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SPECIAL ISSUE



FEBRUARY 5, 2024 ₹100

INDIA TODAY

THE GREAT HINDU REVIVAL



PM Narendra Modi at
the consecration of
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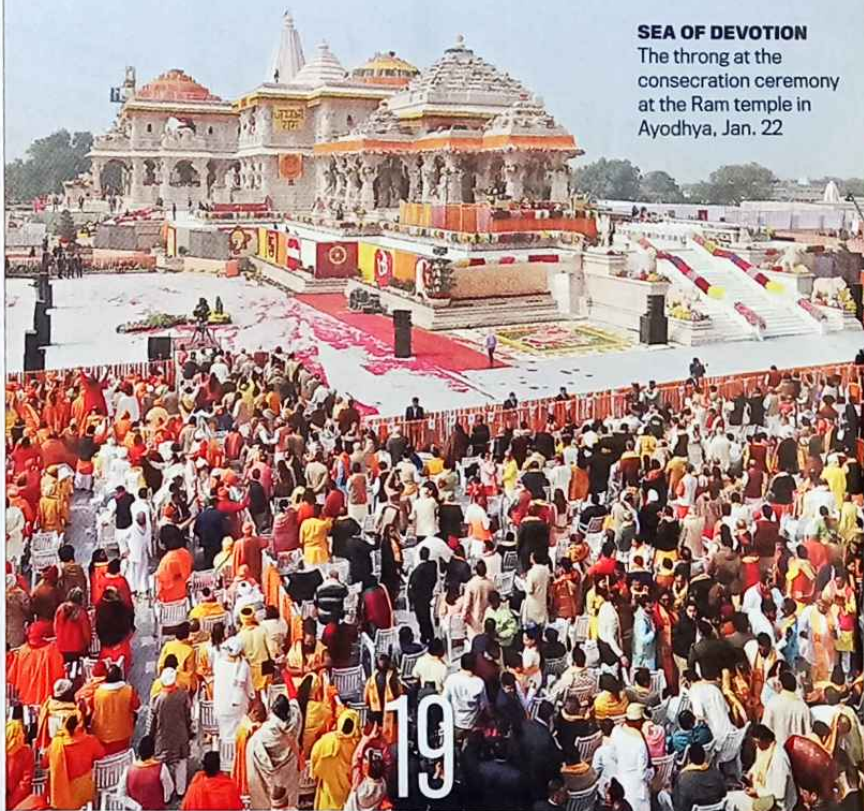
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THE GREAT HINDU REVIVAL

How will it change India and can it lead to Ram Rajya?

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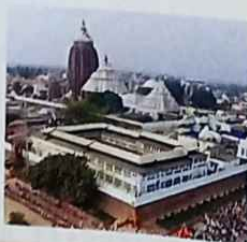
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By Pradip R. Sagar

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WHY THE OPPOSITION ALLIANCE FELL
APART AND HOW IT WILL IMPACT THE
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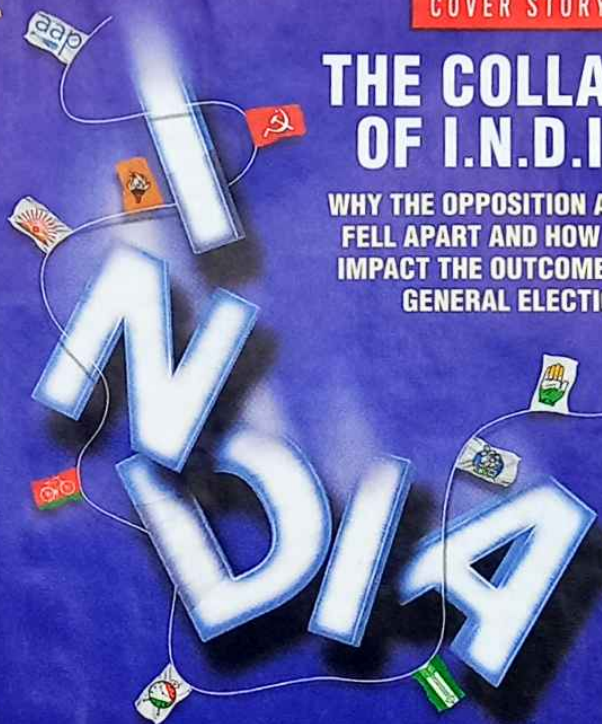
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FLAGS THAT DIVIDE
Members of the
Meitei vigilante group
Arambai Tenggol at
Kangla Fort in Imphal

AFP

MANIPUR

RETURN OF MILITANCY

By Kaushik Deka

In the Manipur of today, ethnically riven as it is between two warring communities—the Meiteis and the Kukis—facts have become stranger than fiction. On January 24, a Meitei vigilante group calling itself Arambai Tenggol (roughly translated as dart-wielding cavalry) summoned 37 Meitei legislators, including Chief Minister N. Biren Singh and two MPs, to Kangla Fort—once the seat of power of the ancient Meitei

kingdom. The group, which boasts a strength of 60,000 volunteers, wanted all these legislators—across party lines—pledging their commitment towards Manipur and Meitei causes.

While Biren Singh did not respond to the call, 25 MLAs from the BJP, five from the Congress, four from the National People's Party, two from the Janata Dal (United) and one independent, besides the two MPs, turned up at the fort's gate, which was manned

not by security personnel but by armed members of the Arambai Tenggol. Earlier that morning, young men in military fatigues and some brandishing arms, rode into the fort in open-top Gypsies. The Arambai Tenggol volunteers made the MLAs leave behind their security staff before entering the fort.

Inside the fort, the legislators signed a pledge that included Arambai Tenggol's key demands, including abrogation of the Suspension of Operations

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HEADING FOR A HAT-TRICK

HIS PERSONAL POPULARITY STILL HIGH, PM NARENDRA MODI AND THE BJP ARE SET TO RETURN FOR A THIRD CONSECUTIVE TERM WITH A CLEAR MAJORITY, THOUGH JOBS ARE A CONCERN

FRACTURED VERDICT AND HAS TO TACKLE A COLLAPSING ECONOMY, HIGH INFLATION, UNRULY IMRAN SUPPORTERS AND A DOMINEERING ARMY

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SCALED UP
Uttarakhand CM
Pushkar Dhami
presents the UCC
draft report, Feb. 2

UCC

THE CODE IN UNIFORM

By Anilesh S. Mahajan

With just weeks to go before the general election is announced, Uttarakhand chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami believes he has handed Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the party, the BJP, a political plank to push further the pro-Hindutva narrative. Amid the sound of thumping on tables and chants of Jai Shri Ram and Vande Mataram, the state assembly passed a bill on a draft uniform civil code

(UCC), paving the way for common civil laws for all religions to govern issues like marriage, divorce, inheritance and adoption. This is perceived as the BJP's first step to get uniformity in civil laws nationally, and it's likely that other party-ruled states will follow suit.

Civil laws on matters like marriages, divorce, adoption and inheritance are entries in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, allowing the states and Centre both to frame laws. Only in case of disputes will the Centre's law prevail.

With minor tweaks to the Uttarakhand template, BJP-ruled Gujarat and Assam are also likely to pass similar laws before the code of conduct—expected by mid-March—kicks in. The Uttarakhand act, the first-ever iteration of the UCC, saw extensive discussions, anchored by a panel led by retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai. It drafted a four-volume, 749-page report containing several recommendations. While the Centre is still awaiting the Law Commission's report on a UCC for

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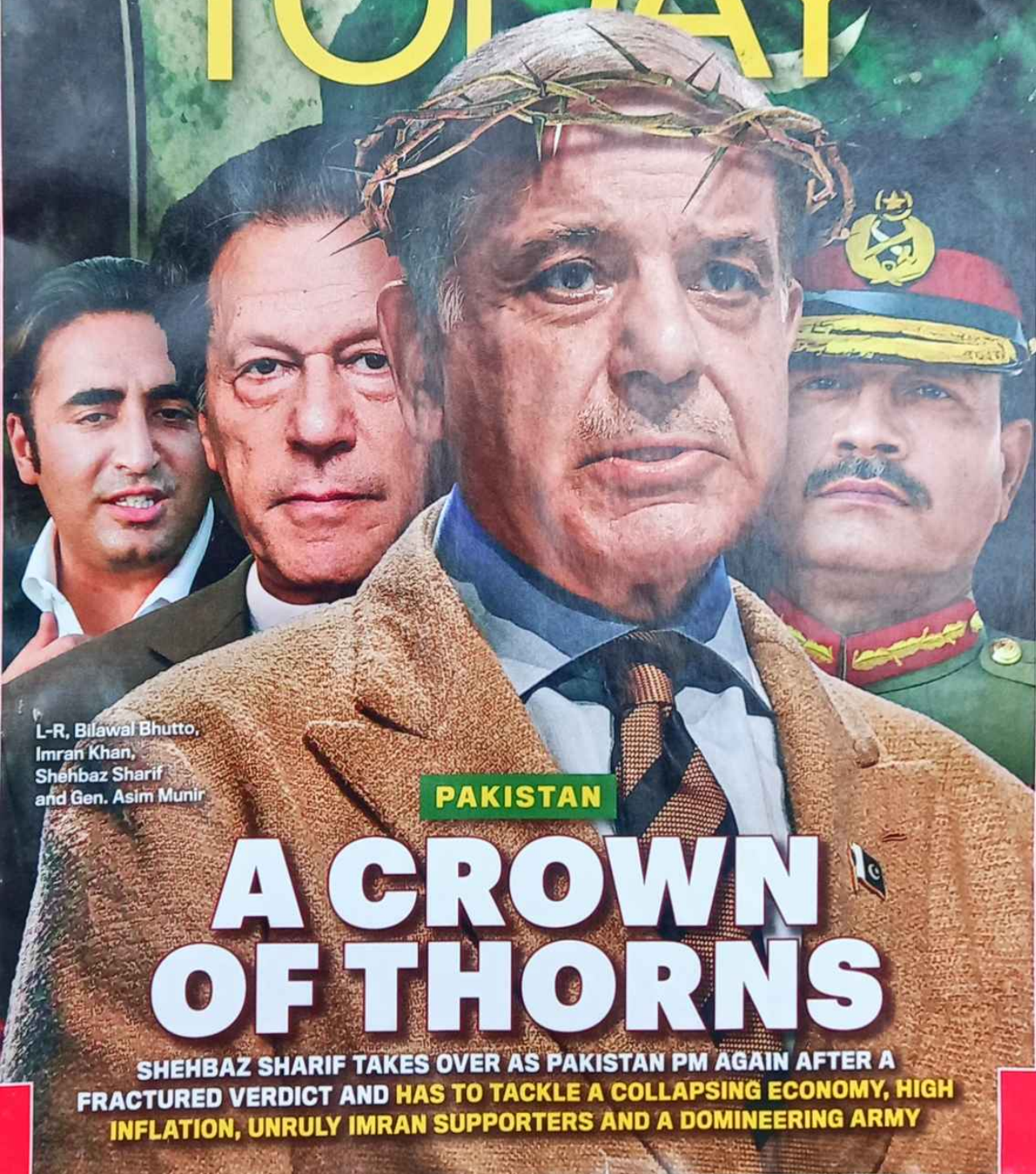
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A CROWN OF THORNS

**SHEHBAZ SHARIF TAKES OVER AS PAKISTAN PM AGAIN AFTER A
FRACTURED VERDICT AND HAS TO TACKLE A COLLAPSING ECONOMY, HIGH
INFLATION, UNRULY IMRAN SUPPORTERS AND A DOMINEERING ARMY**

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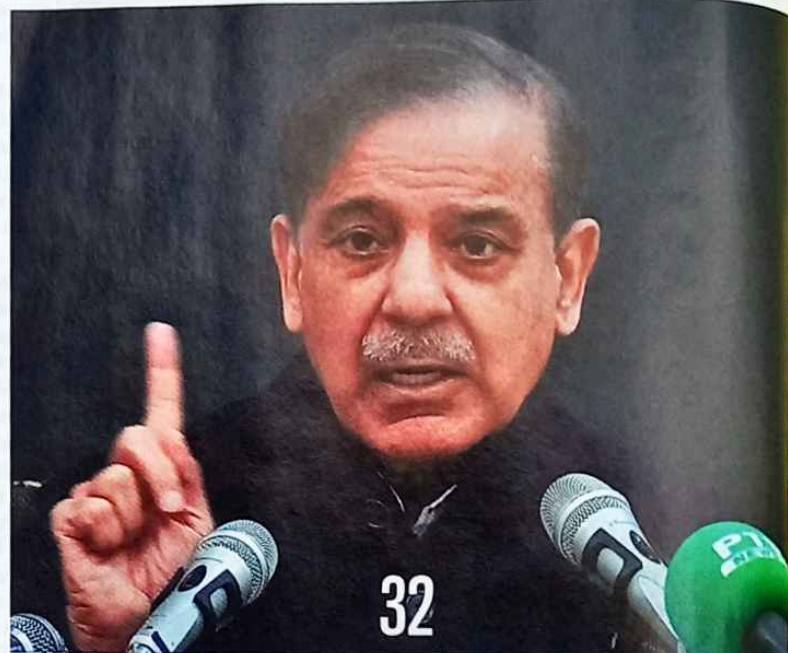
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TEARS FOR FEARS

Farmers brave teargas
shells at the Shambhu
border, Feb. 13

FARMERS' PROTESTS

WHY FARMERS ARE ANGRY AGAIN

By Anilesh S. Mahajan

The heavy-duty tractors at Shambhu in Patiala near the Punjab-Haryana border had turned up the volume. The songs blaring out predicted dire consequences for Delhi (the Centre) and eulogised the bravado of the Jat Sikh community, as the cavalcade rumbled on to lay siege to the national capital on Feb-

ruary 13. The protesting farmers claimed they were carrying rations and diesel to last for months. Right about then, the skies started raining teargas shells, fired from drones by the security personnel manning the barricades.

All this was reminiscent of the 13-month siege the national capital had witnessed (Sept. 2020-Nov. 2021), just

that the farmers hadn't reached the gates of Delhi yet. The siege had forced Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government to back down then and withdraw the big-ticket farm sector reforms. With the general election just months away, the threat of a long-drawn protest has again got the ruling BJP worried. The farmer unions have had two rounds of talks so

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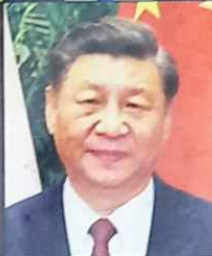
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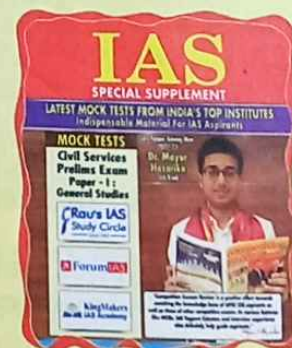
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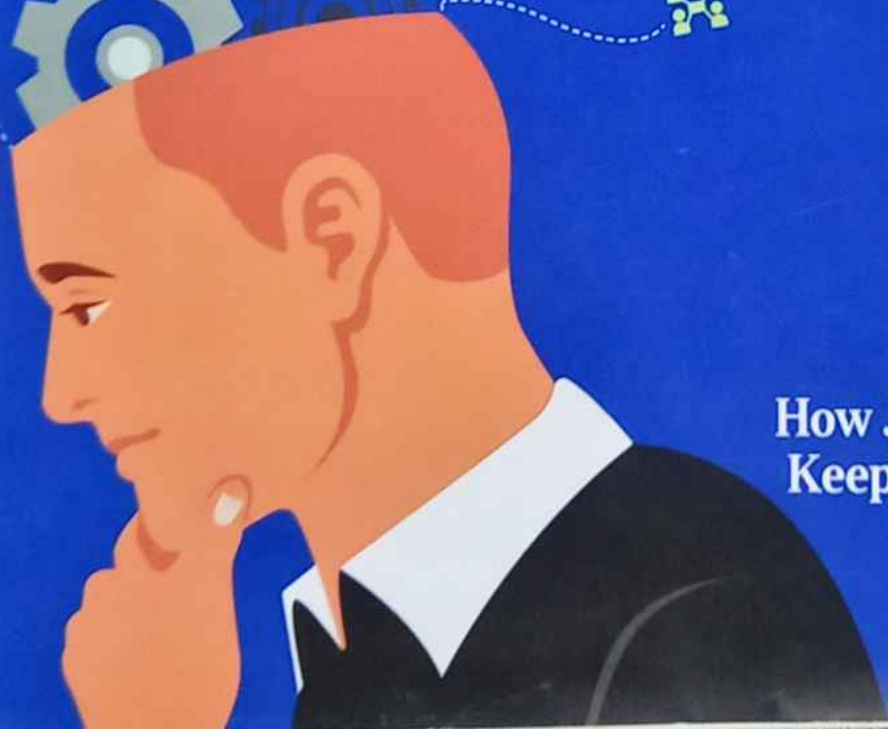
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