like Tata 1mg, Bounce, Centa, CloudSek, DealShare, Kiwi, Otopy, Doubnut, and more. It recently led the \$6 million round in Digivridhi Technologies, a fintech start-up serving the dairy industry.

The TechCrunch report further stated that the investor had about \$673 million of cumulative assets in India. It is also worth noting that the Omidyar group has come under scanner of the Government of India (GoI) over alleged unauthorised foreign funding. In 2021, Omidyar Network International was among the group of 10 American, Australian and European NGOs that were barred from funding.

South Central Railway

Open e-Tender Notice No. DRM/Works/BZA/31/2023 Dated: 07.12.2023

For and on behalf of the President of India, the undersigned invites E-Tenders for the following works up to 15:00 hours and the date mentioned against each.

SI.No.: 01 Tender No.: E-23-North-BZA-2023 Name of work: SW-I : BZA -VSKP Section : Provision of High level Platform at KYM Station in ADEN/SLO Sub-Division under Sr.DEN/North/BZA Jurisdiction. (Umbrella Work Project ID : 11.06.53.22.3.55.053 of 2022-23) SW-II : BZA-VSKP Section : Provision of High level Platform at MPU Station in ADEN/SLO Sub-Division under Sr.DEN/North/BZA Jurisdiction. (Umbrella Work Project ID : 11.06.53.22.3.55.039 of 2022-23) SW-III : BZA-VSKP Section - Provision of High Level Platform at BVM Station in ADEN/TUNI Sub-Division under Sr.DEN/N/BZA Jurisdiction. (Umbrella Work Project ID : 11.06.53.22.3.55.047 of 2022-23) Period of completion: 09(Nine) months Tender value: ₹ 54070017/- E.M.D.: ₹ 420400/- Date of closing: 22/12/2023.

SI.No.: 02 Tender No.: E-24-North-BZA-2023 Name of work: SW-I : BZA-VSKP Section - Repairs to IOH and Freight shed at COA in SSE/Works/SLO section under ADEN/SLO Sub-Division. SW-II : Repairs to MEMU Coach maintenance Facilities and Repairs to infrastructure facilities at MEMU Car Shed, Rajahmundry in SSE/Works/RJY section under ADEN/RJY Sub-Division. SW-III : BZA-VSKP Section - NDD : Repairs to Yard Drain at NDD in SSE/Works/NDD Section under ADEN/RJY Sub-Division. Period of completion: 09(Nine) months Tender value: ₹ 15086235/- E.M.D.: ₹ 225400/- Date of closing: 22/12/2023.

SI.No.: 03 Tender No.: E-52-East-BZA-2023 Name of work: SW-1 : Provision of clinical meeting cum conference hall in lieu of shifting pathological lab in RHBZA. SW-II : Attention to toilets and passage for children ward, Gynec ward & special rooms RHBZA SSE/Works/Est/BZA section. Period of completion: 12(Twelve) months Tender value: ₹ 7452386/- E.M.D.: ₹ 149100/- Date of closing: 27/12/2023.

SI.No.: 04 Tender No.: E-53-East-BZA-2023 Name of work: SW-1 : Vijaywada Division: SW-I: Painting of In-service rails in SSE/P-way/South/BZA, North/BZA & SSE/P-way/GDV sections of ADEN/Lines/BZA sub-division. SW-II: Painting of In-service rails in SSE/P-way/BVM/TNKU&MTM sections of ADEN/BVM sub-division. Period of completion: 12(Twelve) months Tender value: ₹ 28304955/- E.M.D.: ₹ 291500/- Date of closing: 27/12/2023.

SI.No.: 05 Tender No.: E-18-Central-BZA-2023 Name of work: Repairs to Bridges Ballast retainers, face walls spalling concrete patches, and central drain works in SSE/WORKS/EE under ADENE/EE sub-division. Period of completion: 08(Eight) months Tender value: ₹ 11965959/- E.M.D.: ₹ 209800/- Date of closing: 29/12/2023.

SI.No.: 06 Tender No.: E-19-Central-BZA-2023 Name of work: BZA division EE station 1) Provision of open sheds for Hamalis 2) Provision of bathing for hamalis 3) Provision of two wheeler parking stand. Period of completion: 09(Nine) months Tender value: ₹ 19246885/- E.M.D.: ₹ 246200/- Date of closing: 29/12/2023.

SI.No.: 07 Tender No.: E-20-Central-BZA-2023 Name of work: Provision of Sewage Treatment plant in compliance to NGT guidelines, APPCB and CPCB at CLXEE Stations. Period of completion: 09(Nine) months Tender value: ₹ 12581115/- E.M.D.: ₹ 2129000/- Date of closing: 29/12/2023.

The prospective tenderers are advised to visit website "www.ireps.gov.in", before the date of tender closing to note any changes/corrigenda for any tender.

Divisional Railway Manager, Works, Vijaywada

E - Tender Notice No. 29-Dy. CE-GS-GNT Dated: 06.12.2023

The undersigned invites e-tenders for the works mentioned below: a) For SI.No. 1 will be opened at 15:30 hrs on 28.12.2023. b) For SI.No. 2 & 3 will be opened at 15:30 hrs on 02.01.2024.

SI.No.: 1 Tender Id.: 62 Section: Dy.CE/GS/GNT Description of work: Multi tracking and connectivity at Guntur yard for 8.20km - Track portion Approx value in: ₹ 65375034.51 EMD: ₹ 476900.00

SI.No.: 2 Tender Id.: 63 Section: Dy.CE/GS/GNT Description of work: 1. Proposed construction of new FOB with 12.00mts wide gangway at MRGA, N.LDA, PGRL and NDL stations under ABSS 2. Proposed construction of new FOB with 12.00mts wide gangway at GNT, NRT and MRK stations under ABSS. Approx value in: ₹ 776296699.33 EMD: ₹ 4031500.00

SI.No.: 3 Tender Id.: 64 Section: Dy.CE/GS/GNT Description of work: Provision of subways in lieu of LC(M) No 41 @ KM 45/8-9 in GNT-NDKD section. Approx value in: ₹ 36578970.17 EMD: ₹ 332900.00

1. Last date for online submission of E-bids is : a) For SI.No 1 will be opened at 15:30 hrs on 28.12.2023. b) For SI.No 2&3 will be opened at 15:30 hrs on 02.01.2024

2. For detailed information logon to website www.ireps.gov.in.

3. Any further Communication/Corrigendum shall be initiated through E-portal www.ireps.gov.in.

Dy.Chief Engineer, Gati Shakti, Guntur

For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents, please visit website at www.ireps.gov.in

http://www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in

IndoStar Home Finance Private Limited

Regd. Office : Unit No. 305, 3rd Floor, Wing 2/E, Corporate Avenue, Andheri: Ghatkopar Link Road, Chakala, Andheri (East), Mumbai - 400093

Notice is hereby given in terms of paragraph 93 of the Master Direction- Non-Banking Financial Company - Housing Finance Company (Reserve Bank) Directions, 2021, that the branch office of the Company located at D.No. 86-26-13/1, 2nd Floor, Upstairs Sbi, VI Puram, Tilak Road, Rajahmundry Pin Code -533106 will be closed with effect from close of business hours of 13th March, 2024 as operations are being shifted to a nearby branch office located at 80-23-21, Jayasree gardens, Revenue, J.N.Road, Ward No 29, Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh-533103. In case any assistance is required, you may contact the nearest branch office as mentioned above or send an email to connect@indostarhfc.com.

This notice may be accessed on the Company's website (www.indostarhfc.com). For IndoStar Home Finance Private Limited Sd/- Nidhi Sadani Company Secretary Date: 12-12-2023