

'Sauce for goose is sauce for gander': CJI rebukes industry bodies' plea to defer disclosure of electoral bond numbers

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday told the industry bodies like CII, FICCI and Assocham that it would not hear their plea in connection with the disclosure of complete details Electoral Bonds launched as opaque system of donation for political parties as their plea was not board. Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi submitted before a five-judge bench led by Chief Justice of India that he was appearing for major industry bodies. "We have filed application this morning," he said. "Your

application is not numbered, it's not registered. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander! Just because you're appearing for a big client, we will not tolerate this. You have to follow the rules in my court," the bench told Rohatgi. "There is no such application in the board. Let it be circulated, we will deal with it in normal course," the bench told him. "You are appearing for big clients, we will not tolerate this," the bench told the counsel who said if the court was making order, the

application would become infructuous. The counsel said, "Kindly defer the order for release of alphanumeric numbers." Supreme Court orders SBI to disclose all electoral bond details by March 21. "You were aware of when the proceedings were going on before this court, you could have intervened at that stage. What is this that after the judgment is passed," the bench told him. Rohatgi said he was aggrieved with the order passed on March 15. "We were not parties," he said. The bench,

however, said, "the whole world knew that the matter is going on. You come here after the judgment is delivered. That is not the way." Rohatgi said he has no problem with the list of donors and recipients. "We will not hear you right now, we have specific application on board. You file an email. Our registry will deal with it," the bench said, making it clear to the counsel that it would not show any preferential treatment for his clients.

Lok Sabha Elections 2024: BJP signs poll pact with PMK in Tamil Nadu, allots 10 seats

Chennai: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) delegation comprising State President K Annamalai, and Union Minister L Murugan has signed the poll pact with Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) founder S Ramadoss and PMK president Anbumani Ramadoss for upcoming Lok Sabha election on Tuesday. The has got 10 Lok Sabha seats in the alliance led by BJP in Tamil Nadu. No decision on allocating the Rajya Sabha seat to PMK. The PMK president received Annamalai and Murugan by presenting shawls. The seat-sharing agreement between both parties was signed at the PMK leader's Thailapuram residence near Thindivanam.



ment with the BJP, PMK president Anbumani Ramadoss attacked both Dravidian majors - the DMK and the AIADMK, without naming them. Anbumani Ramadoss said "There is a hatred for the parties which ruled Tamil Nadu for the past 60 years. The people are eagerly awaiting a change in the State. To fulfill that wish of the people, the PMK has

taken this decision to align with the NDA. The PMK has been in alliance with both Dravidian parties in the past and very recently, the PMK was in alliance with the AIADMK in the 2021 Assembly elections. Anbumani added, 'For the past 10 years, the PMK has been a partner of the NDA. The PMK will contest the LS Polls in alliance with the NDA. The PMK took this decision to ensure the continuance of the government led by Narendra Modi as PM once again and to bring in changes in Tamil Nadu. The NDA will have a big victory not only in Tamil Nadu but also at the national level.'

since Monday night due to the decision taken by the PMK to align with the BJP-led NDA. We came to Thailapuram from Coimbatore overnight. Both S Ramadoss and Anbumani Ramadoss will be taking part in the public meeting to be addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.'

Anbumani attacks DMK, AIADMK after joining BJP
Just after the PMK signed an agree-

The political scenario changed in Tamil Nadu: Annamalai
Annamalai who also addressed the reporters, said, 'It is a strong alliance. The political scenario has changed

PMK leaders to participate in PM Modi's rally in Tamil Nadu today
PMK founder and PMK president are likely to attend the Salem public meeting in Tamil Nadu to be addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi late in the day. PMK on Monday decided to go with BJP in the Lok Sabha elections. Vadivel Ramanan, PMK general secretary said that the details of the seat sharing will be announced by party founder S Ramadoss within a day or two.

'Welcome to Tihar Club': Jailed 'Conman' Sukesh Mocks Kavitha 'Akkaiah' in New Letter, Claims Kejriwal Threatened Him

Conman Sukesh Chandrashekhar, who is lodged in Delhi's Mandoli prison, released another explosive letter welcoming 'Akkaiah' K Kavitha to the 'Tihar Club' and suggested that he has more information to reveal about Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. In his letter addressed to Kavitha, Sukesh, who is currently in jail in a Rs 200-crore money laundering case, said that those denying their wrongdoings by calling the allegation fake and political with hunt are getting back their karma. He said he would soon expose Kejriwal as well. "The truth has prevailed, the dramas of saying fake cases, fake allegations, the political witch hunt have fallen flat, all your karmas are com-

ing back to you," the letter stated. Addressing Kavitha, Sukesh further wrote, "You always thought you were untouchable. But you forget this is the new Bharat, the law is stronger than ever." The jailed conman further claimed that two predictions made by him last year - one that the "BRS would be thrown out of power in Telangana" following the 2023 Assembly elections and second that Kavitha will be arrested and be a part of Tihar club, turned out to be true. The letter comes after the ED arrested BRS leader and former Telangana Chief Minister KCR's daughter K Kavitha after an hour-long raid at her premises in Hyderabad. She was later brought to



Delhi for questioning in a money laundering case linked to the now-scrapped Delhi excise policy.
Kavitha's Arrest Will Open "Pandora's Box of Corruption"
In his latest letter, Sukesh further

alleged that Kavitha's arrest will open a "Pandora's Box of corruption" and that his "dearest friend Arvind Kejriwal will be exposed to another level." "All your corrupt associates, including the king of corruption, my dearest Arvind Kejriwal, are going to be exposed to another level. Thousands of crores that you and your party have looted and stacked in Singapore, Hong Kong and Germany will all be out in the open," the letter read. The conman concluded his letter with a request to Kavitha urging her to stop hiding evidence. "There is enough evidence to prove all your corruption... Will see you soon, akkaiah, face-to-face. I welcome you to the greatest Tihar club," he wrote.

Rail Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw Reveals When India's First Bullet Train Will Start Running

The much-awaited bullet train project will be ready by 2026, with services between Surat and Bilimora, Railways minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said at the Rising Bharat Summit 2024 in New Delhi on Tuesday. Vaishnaw said the train will not be just a mode of transportation but will connect the economies of cities between Mumbai and Ahmedabad. "It is not just a means of transportation. When it runs, it will connect the economy of all the cities around it... Mumbai, Thane, Vapi, Surat, Vadodara, Anand and Ahmedabad will become a single economy zone... The train will be ready by 2026... The train will run first between the Surat-Bilimora section," the minister said. He further said while countries take 20



years to build a 500 km project, India will complete it in 8-10 years. The service will be world-class, he assured. The bullet train will pass through Gujarat,

Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Maharashtra. The total land required for the project is around 1,400 hectares. The total length of the bullet train corridor is divided into three states/UTs - 156 km in Maharashtra, 4 km in Dadra and Nagar Haveli and 384 km in Gujarat. As per the National High Speed Rail Corporation Ltd (NHSRCL), executing the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail (MAHSR) project, 100% land has been acquired for the project across Maharashtra and Gujarat. Also, all the civil contracts have been awarded in the two states. As of February 28, at least 143 km of girders have been launched and 289 km of pier casting have been completed. The total cost of the MAHSR project was estimated as Rs 1 lakh crore

in 2015. About 81 percent cost of the MAHSR Project is being funded by the Government of Japan and remaining cost is being provided through the Equity by the shareholders - Government of India (Ministry of Railways) (50%), Government of Gujarat (25%) and Government of Maharashtra (25%). The work on the country's first bullet train started in September 2017 in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and former Japanese Prime Minister late Shinzo Abe jointly laid the foundation stone for the project. The project was targeted to be completed by December, 2023. However, several factors are impacting the project growth, including pace of land acquisition



Biden's age haunts his appearances - and elections

"My memory is fine," President Joe Biden said at a press conference designed to refute claims that he's "an elderly man with a poor memory". Minutes later he mistakenly referred to Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi as the "President of Mexico". This is what average Americans have seen of this president over the last few years. And this is the issue that could doom Biden's re-election chances. Americans have observed the following: Biden is 81. He has memory problems. He fractured his foot playing with his dog and has what one Democrat called "an old man walk." Sometimes he gets names wrong. Sometimes he gets dates wrong. He pauses for uncomfortable stretches, seeming to search for a word or thought that's not quite there. He has a faraway gaze that makes him look out of it. In a recent NBC News poll, 76 per cent of voters said that Biden "not having the necessary mental and physical health to be president for a second term" was a major or moderate concern for them. That includes 54 per cent of Democrats and 81 per cent of independents. These are the voters Biden and his team will need to return to the White House. Rather than level with Americans about

Biden's clear issues, they too often dissemble and get defensive or pivot to Donald Trump's age. Yet to voters Trump, who despite being just three years younger, appears less frail. Only 48 per cent of voters have the same concerns about Trump's age and fitness. Biden campaign joins TikTok to reach young voters ahead of presidential elections. Biden, who likes to say he is a shoot-from-the-shoulder politician, must admit that average Americans aren't part of some right-wing cabal when they notice signs of his aging. Many have seen a similar decline in themselves and family and friends. The president can't keep telling Americans to believe him, not what they're seeing. He must acknowledge what everyone sees and is talking about, then succinctly pivot to his real strengths. He is a fundamentally decent man. He has restored America's reputation as a reliable ally. He pulled the American economy out of a ditch. The Biden economy has seen higher wages and lower unemployment. The Biden economy added 3,53,000 jobs last month. Millions of students no longer have burdensome student loan payments. Yes, Biden gets names wrong. But he has gotten the big



issues right. Biden might forget that he met with a certain world leader, but it's because he has met with hundreds over his 40 years in public service. He might forget a date, but he remembers the people and the values he is fighting for. A Black woman sits on the Supreme Court and in the vice president's office - in fact, Biden's team is one of the most diverse the country has ever seen. He should showcase this team as often as he can, emphasizing that the presidency is a team effort. While former President Donald Trump was often derided for his need to show off obsequious cabinet meetings, those meetings helped burnish his image as the leader of a loyal team. Biden should borrow from Trump's playbook. The presidency is not only about legislative accomplish-

ments, it's also about the visual display of strength, power and leadership. Telling Americans that Biden is engaged isn't as effective as showing that he is. The White House must put him out there often, mistakes and all. (Is it too late for him to do the Super Bowl interview?) Hiding the gaffe-prone president, as his team seems prone to do, will only make the gaffes bigger. If he's out there enough, eventually reporters will tire of asking him if he's fit for the job. His constant presence and engagement will be its own answer. He will surely make mistakes, but the stakes will be much lower. Every event won't have such high stakes, as happened with his recent press conference, if he's constantly flooding the zone. His ability to connect with ordinary, struggling Americans is unmatched - his call with the family of a fallen soldier was incredibly moving and authentic. His genteel, pastoral and grandfatherly manner is an asset in a fractured and angry country. His campaign must look for ways to highlight this strength. Democrats have for many months been privately frustrated with the way the White House has dealt with the age issue. They have pressed the president's team to do more.

Mob vandalises, sets driverless Waymo car ablaze in San Francisco

NEW DELHI (ROYAL JOURNALISM): Google spinoff and Alphabet-owned Waymo said the crowd surrounded the white sport utility vehicle in San Francisco's China Town area on Saturday. According to authorities, this was the most destructive attack on self-driving vehicles in the US so far. Michael Vandi, a witness who posted videos of the incident, told Reuters that people were celebrating China's Lunar New Year by setting off fireworks. A person jumped onto the hood of the Waymo vehicle and broke its windshield. Another person also jumped on the hood 30 seconds later as some in the crowd clapped in approval, he told Reuters in an X direct message. "That was when it went WILD," he wrote, describing people with skateboards breaking the glass and others graffitiing the car. "There were two groups of people. Folks who encourage it - and others who were just shocked & started filming.

No one stood up - i mean there wasn't anything you could do to stand up to dozens of people." His video showed the vehicle engulfed in flames with a huge plume of black smoke. Waymo said someone threw a firework inside, which set the vehicle on fire. The fire department posted pictures on social media of the charred remains of the car, and said a firework started the blaze. "The vehicle was not transporting any riders and no injuries have been reported. We are working closely with local safety officials to respond to the situation," the company said. It did not say what caused the attack. The San Francisco Police Department said it was investigating the cause of the fire and did not say whether arrests have been made. The electric car, a Jaguar I-PACE, is equipped with 29 cameras and other sensors. The latest incident came a day before the Super Bowl NFL championship involving the San Francisco

49ers and the Kansas City Chiefs. "This was a one-off event," the Waymo spokesperson told Reuters, adding it will "continue serving riders during today's festivities". The incident was not the first time people have harassed self-driving cars, but its severity may illustrate growing public hostility following a pedestrian-dragging accident last year involving a vehicle operated by General Motors' Cruise unit. On previous occasions in San Francisco and Phoenix, Arizona, groups have disrupted the operations of self-driving vehicles, blocking their path, trying to enter the vehicles and jumping on their hoods. Videos that went viral showed people putting orange traffic cones on top of vehicles to obstruct their sensors and force them to stop abruptly. Last week, a driverless Waymo car collided with a cyclist in San Francisco, causing minor injuries. The incident is being reviewed



by the state's auto regulator. Waymo offers driverless ride-hailing service in Phoenix and is working to expand the service to Los Angeles and Austin, Texas. On October 2, 2023, a pedestrian hit by another vehicle was thrown into the path of a self-driving Cruise vehicle and dragged 20 feet. California subsequently suspended the company's driverless testing license, and Cruise pulled all its US self-driving vehicles from testing. Completely driverless test vehicles, mostly from Cruise and Waymo fleets, travelled nearly 5.3 million km in California last year.

LIC's new product roll outs drive growth in December quarter

NEW DELHI (ROYAL JOURNALISM): Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) reported a net profit of Rs 26,900 crore for the first nine months of the current financial year. However, this figure is not directly comparable to the previous year's results, as last year's net profit included an amount of Rs 4,500 crore related to accretions on the available solvency margin, which was transferred from the non-par fund to the shareholders' account. Despite a 5 per cent annual growth in net premium to Rs 1.17 lakh crore during the first nine months, LIC's market share in premium has dipped to 58.9 per cent, down from 68.4 per cent in the corresponding period last year. The value of new business (VNB) surged by 46 per cent annually to Rs 2,634 crore in the third quarter of the current financial year. For the first nine months, VNB grew by 8.4 per cent annually to Rs 5,940 crore. This growth has also translated into an improvement in VNB margin, reaching 20 per cent in



the third quarter and 16.6 per cent for the entire nine-month period. Analysts at brokerage firm Motilal Oswal attributed this improvement in margins to changes in the product mix. While the net margin in the individual par segment witnessed a slight decline to 10.3 per cent for the first nine months, the non-par segment's net margins improved marginally to 63.8 per cent. The introduction of new products such as LIC's

Group Post Retirement Medical Benefit, LIC's Dhan Vriddhi, LIC's Jeevan Kiran, and LIC's Jeevan Utsav - with a combined premium collection of over Rs 1,000 crore - has been instrumental in driving growth. These products are proving to be highly competitive and are gaining traction in the market, with LIC expressing confidence in the sustainability of their VNB margins, the Mumbai-based brokerage said. LIC is also gearing up to focus more on alternate channels, considering its current share of less than 1 per cent. The banca channel, in particular, has witnessed robust growth and is expected to continue on this trajectory. Despite a slight decline in margins in the Par segment, LIC remains optimistic. Repricing of annuity products twice this year has impacted the VNB margin, but the company is confident in its ability to maintain its industry-leading position and drive growth in profitable segments such as Protection, Non-PAR, and Sav-

ings Annuity. With expectations of a 6 per cent CAGR in annualised premium equivalent (APE) over FY23-26 and a 12 per cent VNB CAGR, LIC is positioned for growth. However, its operating return on embedded value (RoEV) is expected to remain modest at 10.7 per cent in FY26, considering its lower margin profile compared to private peers and a large EV base, the brokerage firm said. Amid gradual recovery in margins and diversification in the business mix, analysts have raised their VNB estimates. Furthermore, better-than-expected equity market returns have led to an increase in EV estimates. Therefore, Motilal Oswal analysts recommend buy on the stock for target price of Rs 1,270. As of 12:06 pm, LIC shares traded 2.8 per cent lower at Rs 1,050. Earlier in the day, LIC shares rose as much as 6.8 per cent to hit an intraday high of Rs 1,150 before succumbing to profit booking.

