

DRISHTI MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME (INTEGRATED) – 2026

Mode: Offline / Online (Via App) Medium: Hindi and English

Admissions Open

Programme Starts 21st Oct

Key Features

- Well-Equipped Library
- Subject-Wise Daily Schedule
- Synergy Between Pre and Mains
- Value-Added Materials
- In-House Expert Mentors
- Quick Revision Classes

Drishti IAS

Connect Now

87501 87501

Download Drishti Learning App



Karol Bagh | Noida | Prayagraj | Jaipur | Lucknow | Indore



WORLD » PAGE 18



OPINION » PAGE 11



TIME TO EXPERIMENT

India faces Oman in its final group game

SPORT » PAGE 19

Rahul says CEC is ‘protecting’ those ‘destroying’ democracy

Congress leader cites attempted voter deletions in Karnataka and sets 7-day deadline for EC to share details for probe into ‘vote theft’; he says non-cooperation will imply EC is ‘complicit in murder of the Constitution’; EC says charges are ‘baseless’

Sandeep Phukan
NEW DELHI

Mounting a scathing attack on Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, on Thursday accused him of “protecting” those “destroying” Indian democracy by refusing to share technical details of persons behind an attempt to delete names of voters from the electoral rolls of an Assembly seat in Karnataka.

The Election Commission of India (EC) rejected his allegations as “incorrect and baseless”.

Mr. Gandhi said that 6,018 names were sought to be deleted in the Aland constituency using centralised software and mobile



Serious charges: Rahul Gandhi addressing the media at Indira Bhawan in New Delhi on Thursday. R.V. MOORTHY

phones registered outside Karnataka. In the past 18 months, the State’s Criminal Investigation Department has written 18 letters to the EC for details of the IP addresses used to fill online applications for the deletions, but the EC has not responded, he said.

The EC must stop protecting “vote *chors* (thieves)” and provide information sought by the Karnataka CID within a week, he said, adding that if the EC does not oblige, it will be known for being “complicit in the murder of the Constitution”.

All data handed over to police:
Karnataka CEO

BENGALURU
Responding to Rahul Gandhi’s allegation that the EC was not sharing key technical data for probe into the alleged vote fraud in Aland constituency, Karnataka Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) has claimed that his office handed over all available data to the police on September 6, 2023. » PAGE 15

Cong. leader lacks faith in Indian democracy: BJP

NEW DELHI
The BJP has termed Rahul Gandhi’s charges against the Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar as baseless. BJP leader Anurag Thakur on Thursday said the repeated accusations of the Congress leader against the EC showed his lack of faith in Indian democracy. » PAGE 15

job, you have taken an oath, you are India’s Chief Election Commissioner, you must give evidence to the Karnataka CID.”

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 14
RELATED REPORTS ON
» PAGE 15

IN BRIEF



I believe in true secularism, in all religions, says CJI

NEW DELHI
Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai on Thursday said he believes in all religions and firmly trusts in “true secularism”. He made the comment after a social media outrage over his oral remarks in a hearing on a damaged Lord Vishnu idol. » Page 14

DUSU polls see 39.45% turnout; counting today

NEW DELHI
Delhi University Students’ Union (DUSU) elections were held on Thursday with a voter turnout of 39.45%. Votes will be counted on Friday. » Page 2

Attack on one of us is an attack on both, says Saudi Arabia-Pakistan pact

Associated Press
ISLAMABAD

Saudi Arabia and nuclear-armed Pakistan have signed a mutual defence pact that defines any attack on either nation as an attack on both – a key accord in the wake of Israel’s strike on Qatar last week.

The kingdom has long had close economic, religious and security ties to Pakistan, including reportedly providing funding for Islamabad’s nuclear weapons programme as it developed.

Analysts – and Pakistani diplomats in at least one case – have suggested over the years that Saudi Arabia could be included under Is-

Will study pact to protect India’s interests: MEA

NEW DELHI
Hours after Pakistan signed a defence agreement with Saudi Arabia, India said it was aware that the pact had been under consideration. The External Affairs Ministry said India would study its implications for “our national security” and “regional stability”. » PAGE 14

Islamabad’s nuclear umbrella, particularly as tensions have risen over Iran’s atomic programme.

But the timing of the pact appeared to be a signal to Israel, West Asia’s

only nuclear-armed state, which has conducted a sprawling military offensive since Palestinian nationalist Hamas’s October 7, 2023, attack on Israel stretching across Iran, Lebanon, the Palestinian territories, Qatar, Syria and Yemen.

The pact marks the first major defence decision by a Gulf Arab country since the Qatar attack.

Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman signed the pact on Wednesday with Pakistan’s Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

While not specifically discussing the bomb, the agreement states “any aggression against either

country shall be considered an aggression against both,” according to statements issued by both Pakistan’s Foreign Affairs Ministry and the state-run Saudi Press Agency.

“This agreement... aims to develop aspects of defence cooperation between the two countries and strengthen joint deterrence against any aggression,” the statement said.

A senior Saudi official, speaking on condition of anonymity to The Financial Times, seemed to suggest that Pakistan’s nuclear protection was a part of the deal.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 14

U.S. visas of Indian executives revoked over ‘drug trafficking’

Kallop Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

Months after charging two Indian companies of “criminal conspiracies” to smuggle fentanyl precursors into the United States, the U.S. Embassy on Thursday said that it has revoked and denied visas for certain business executives and corporate leadership based on involvement in trafficking fentanyl precursors, it said, acknowledging the support received from “counterparts in the Go-

Drug precursors

The following are two precursors highly suitable for illicit manufacture of fentanyl and fentanyl analogues

- 4-piperidone
- 1-boc-4-piperidone

Fentanyl and fentanyl analogues are very potent narcotic drugs that continue to result in overdose deaths, according to the International Narcotics Control Board



safe from dangerous synthetic narcotics, the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi has revoked and subsequently denied visas for certain business executives and corporate leadership based on involvement in trafficking fentanyl precursors, it said, acknowledging the support received from “counterparts in the Go-

vernment of India” toward stopping the flow of fentanyl and its precursors.

The Embassy continues to be “steadfast in its commitment to combating illicit drug trafficking”, said U.S. chargé d’affaires Jorgen Andrews.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 14

Delhi court sets aside gag order in Adani defamation case

Aaratrika Bhaumik
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Thursday set aside the *ex parte* injunction that had restrained journalists Ravi Nair, Abir Dasgupta, Ayashant Das, and Ayush Joshi from publishing allegedly defamatory material about Gautam Adani’s Adani Enterprises Limited (AEL).

District judge Ashish Agarwal of the Rohini courts said that the September 6 order was “unsustainable” as it had been passed without affording the journalists an opportunity of hearing. “While articles and posts spanning a substantial period were questioned by the plaintiff through the suit, the court did not deem it fit to grant an opportunity of hearing to the defendants before passing the impugned order... In my opinion, the



Judge said that the journalists should have been afforded an opportunity of hearing

ed and *ex facie* defamatory” reports about AEL, and directed the removal of such content within five days. The order had also allowed the company to identify additional online material it considered defamatory, which intermediaries and platforms were required to take down within 36 hours.

senior civil judge ought to have granted that opportunity before passing an order which had the impact of *prima facie* declaring the articles as defamatory and even directing their removal, he said.

Special civil judge Anuj Kumar Singh had restrained nine journalists, activists, and entities from publishing or circulating “unverified, unsubstantiated

Grover submitted that the September 6 order contained no finding on whether the publications were defamatory. “[The order] was not the court expressing its mind. It is the reproduction of the plaintiff’s averments and pleadings,” she said.

She said that most of the publications cited in the suit had been available in the public domain since June 2024 and argued that there was no urgency to justify the “extraordinary and exceptional relief” of an *ex parte* injunction months after their release.

“Why the rush? Why was no notice given to us? How have they explained the delay in approaching the court?” she said.

Malicious campaign? On behalf of the conglomerate, advocate Vijay Agarwal contended that the

journalists were engaged in a malicious campaign. “All of them like writing against me... it is a completely malicious targeting,” he said.

Senior advocate Jagdeep Sharma, also appearing for AEL, submitted that the company’s reputation was being unfairly maligned.

The court, however, noted that the veracity of the contested publications could not be determined at this stage. Judge Agarwal orally observed that whether the defendants are able to prove the truth of their articles “would be a subject matter of trial”.

The judge further clarified that his ruling applied only to the four appellants before him and did not extend to the separate appeal filed by senior journalist Paranjay Guha Thakurta, on which another judge of the same court has reserved judgment.

IN BRIEF



Allotment of govt. bungalows cannot be on 'whims': HC

The Delhi High Court on Thursday observed that allotment of government residences cannot be left to the "whims" of authorities while hearing a plea by the Aam Aadmi Party seeking a bungalow for its national convener Arvind Kejriwal. "Is there a procedure? I want to see how this procedure has been applied. How are priorities fixed, and what sequence is followed? Assuming there are limited bungalows, how do you decide?" the court said.

Over 75 diplomats participate in tree plantation drive

Over 75 Ambassadors, High Commissioners, and heads of missions from 72 countries participated in a tree plantation drive - Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam - at PBG ground as part of the ongoing 'Sewa Pakhwada', a 15-day social service initiative launched to celebrate Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday. "Under Sewa Pakhwada, we will plant 7.5 crore saplings across the country," said Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav.

Two college students rape 17-year-old Gurugram girl; held

A Class 11 student was allegedly kidnapped and gang-raped by two B.Com students whom she met on social media, the police said on Thursday. The accused threw her from their car near her house in Gurugram and fled away, they said, adding the incident took place on Tuesday when she was going to a tuition centre. The accused, identified as Ankit, 19, from Bihar, and Lakshya, 18, from Uttar Pradesh, have been arrested. PTI

DUSU polls register 39.45% turnout; votes to be counted today

NSUI claims malpractice in some colleges; officials dismiss claim; ABVP says it's confident of winning all four seats; EVMs placed in strongroom

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) elections were held on Thursday with a voter turnout of 39.45%, significantly higher than last year's 30%. While polling remained largely peaceful, the Congress-backed National Students' Union of India (NSUI) alleged "vote manipulation".

However, the university officials dismissed the claims. Voting took place across 195 booths at 52 polling stations. Polling was held from 8.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. for day scholars and from 3 p.m. onwards for students in the evening shift. Votes will be counted on Friday.

The NSUI claimed that malpractice was reported from Kirori Mal College, Hindu College and Hansraj College. "Complaints have surfaced across colleges that blue ink marks were deliberately placed in front of the [RSS-affiliated] Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) candidates' names on EVMs, with the clear intention of influencing voters. This is nothing short of than a blatant attempt to rig the democratic process," it said.

DUSU Chief Election Officer (CEO) Raj Kishore Sharma rejected the claim. "A team of officials inspect-



Ballot buzz: Delhi University students casting votes at a polling booth on Thursday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

ed the said colleges, where CCTV cameras were found to be in place, and no cases of manipulation were reported," he said. Mr. Sharma added that the increased turnout reflected "greater sensitisation" among students on defacement and the conduct of elections in a healthy environment.

Stems from frustration'
Hitting out at the NSUI over its "baseless" charge, the ABVP said the allegation reflected the Congress-backed outfit's "frustration over an impending defeat". "The ABVP is on course to win all four seats," it added.

The campaign for this year's elections saw fewer instances of defacement and adherence to the guidelines issued by the un-

iversity. Last year, the Delhi High Court had withheld the counting of votes for nearly two months over the defacement of public property. With campaigning through loudspeakers and vehicles banned, much of the outreach this time shifted online.

After polling ended, the EVMs were placed in a strongroom at the multi-purpose hall of the university's sports complex, the DUSU CEO said. Eight candidates are in the fray for the post of president, including ABVP's Aryan Maan, NSUI's Joslyn Nandita Choudhary, and Anjali, fielded by the Left-backed All India Students' Union and Students' Federation of India.

Currently, DUSU is evenly split between the NSUI and the ABVP.

CM launches new curricula for govt. schools replacing initiatives introduced by AAP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday launched three new curricula - Rashtraneeti, Science of Living, and New Era of Entrepreneurial Ecosystem & Vision (NEEEV) - for the Delhi government schools.

Speaking at the launch event at Bharat Mandapam, Ms. Gupta said, "The new curricula will prepare students to write India's future."

She said the curricula have been designed with the aim of promoting nation-building.

The new curricula will replace the previous Aam Aadmi Party government's Deshbhakti programme (launched in 2021), the Happiness curriculum (2018), and the Entrepreneurship Mindset (2019).

In a briefing on NEEEV, Education Minister Ashish Sood, who was also present at the event, said, "This pioneering initiative for students from Class 8 to 12 is designed to transform education by embedding a spirit of innovation, self-reliance, and entrepreneurship from a young age."

Rashtraneeti, which will be taught from KG to Class 12, will include the study of governance, policymaking, leadership, and civic responsibility, said Mr. Sood. Science of Living, which will be taught from Classes 1 to 12, is rooted in Indian knowledge systems and will promote holistic health through yoga, ayurveda, and meditation.



Chief Minister Rekha Gupta with Education Minister Ashish Sood (second from right) at the launch event on Thursday. ANI

The curricula have a grade-wise structure.

For instance, in the Rashtraneeti curriculum, students in the 'foundational stage' (KG to Class 2) will be taught the basics of civic awareness. Those in the 'preparatory stage' (Classes 3 to 5) will be taught civic responsibility. Students in the 'middle stage' (Classes 6 to 8) will be taught about civic engagement and leadership, while those in the 'secondary stage' (Classes 9 to 12) will learn about strategic thinking and governance, an official said.

The four-stage academic structure in school is part of the reforms introduced under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Similarly, in the Science of Living curriculum, foundational classes include recognising emotions and learning social behaviour through puppet shows, songs, and storytelling. Students in the middle classes will learn ethical reasoning, civic responsibility, and spiritual inquiry, and other facilities.

PCR van runs over man; kin allege drunk driving by cops

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

"For the past 20 years, AAP and Congress have created fake votes in Delhi through fraudulent registrations," he said.

Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav alleged, "If the SIR in Bihar was used to delete names of Opposition supporters and add votes for the BJP under the guise of transparency, then the same opaque process will now be carried out in Delhi." He said that by linking the rolls with the 2002 list, the CEO's office is attempting to "exclude a large number of genuine voters".

According to the office of the CEO, those whose names appear in the 2002 rolls and the current rolls must submit duplicate enumeration forms along with the 2002 extract. In cases where the name of an elector does not appear in the 2002 list but the names of her parents do, the voter will have to submit an identity proof, along with the enumeration form and an extract of the 2002 voter list showing parents' names.

'Empty liquor bottles'
Sources said the incident happened around 5 a.m. when the deceased, Ganganam Tiwari, was asleep in his tea stall. "The PCR van climbed onto the roadside ramp and ran over my father," said the deceased's son.

"The officers were intoxicated. I got the stench of alcohol and there were empty liquor bottles in the van," he claimed. He said there were two male policemen and a woman in the van.

The deceased's son also claimed that when the locals tried to stop the accused from fleeing the scene, one of the policemen pointed his pistol at them and threw away the mobile phone of a man who was recording the altercation after the incident.

(With inputs from PTI)

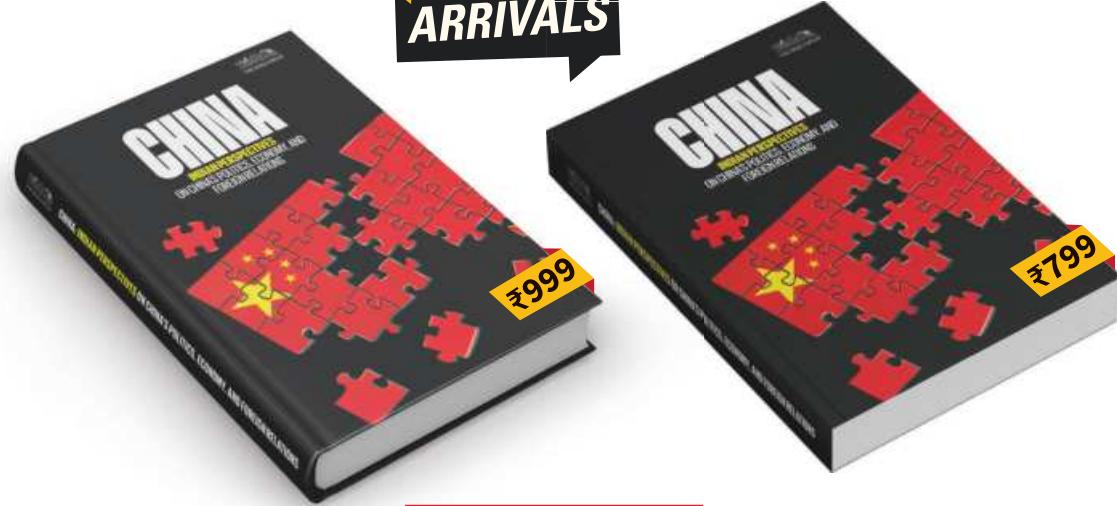


A SPECIAL PUBLICATION FROM THE HINDU GROUP

Unwrapping the China Enigma

In India, where China is present in almost every sphere, there is limited well-informed public discourse about the country. Mostly, we depend on the West to understand our largest neighbour. We present "China: Indian Perspectives on China's Politics, Economy, and Foreign Relations", a collection of essays by 12 outstanding Indian experts on China — a unique, first-of-its-kind volume from The Hindu Group offering entirely original Indian perspectives on India's enigmatic neighbour.

NEW ARRIVALS



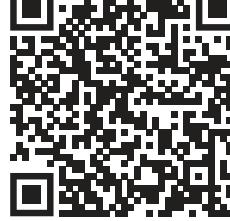
Launch offer

Hardbound Edition

₹999
₹799*

Paperback Edition

₹799
₹639*



VIJAY GOKHALE | ASHOK KANTHA | GEN. S.L. NARASIMHAN | MANOJ JOSHI
POONAM SURIE | MANOJ KEWALRAMANI | PRANAY KOTASTHANE | SHOBHANKITA REDDY
SANTOSH PAI | VEDA VAIDYANATHAN | AMIT KUMAR | ANTARA GHOSAL SINGH

BOOK YOUR COPY ONLINE Scan QR code or visit newsth.live/THBookStore
For bulk booking and enquiries, contact us at bookstore@thehindu.co.in or 1800 102 1878

*Shipping charges extra | conditions apply

Branded T.SHIRT SALE
MEN, WOMEN & KIDS

up to **60% off**
Introducing huge range of **Shorts & Lovers**
By Economy Sales: 9212758425

ARROW **PARK AVENUE** **ColorPlus SMART CASUALS** **Reebok** **Levi's**

GURUGRAM 306, City Center, Sector 29 (Near Hotel Pillazio)
• PUNCHKUAN ROAD, Garwal Bhawan, (Near Jhandewalan, Gole Chkr.)
• WAZIRPUR A-5, Near Richi Rich Banquet (Opp. Shalimar Bagh)
• NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP
• LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing

Date for slashed GST rates influenced by Bengal: Sitharaman

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Highlighting that the second-generation GST reforms will boost the economy by increasing demand, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday said that the determination of September 22 as the date when revamped taxes will come into effect has a very strong influence of West Bengal.

"I am happy to say that the determination of September 22 as the implementation date for the next-generation GST reforms was largely influenced by [Durga] Pujo. The Shubh Mangal Diwas when the revamped GST comes into effect coincides with the first day of Navratri, the day after Mahalaya. There is, therefore, a strong influence of Bengal in this decision-making," Ms. Sitharaman said at an event in Kolkata.

"Durga Puja is Bengal's biggest festival, and people



Nirmala Sitharaman

in the State make major purchases during this period. Keeping this in mind, we have chosen this date for the new GST rates to come into effect. This will allow people to benefit from the reduced tax burden during the festive season," she said.

The Finance Minister also highlighted that GST rates have been reduced from 12% to 5% for a number of local products and handicrafts from West Bengal.

She expressed optimism that these changes would spur growth across various sectors in the State.

APPOINTMENT

Bharatiya Pravartan Sansthan Tiruchirappalli
Indian Institute of Management Tiruchirappalli

RECRUITMENT NOTIFICATION - NON-TEACHING ON REGULAR
Advt. No.: EST-II/A-02/2025/003 dated 19th September 2025

Indian Institute of Management Tiruchirappalli invites online applications from interested candidates for the various non-teaching positions on regular basis on or before 21st October 2025.

For full details regarding positions, qualifications, experience, terms & conditions, and other requirements, please visit our website: <https://www.iitmtrichy.ac.in/careers>

इस विज्ञापन की पूर्ण जानकारी हेतु कृपया उपरोक्त वेबसाइट देखें।

J&K CM decries closure of tourist sites months after Pahalgam attack

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday decried that security agencies were continuing to keep dozens of prime sites in the Kashmir Valley out of bounds for tourists six months after the Pahalgam terror attack.

Mr. Abdullah, who inaugurated the Gulmarg Convention Centre in Baramulla district, said half of Gulmarg, a popular destination, remained closed for tourists. "The nearby destination of Drung in Tangmarg is closed. This is in no way helpful for the tourism sector of J&K. Those responsible for security should start opening

up closed destinations one by one," Mr. Abdullah said.

The Chief Minister also named the popular destinations of Betaab valley and Aru valley in Pahalgam among those closed. "What happened in Pahalgam should not have happened. Since then, a number of steps have been taken. But unless closed destinations are thrown open, our tourism promotion will be a futile exercise. If they are not open, there is no point spending resources on promoting tourism," he said.

The CM said on the one hand, the Centre told the world that Kashmir was normal, but on the other, such measures hit the confidence in promoting tourism in the region.

IIM Lucknow
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT LUCKNOW

VACANCY
IIM Lucknow invites applications for the following positions -

- Chief Administrative Officer (1 Post) on Tenure Appointment/Contract
- Officer on Special Duty (1 Post) on contract

For details please visit Institute's website 'www.iiml.ac.in'.

SANGLI MIRAJ & KUPWAD CITY CORPORATION ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT, SANGLI
TENDER NOTICE NO. 01/2025-26
NOTICE INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

Sangli Miraj Kupwad City Municipal Corporation (SMKMC) invites sealed Expression of Interest (Rate EoI) from reputed consultancy firms/agencies for undertaking a Comprehensive Study and Preparation of a Vision Document for Sangli-Miraj-Kupwad City, including long-term developmental strategies, sectoral priorities, and integrated infrastructure planning in alignment with sustainable development goals and Government of India / GoM missions.

The detailed Expression of Interest along with scope of work is available on the official e-tendering portal <https://mahatenders.gov.in/>.

Start Date: 18.09.2025
End Date: 29.09.2025
Mode of Submission: Online only via the above portal
For Queries: smkmc@gmail.com, srm.smkmc@gmail.com
Sd/-, (Dr. Ravindra Tare)
Environment Conservation Officer
Sangli Miraj & Kupwad City Corporation

90th BIRTHDAY



Thiru. N.P.V. RAMASAMY UDAYAR

Founder - Chancellor,
Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education and Research (DU)

You have proved that education alone

will not yield one's future.

Creativity, entrepreneurship, hard work and

relentless effort are all

necessary to become a leader.

The greatest wealth you have

left to this country is a

medical citadel (SRIHER) which has

paved the way for excellent

health care professionals.

On this day, we bow our head and
salute you for your formidable thought
and epoch making endeavour.

V.R. Venkataachalam

Chancellor, Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education and Research (DU)
Family Members
Trustees, Sri Ramachandra Educational and Health Trust
Faculty, Staff & Students

**40 years of glorious journey with sustainable
effort by the management and the members of
Sri Ramachandra Family**



SRI RAMACHANDRA
INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH
(Category-I Deemed to be University) Porur, Chennai



REGISTRATION NO. 02 OF 2024

RE/RERA/HARERA/1GM/005/501/2024/02 DATE: 02.08.2024

UNIQUE NO. GENERATED ONLINE REBA-GRC-PROJ-1626-2024

दीन दयाल जन आवास योजना

APPLICATIONS INVITED FOR COMMERCIAL SHOPS AT SECTOR-95, DWARKA EXPRESSWAY, GURUGRAM

(Under Deen Dayal Jan Awaas Yojna 2016, Government of Haryana)

REGISTRATION AMOUNT **Rs.31,000/-**

ON SECTOR 95 - DWARKA EXPRESSWAY, GURUGRAM

Floor	Area per sq ft	Area per sq mtr	Units	Registration Amount (Refundable)	10% by (29/08/2025)	40% by (28/10/2025)	50% by as per CLP	Total Basic Cost
LG	310	14.3999	3	Rs. 41,000	Rs. 9,14,500	Rs. 36,58,000	Rs. 45,72,500	Rs. 91,45,000
LG	420	19.5097	4	Rs. 41,000	Rs. 12,39,000	Rs. 49,56,000	Rs. 61,95,000	Rs. 1,23,90,000
UG	241	11.1948	4	Rs. 41,000	Rs. 7,10,950	Rs. 28,43,800	Rs. 35,54,750	Rs. 71,09,500
UG	438	20.3458	2	Rs. 41,000	Rs. 12,92,100	Rs. 51,68,400	Rs. 64,60,500	Rs. 1,29,21,000
1st Floor	258	11.9845	2	Rs. 31,000	Rs. 5,54,700	Rs. 22,18,800	Rs. 27,73,500	Rs. 55,47,000
1st Floor	323	15.0038	7	Rs. 31,000	Rs. 6,94,450	Rs. 27,77,800	Rs. 34,72,250	Rs. 69,44,500
1st Floor	428	19.8812	2	Rs. 31,000	Rs. 9,20,200	Rs. 36,80,800	Rs. 46,01,000	Rs. 92,02,000
2nd Floor	437	20.2993	2	Rs. 31,000	Rs. 9,39,550	Rs. 37,58,200	Rs. 46,97,750	Rs. 93,95,500



आज ही
आवेदन करें

Starting from
₹ 55.47 Lac

On Main 84-Meter Wide Road | High Rental Value Shops

Important Dates:

आवेदन की अंतिम तारीख
TUESDAY, 23rd SEP 2025

आवंटन तिथि
FRIDAY, 26th SEP 2025

Only 26 Shops are Available for Registration

*Assured Rentals & Lease Guarantee

* T&C Apply

Registration Amount is Refundable
for Unsuccessful Applicants



Food Court
Retail Shop
Super Market
Ample Parking

SECURITY

HELPLINE NO.
+91- 7982701310

BANK LOAN AVAILABLE:



Canara Bank
HDFC Bank
ICICI Bank

Disclaimer: Promoter urges every applicant to inspect the project site and shall not merely rely upon any architectural impression, plan, sales, brochure, advertisements, representations, statements of whatsoever nature' and, therefore, requests to make personal judgement prior to submitting an application for allotment, unless otherwise stated, all the images, visual materials and information contained herein are purely creative/artistic and may not be actual representation of the product and/or any amenities. Further, the actual design may vary in the fit and finished form, from the one displayed above. 84 meter road location is proposed as per master plan approved by Government of Haryana. Journey time shown, if any, is based upon Google Maps which may vary as per the traffic at a relevant point of time. Rate mentioned above does not include GST and other statutory charges, if applicable. T & C Apply. 1sq.mt. = 10.7639 sq.ft. BBA to be executed.

IN BRIEF



PM Modi to review Maritime Heritage Complex at Lothal

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be on a visit to Gujarat on September 20 where he will review the progress of the National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) at Lothal in Ahmedabad district. He will also inspect the works completed so far and hold a detailed review meeting with officials regarding the ongoing projects at the site. Lothal, once a prominent trading hub of the Indus Valley Civilisation, is a symbol of India's maritime strength and prosperity. "NMHC will seamlessly blend history, education and research. Lothal, which served as a thriving port 5,000 years ago, will be revitalised, showcasing its illustrious maritime legacy," officials said.

Probe against preacher: ED raids locations in Bikaner

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has carried out search operations at multiple locations in Rajasthan's Bikaner as part of money laundering investigation against a religious preacher and trader, Sadeeq Khan, and his close associates. Mr. Khan, the Amir (head) of Jamiat Ahle Hadees, has been accused of indulging in hawala dealings and suspicious financial transactions running into crores of rupees routed through nearly 20 bank accounts operated and controlled by him. The raids were conducted under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.



People with links to smuggling of cattle, coal, drugs will not dictate to the Assamese mind: State Cong. chief Gaurav Gogoi. FILE PHOTO

Rahul Karmakar
GUWAHATI

The Assam unit of the Congress on Thursday filed a first information report (FIR) with the Dispur police station in Guwahati against the State Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) IT Cell for "criminal conspiracy, abetment, promoting enmity between religious groups, and violation of model code of conduct for the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) election".

The FIR, signed by Congress spokesperson Bedabrata Bora, said the State BJP had posted the communally sensitive video on its official handle on social media platform X on September 15 to depict a hypothetical scenario of Assam under non-BJP rule.

"The video titled 'Assam without BJP' portrays an overwhelmingly Muslim-dominated Assam, with visuals of legalised beef sales in public spaces, renamed

landmarks adorned with Islamic motifs, exaggerated statistics claiming a 90% Muslim population, and Muslim common intention to polarise communities for electoral advantage," the FIR read.

Book State BJP chief? Pointing out that the video violated six sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, the Congress party underlined the "urgent need" to register an FIR against BJP

State president Dilip Saikia and others.

The party sought urgent measures to prevent communal violence in the Bodoland Territorial Region, where elections to the BTC will be held on September 22.

Earlier, State Congress president Gaurav Gogoi said the words, actions, and images produced by the BJP's IT Cell through a malicious video did not have the strength to

scratch the surface of Assamese society.

"Assam has been nurtured by Mahapurush Sri-Sankaradeva, Azan Pir, Swargadeo Siukapha, Lachit Borphukan, and Bhupen Hazarika. People with links to smuggling of cattle, coal, betel leaves, drugs will not dictate to the Assamese mind," Mr. Gogoi posted on X.

"The proud and great State of Assam deserves politicians who help the people of Assam reach new heights. We want to build a society of pilots, engineers, doctors, entrepreneurs, bankers, and business owners," he said.

"We want to see a *bor* (greater) Assam, where hard work trumps hate, decency matters over hubris, democracy crushes autocracy, and everyone is treated with respect," Mr. Gogoi wrote.

The BJP defended the video. "The Fault (read F-alt) gang of journalists and

their pet ecosystem are bawling like 'professional rothas' ever since @BJP4Assam dropped a video exposing what Assam's future would look like if Paaijan (a BJP term for Gaurav Gogoi) ever grabbed power," State Information Minister Pijush Hazarika said on X.

BJP defends video

He said the video clearly spoke about the threat of illegal immigrants who were changing Assam's demography, "but instantly these 'champions of secularism' screamed Islamophobia", Mr. Hazarika said.

"Now tell me - why the *mirchi* if the issue is about illegals? And here's the real kicker - if, in their logic, talking about illegal immigrants = Islamophobia, then aren't they themselves suggesting that all Muslims are illegal immigrants? Who's the real Islamophobe here? Them or us?" he added.

Madras HC calls for framing of guidelines to penalise parties for damage caused to property

Mohamed Imranullah S.
CHENNAI

The Madras High Court on Thursday impressed upon the State government the need to frame guidelines for collecting security deposits from political parties, whenever they intend to hold public meetings or such other events, and use the money to offer compensation for any damage caused to public/private property by the party cadre.

Report sought

Justice N. Sathish Kumar directed Additional Public Prosecutor E. Raj Thilak to submit a report by September 24 with respect to the guidelines, which should be made applicable to all political parties as well as other organisations/associations that intend to conduct public meetings, processions, and so on.

age to public property, the law was amended in 1994 to also bring private property under its ambit.

The observations were made while passing interim orders on a writ petition by actor Vijay's Tamilaga Vettai Kazhagam, which alleged discrimination in grant of permission for his campaign. PTI

Congress gives notice for no-trust motion against Odisha govt.

Satyasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

earlier said that if the BJD brought a no-confidence motion, the Congress would support it, and if the Congress moved one, it expected the regional party's backing," said Congress Legislature Party leader Ramachandra Kadam.

No real threat In the 147-member House, the Congress has 14 MLAs and the support of one CPI (M) legislator. The BJD, which had won 51 seats in the last Assembly election, is now reduced to 50 following the death of its Nuapada MLA. The BJD, however, remains comfortably placed with 78 members, backed by three Independents.

1.8 lakh Maharashtra doctors protest against registration of homeopaths

Snehal Mutha
MUMBAI

Doctors across Maharashtra went on a 24-hour token strike on Thursday to protest against the State government's decision to allow homeopathy practitioners with Certificate Course in Modern Pharmacology (CCMP) to register with the Maharashtra Medical Council (MMC).

Nearly 1.8 lakh doctors from government medical colleges, State-run hospitals, and private healthcare institutions in Mumbai, Thane, Nashik, Nagpur, and other districts participated in the strike, said Dr. Santosh Kadam, president of the Indian Medical Association (IMA) Maharashtra.

The protesters opposed the notification dated September 11 issued by the MMC, a State body that regulates the registration and



Doctors staging a protest in Thane on Thursday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

practice of modern scientific medicine. They argued that a one-year bridge course cannot replace the "rigorous 5.5 years of MBBS training followed by postgraduate residency" and that the notification "dilutes the standards of modern medicine and puts patients directly at risk, especially in emergencies".

"If they [homeopaths] are also given MMC registration numbers, then the public will be misled about their doctor's qualifications and unable to distin-

guish between a trained MBBS/MD and a short-course practitioner. This lack of transparency is dangerous and unfair to patients," said Dr. Suyash Dhavane, who practises at Nagpur Government Medical College and participated in the stir in Mumbai.

It was organised by the Maharashtra Association of Resident Doctors, Association of State Medical Interns, and IMA, with support from the Federation of All India Medical Association, Maharashtra State

A delegation of doctors met NCP MP Supriya Sule, BJP MLA Ashish Shelar, and the Principal Secretary

of the Medical Education Department to reiterate their united stand.

Challenged in court

The State government had amended the Maharashtra Homoeopathic Practitioners' Act and the Maharashtra Medical Council Act in 2014, permitting homeopaths to practise modern medicine despite having their own council. "This is injustice to MBBS doctors and patients," he said.

However, a senior official from the State Medical Education Department said "everything is happening as per the law" and the MMC is following instructions. "The concerns of allopathy doctors are being heard, and a meeting is scheduled with the Chief Minister to discuss the matter," the official said.

The delegation of doctors stayed the notification after the IMA announced a one-day strike on July 11. The department then constituted

a seven-member special committee to examine the implications of the move.

The MMC issued a fresh circular on September 11 announcing the launch of a portal for the registration of homeopaths with CCMP from Wednesday.

The IMA on Tuesday announced a State-wide protest against the move.

Dr. Bahubali Shah, spokesperson of the Maharashtra Council of Homoeopathy, said about 1,100 homeopathy doctors have registered with the MMC after the notification was issued. "A total of 9,160 homeopathy doctors with CCMP will register and practise legally," he said.

On the protest, he said, "Everyone has the right to protest, but if they want things to happen as per their will and don't want to follow the rules and law, then so be it."

Target two-thirds majority in Bihar: Shah to BJP cadre

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

Help form the government in Bihar with two-thirds majority, said senior BJP leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday while addressing a regional conference of party workers from the Shahabad and Magadh regions in the State's Rohtas district.

Mr. Shah also accused Congress leader Rahul Gandhi of undertaking the Voter Adhikar Yatra not over "vote chori (theft)" but to save "Bangladeshi infiltrators". "I want to ask Rahul Gandhi and [RJD chief] Lalu Prasad, should infiltrators get the right to vote, employment, free ration, and other benefits? Who wants to give them these benefits? It is Rahul baba and his company doing it."

Mr. Shah acknowledged that the NDA had not performed well in the Shahabad and Magadh regions in the 2020 Assembly poll. "Take pledge"

"After this meeting, we all have to take a pledge that more than 80% of seats of these regions would go into the pocket of the BJP and its partners," he said.

He later addressed a gathering in Begusarai for party workers from Patna and Munger divisions.

Earlier in the day, in a departure from the usual practice of visiting Chief Minister Nitish Kumar at his official residence, Mr. Shah and Mr. Kumar met at a hotel in Patna and held talks. Seat-sharing arrangements in the NDA for the Assembly election were discussed, sources said.

Midnight funeral for former Hurriyat chief Bhat; Mirwaiz, Mehbooba claim house arrest

BJP seems determined to keep J&K in turmoil, says PDP chief; locking people in their homes has only deepened the sorrow, says Mirwaiz; we deserved to say goodbye to Prof. Bhat: Sajad Lone

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Authorities in Kashmir allowed a midnight funeral for separatist leader Abdul Gani Bhat, who died on Wednesday evening.

Several senior leaders, including Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti and J&K People's Conference (JPC) chief Sajad Lone, claimed to have been placed under house arrest to prevent them from joining the grieving family in north Kashmir's Sopore on Thursday.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah questioned the security agencies, which reported to Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha, over their purported decision not to let the leaders step out of their homes.

"Nothing would have happened had Ms. Mufti or Mr. Lone gone to the family to offer condolences. Is our security grid so fearful that it cannot even trust leaders to visit for condolences? This is not good for J&K, es-

specially for 'Naya Kashmir,'" Mr. Abdullah said.

'They insisted'

Prof. Bhat, head of the Muslim Conference, Jammu and Kashmir, and former chairman of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, passed away at the age of 89 after a brief spell of illness. Family sources said the authorities insisted on a midnight funeral. "The authorities ensured that the *janaza* (final rites) was held late so that few people could attend it," a close aide of the deceased leader said.

efforts "for a dialogue and peaceful engagement, as the only practical way to address the Kashmir issue" and added that "his conviction that dialogue was a strength, not a weakness, gave encouragement and direction to the collective efforts of the Hurriyat".

Ms. Mufti, a former Chief Minister, termed the authorities' decision not to let her step out of her house a "harsh and undemocratic reality of J&K".

"It is becoming increasingly clear that the BJP has no interest in peace or healing in Kashmir. Instead, they appear determined to keep the region in a constant state of turmoil, weaponising pain and unrest for political mileage across the rest of the country. This cynical approach is not just irresponsible; it is dangerous and utterly reprehensible," said the former CM.

The JKPC chief said, "Professor sahib was a pacifist and long retired. We deserved the chance to bid him a final goodbye. I fail to understand the need for this [house arrest]."

Next-Gen GST
Better & Simpler

CARS BECOME CHEAPER
OUR JOURNEY BECOMES EASIER

GST SAVINGS

MORE THAN ₹70,000 SAVINGS
ON A CAR OF UP TO 1500CC

MORE THAN 1500CC CARS
ALSO GET CHEAPER

भारत सरकार
GOVERNMENT OF BHARAT

Amid oppn., Ministers urge Karnataka CM to postpone caste census

BJP, caste groups raise objections to 'inclusion of new castes'; people want to identify themselves in a certain way, govt. has no role in this: Minister

The Hindu Bureau

BENGALURU



A few Ministers in the Karnataka Cabinet have urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to either drop or postpone the socio-economic and educational survey (caste census) scheduled to be conducted by the Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes from September 22 citing objections over the "inclusion of groups that are not in the notified list of castes", according to sources.

The BJP and some caste groups have raised objections to 'new castes' being included in the list, including Brahmin Christians, Lingayat Christians, Kuruba Christians, and Vokkaliga Christians. Objections have also been raised on the "increased number" of Muslim subcastes and Lingayat subcastes.

A total of 331 castes and subcastes have been cited as not being part of the

Veerashaiva-Lingayat community raised the issue of confusion around the survey, a few others pointed out that it had become a "political tool".

CM disappointed

The Chief Minister reportedly expressed disappointment over being perceived as pro-SC/ST/OBC and minorities and opposed to other castes. He stressed the need for the survey, highlighting that poor people in all communities would benefit from it.

At the meeting of Ministers, it was decided to look into the list of 331 castes.

Despite the opposition, one of the Ministers stated that the survey would proceed as scheduled. "People want to identify themselves in a certain manner, and that cannot be prevented. Neither the government nor the commission has any role in this. The Chief Minister would be briefed about the matter," the Minister said.

While Ministers from

'Aland episode window into larger conspiracy'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Endorsing the statements made by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on alleged efforts to delete the names of eligible voters at Aland in Karnataka's Kalaburagi district, CM Siddaramaiah on Thursday said it was "not an isolated incident but a window into a larger conspiracy to manipulate electoral rolls and deny citizens their right to vote".

'Not local mischief'

Taking to social media, Mr. Siddaramaiah argued that the Aland case was "not a local mischief" and won-

dred if it was only the tip of the iceberg. He alleged that the "revelations" made by Mr. Gandhi once again exposed how Indian democracy was being subverted through systematic and centralised attempts at "vote chori (theft)".

He recalled that between February 2022 and February 2023, a total of 6,018 Form 7 applications had been filed through the Election Commission's apps to "delete names" from the voters' list of the Aland Assembly constituency.

On inquiry, only 24 were found to be genuine while the remaining 5,994 were fraudulent, he said.

Kejriwal exposed 'vote theft' first, but EC did not act: AAP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Thursday said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's vote theft allegations against the Election Commission (EC) are "not new" as AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal had first exposed them during the 2025 Delhi Assembly election.

AAP Delhi chief Saurabh Bharadwaj alleged that out of the 1.48 lakh votes in the New Delhi Assembly constituency, "42,000 votes were deleted" in one go

and another "6,100 were removed later". He said "only 84 people applied" for the deletion of 4,000 votes and new applications were filed "to create more than 10,000 fake votes".

"Arvind Kejriwal pointed out that reports were coming in from across India that voter deletions were happening at an unprecedented scale... but the EC never conducted an investigation," he alleged.

There was no reaction from the EC to AAP's allegations till the time of going to press.

Punjab floods: Assembly to hold special session

Press Trust of India
CHANDIGARH

The Punjab government will convene a special session of the Assembly from September 26 to 29 to focus on introducing "people-oriented" amendments to rules related to damage caused by the recent floods in the State, Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said on Thursday.

Mr. Mann said new laws concerning compensation for flood victims will also be introduced and approved during the session.

HC seeks Centre's reply to plea for stay on Roy's book

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court has sought the Centre's response to a plea seeking a stay on the sale of writer Arundhati Roy's recently released book, *Mother Mary Comes To Me*, which has a photo of her smoking a bidi on its cover without any statutory health hazard warning label.

Referring to the photo



Arundhati Roy

as an act of "intellectual arrogance", the petitioner, advocate Rajasimhan, sub-

mitted that the book violated Section 5 of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply, and Distribution) Act.

'Misleading message'

It states that no person engaged in or purported to be engaged in the production, supply, or distribution of cigarettes or any

other tobacco products, shall advertise, and no person having control over a medium shall cause to be advertised, cigarettes or any other tobacco products through that medium. No person shall take part in any advertisement that directly or indirectly suggests or promotes the use or consumption of cigarettes or any

form of glorification of smoking" and sent a misleading message to impressionable youth, especially teenage girls and women.

The court asked whether the petitioner had approached the authority concerned, as specified in the Act, to ascertain if this amounted to an infringement of the legislation.

The court posted the matter for hearing on September 25.

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS TO SELVI APOORVA IAS (Retd.)

THE FIRST INDIAN WOMAN I.A.S. OFFICER

TO RECEIVE THE PRESTIGIOUS U.S. CONGRESSIONAL RECORD PROCLAMATION
ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2025 AT THE CAPITOL HILL, WASHINGTON D.C., USA



U.S. Rep. Jonathan Jackson (D-IL) Member, House Foreign Affairs Committee Presents the Congressional Record to Selvi Apoorva IAS (R)



On receiving the honor Selvi Apoorva IAS, Standing in front of U.S. Capitol Hill



U.S. Rep. Danny K. Davis (D-IL) serving in U.S. Congress for past 30 years presenting the Danny K. Davis Prize to Selvi Apoorva



Governor of Indiana Mike Braun's (R) Senior Policy Advisor Anthony Ferraro Presenting the Indiana Governor's Inaugural Commemorative to Selvi Apoorva



Republican Congressman Darin LaHood (R-IL) Congratulating Selvi Apoorva on receiving the U.S. Congressional Honor.



Andy Gipson, Mississippi State Agriculture & Commerce Commissioner and Republican Candidate for Governor, State of Mississippi warmly welcoming Selvi Apoorva to Jackson, Mississippi.



Dr. Steve Munsey, Member, U.S. President Trump 'A' Team receiving the MILLET BELL from Selvi Apoorva, at the GSA Millets Conclave.



Mayor Nathaniel Booker of Maywood Presenting the Key to City of Maywood to Selvi Apoorva at the GSA Global Millets Conclave, IL

AMERICAN MULTI ETHNIC COMMISSION, USA

A Bipartisan Coalition to Empower Ethnic Communities



MARTINO TANGKAR
GOVERNOR



SYED MUKKARAM
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



DR. UDAYA SHIVANGI
NATIONAL CHAIR



FATIMA TRAORE
WOMEN'S CHAIR



BENJAMIN LEONG
STUDENT'S CHAIR



DR. STEVE MUNSEY
PRESIDENT, FAMILY CHRISTIAN CENTER, INDIANA & MEMBER,
PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP'S A TEAM



DR. VIJAY G. PRABHAKAR
PRESIDENT, AMEC USA
CHAIRMAN, TGEIL
HOST, DR VGP PODCAST



DR. VASAVI CHAKKA
PROVOST, THE GLOBALEYE
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
LEADERSHIP- TGEIL, USA



ANWAR SADATULLAH
CEO, FUSION SYSTEMS
& SERVICES INC.,
OAKBROOK, IL



PROF. SENAY SIMSEK
DEAN'S CHAIR
FOOD SCIENCE DEPT.,
PURDUE UNIVERSITY
MUNSTER, INDIANA



PROF. RANGA
CHANDRASEKHARAN
INFORMATION & DECISION
SCIENCES, UIC, CHICAGO



MELODYE MUNSEY
CEO, REFUGE
PRODUCTIONS,
MUNSTER, INDIANA

THE GLOBAL EYE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF LEADERSHIP

Creating Tomorrow's Inclusive Leaders Today

INBRIEF**A.P. govt. has cancelled pattas given to poor women: Jagan**

YSRP president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has accused the Andhra Pradesh government and Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu of betraying the poor women by cancelling the house site *pattas* allotted to them. Taking to X on Thursday, he alleged, "The present government has not built a single house in the past 16 months nor has purchased land for housing. Instead, it has cancelled *pattas* given to the poor, and diverted prime lands to private industrial parks, reflecting a pro-rich, anti-poor stance."

Dharmasthala case: two more skulls found at Banglagudde

The alleged mass burials in Dharmasthala village has taken a curious turn with the Special Investigation Team probing the case finding two more skulls lying on the ground at Banglagudde near Dharmasthala on Thursday. The team seized the skulls. The SIT found five skulls and 100 bones at Banglagudde on Wednesday, and all of them were found lying on the ground in the forest area, according to sources.

'Will move breach of privilege notice against Kerala CM'

Congress leader and MLA Ramesh Chennithala on Thursday questioned Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's contention in the Assembly that 144 police officers had been dismissed from service on disciplinary grounds since 2016. Arguing that data available with the National Crime Records Bureau suggested that just about 50 police officers had been dismissed in the said period, he said a breach of privilege notice would be moved against the Chief Minister. Mr. Chennithala said 61 errant police officers had been dismissed from service between 2011 and 2016 when Oommen Chandy was the Chief Minister.

SC to hear plea over Banu Mushtaq's Dasara invite

CJI B.R. Gavai agreed to urgently list the case after an advocate said that a non-Hindu had been invited to perform the *agrahara puja* in Chamundeshwari temple during Mysuru's Dasara festival.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday agreed to hear a petition challenging the Karnataka government's decision to invite Booker Prize winner and activist Banu Mushtaq to inaugurate the historical Mysuru Dasara festival on September 22, which has triggered a political slugfest between the Congress government and the State's BJP leadership.

Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai agreed to list the case filed by Bengaluru resident H.S. Gaurav urgently after it was orally mentioned by an advocate, who said a "non-Hindu has



Mysuru Deputy Commissioner G. Lakshminarayana Reddy had offered a formal invitation to Banu Mushtaq to inaugurate Dasara festival, earlier this month. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

been invited to perform the *agrahara puja* in the Chamundeshwari temple as part of the Dasara festival in Karnataka".

A Division Bench of the High Court, on September 15, declined to interfere

with the State's invitation to the writer. The court had highlighted the secular character of the nation, while noting its objection to "arguments that an invitation to a person of different faith violates constitu-

tional or legal right". In the High Court, Mr. Simha challenged the invitation to Ms. Mushtaq, citing her alleged "anti-Hindu and anti-Kannada" remarks at a literary event in 2023 and the lack of consultation with the Mysuru royal family.

The State government had argued that it was performing a secular function in organising the Dasara festival in Mysuru. Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar had said that Chamundi Hills in Mysuru was open to people of every faith.

BJP MLC C.T. Ravi had said that it was "not right for a person with uncertain faith to preside over a religious event".

All set for Ayyappa conclave tomorrow

The Hindu Bureau
PATHANAMTHITTA

rate the conclave, to be also attended by two Ministers representing the Government of Tamil Nadu. Although representatives of the Union government have been invited, no confirmation has been received so far.

Out of more than 5,000 registrations received, 3,500 participants have been shortlisted. Discussions will be held in three parallel sessions: the Sabarimala master plan, including projects worth over ₹1,000 crore, pilgrimage tourism and crowd management.

Addressing the presspersons on Thursday, Devaswom Minister V.N. Vasavan said the cost of the conclave is estimated at ₹7 crore, which will be funded entirely through sponsorships.

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan will inaugu-

V-C case: universities told to bear legal cost

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala Raj Bhavan has written to the APJ Abdul Kalam Technological University (KTU) and Digital University Kerala (DKU) seeking payment towards legal expenses incurred in the ongoing Supreme Court case relating to Vice-Chancellor appointments in the two universities.

The Raj Bhavan has instructed the two universities to jointly release ₹11 lakh towards the lawyers' fee.

The letter asserts that

the cost of the legal proceedings should be borne by the universities since the litigation concerns their functioning. Each university has been directed to disburse ₹5.5 lakh to clear the memo of fees provided by the Attorney General of India and Advocate-on-Record.

Both the Single Bench and Division Bench of the Kerala High Court had previously ruled in favour of the State government regarding the appointments.

Subsequently, the Governor challenged the verdicts in the Supreme Court.

SC fines PWD ₹5 lakh for using workers to clean sewers outside the court premises

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A Bench pulled up the PWD for flouting its October 2023 directions prohibiting manual scavenging. FILE PHOTO

plaint was sought to be lodged at Tilak Marg station, but neither the police nor the PWD took appropriate action. This is not merely a labour law violation, rather, it is a breach of constitutional obligations," he said.

The court said that it appeared that its earlier directions "had not percolated" to the erring officials or were "consciously ignored". It added that it had made it clear that in the event of any untoward incident, the court would direct the registration of FIRs against the officials concerned.

"At this stage, we desist from doing so for the simple reason that no incident has occurred and to ensure that neither the officials nor the contractor appointed by them allow the worker to enter the drain or soft water drain or sewer without protective gear," it said.

The court was hearing applications in a public interest litigation petition highlighting the continuing practice of manual scavenging.

CHENNAI METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER CIRCLE-II, CONSTRUCTION WING, "A" BLOCK 'E' ROAD, KOYAMBEDU, CHENNAI - 600 107

Short E-TENDER NOTICE Dated :18.09.2025

e-Tender is invited from the Government registered and experienced contractors by the Superintending Engineer, Circle-II, Construction Wing, Chennai – 600107, under Two Cover System for the work of Construction and Development of State-of-the-art Public Library in Prakasam Salai at Broadway, Chennai

Short Tender Notice No.	12/2025-26 dt.18.09.2025
Last date & Time of receipt of e-tender	07.10.2025 upto 3.00 PM
Downloading the tender document by free of cost	23.09.2025 to 07.10.2025 upto 3.00 PM
For further details visit website	http://tnitenders.gov.in

Superintending Engineer (FAC)
Circle II, C.W., CMDA, Ch-107.

BENGALURU METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT CORPORATION Traffic (Com) Department, 2nd Floor, Shanthinagar TTMC, K.H. Road, Bengaluru-560027, Telephone: No: 080-22537575 Website : www.mybmtc.com e-mail : ctmc@mybmtc.com

No. BMTC/CO/TR/COM/1890/2025-26 Dated:15.09.2025

SHORT-TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION NO: 21/2025-26(Call-2)

(e-Procurement Platform)

Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation invites bids from the interested Persons/Agency/company on monthly license fee basis for Kengeri Commercial/Office Space 2nd Floor & Terrace space through e-procurement platform.

Date of Pre-Bid meeting	20.09.2025 at 11:30 hrs	Place: Chief Traffic Manager (Com) chamber, 2nd Floor, Central Offices, BMTC, Shanthinagar.
Last date & time for submission of bids	30.09.2025 up to 17:00 hrs.	
Opening of Technical bids	03.10.2025 at 11:30 hrs	

SHORT-TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION NO: 25/2025-26

(e-Procurement Platform)

No. BMTC/CO/TR/COM/1757/2734A/2025-26 Dated: 17.09.2025

Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation invites offers/bids from the interested Persons/Agency/for above 10,000 Sq.Ft. Commercial / Office Space at Yelahanka Old Town, Vijayanagar TTMC, Mallassandra Bus Station Complex, Yeshwanthpura TTMC, Kengeri TTMC & Hoskote bus stand through e-procurement platform.

Date of Pre-Bid meeting	24.09.2025 at 11:00 hrs	Place: Chief Traffic Manager (Com) chamber, 2nd Floor, Central Offices, BMTC, Shanthinagar.
Last date & time for submission of bids	04.10.2025 up to 17:00hrs	
Opening of Technical bids	06.10.2025 at 11.30 hrs	

To be Intimated later

For further details on license fees, EMD, Area and other conditions log on to:

www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in & Contact No:09240214001, 09240214001; 080-22483777, 22371090; 2234060; 22340948 or 7760997519 & 7760991222. E-mail: ctmc@mybmtc.com.

Sd/- Chief Traffic Manager (Com) (Tender inviting Authority)

BIHAR STATE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD A Govt of Bihar Undertaking

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE E-BIDDING INVITATION SHORT-RE-TENDER NO. 43/E-TENDER/ BSTDC/SBD/2025-26

File No. 118/Engg/2025/1243/engg/25
(Through e-procurement mode only) www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in

Dt. 17/09/2025

Govt. of Bihar

1. Bihar State Tourism Development Corporation Limited (BSTDC), a nodal agency for executing tourism infrastructure projects in the state of Bihar, India, intends to execute tourism infrastructure projects at its tourism potential locations.

2. Any Contractor registered in Central Government/any State Government or any PSU or an agency of International or National repute may participate in the tender though registration in requisite category with any works department, government of Bihar will be essential before executing the agreement, if not registered in Bihar.

3. Details of works

Gr. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (in Lac)	Bid Processing fees (in Rs.)	Bid Document Cost (in Rs.)	Bid Security (EMD) (in Lac)	Contract Duration (Months)
1	PRECINCT DEVELOPMENT OF MAA UGRATARA MANDIR, MAHISHI, SAHARSA	1378.50	5,900.00	10,000.00	23.79	15
4	Date of Inviting tender	:	From 19.09.2025 to 01.10.2025 up to 3:00PM			
5	Date of downloading of bid document	:	Through website www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in only			
6	Place & Date of Pre-bid meeting	:	Date 23.09.2025 Time 03:00PM. (Office of Chief Engineer B.S.T.D.C, Patna)			
7	Last date and time for receipt on eproc2	:	Date 03.10.2025 up to 3:00PM			
8	Last date and time for Submission of Original instrument of EMD & Affidavit	:	Date 03.10.2025 Time 3:00PM			
9	Time and date of opening technical bids	:	Through website www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in			
10	Time and date of opening of financial bids	:	To be communicated later on			
11	Place of opening of bid	:	Through website www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in			
12	Period of bids validity	:	120 days			
13	Officer inviting bids	:	Executive Engineer (North), BSTDC Ltd.			

For further details please visit : www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar

Sd/-

Executive Engineer (North)

BSTDC Ltd, Patna

P.R. 015279 (B & C) 2025-26

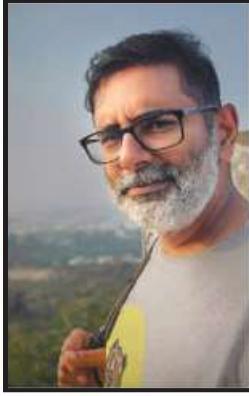
Nशे से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार

“तत्त्वात् देवी प्रदूषण नियन्त्रण बोर्ड”

46वीं, आई.टी. पाक., सहस्रधारा रोड, देवरादाम

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

T. T. VENKATESH
12.06.1982 - 17.09.2025

Venky was a beloved father, husband, uncle, brother and son. He was a cherished and loyal friend, an inspiring teacher, and a humble, fiercely egalitarian colleague. We will miss his gentleness and generosity, and the laughter he brought to our lives.

Sarayu & Maitri
Latha & Jagu
Shabari & Lakshman
Nidhi & Mukund

In Memory of your loved ones

To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:
011-43579797

from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

For Placing Advertisements Online log on to
www.thehinduads.com

DONATE EYES - GIFT SIGHT

Timings
DELDI

FRIDAY, SEP. 19
● RISE 06:08 SET 18:21
● RISE 03:35 SET 17:05
SATURDAY, SEP. 20
● RISE 06:08 SET 18:20
● RISE 04:34 SET 17:35
SUNDAY, SEP. 21
● RISE 06:09 SET 18:19
● RISE 05:31 SET 18:02

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	34	26
Safdarjung	34	26
Palam	34	25

Delhi Palam Today
36°C The weather will be dry.
Day will be very warm and uneasy. Night will be comfortable.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
34°C Morning will be pleasant.
Day will be warm. Night will be comfortable. Chances of rain and thundershower

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2025
All rights reserved.

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No
"18-GKP-MWS- 2025-26"

Dy.CME/Works, for Chief Workshop Manager, N.E. Railway, Mechanical Workshop, Gorakhpur- for and on behalf of President of India invites Open tender through on-line (E-Tendering) for the following work- S. No.- 1. E-Tender Notice No. & Name of the work- Tender No.- "18-GKP-MWS-2025-26" "Stitching of curtains of ICF and HB AC Coaches and repairing of sofa along with supply of sofa cloth in AC Trimming shop at Mechanical Workshop, Gorakhpur". Estimated cost (in Rs.):- 11,75,669.44, Earnest Money (in Rs.):- 23,500.00, Last date of tender submission:- Upto 11.00, Date: 10.10.2025, Cost of the Tender forms:- Zero, Period of Contract:- 12 Months. The details of above tender are also available on Indian Railway website "http://www.irreps.gov.in". Dy.CME/Works Mechanical Workshop, CPRO/Mech-66 Gorakhpur
Do Not Smoke Bidi/Cigarette in train

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY

Tender No.ENG/CE/1523/
NDC/2024/290 Dt.12.09.2025
DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH DOCK COMPLEX-3
(NDC-3) BERTH FOR HANDLING DRY BULK
CARGO ON CAPTIVE BASIS
INVITATION OF REQUEST FOR
QUALIFICATION (RFQ)

Paradip Port Authority (PPA) invites applications from interested Applicants in accordance with the RFQ document which may be downloaded from the CPP Portal (<https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app/>). Last date & time of submission of RFQ Applications is 12.11.2025 till 1400 hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer (C)
Project Management Office
Paradip Port Authority
PPA/PR/43/2025-2026 dtd. 18.09.2025

TO ADVERTISE
PLEASE CONTACT

Mr. N SELVA KUMAR

PH: 9820350726

selvakumar.n@thehindu.co.in

THE HINDU

India's National Newspaper

THE HINDU

DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD, the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

TAMILNADU INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION LTD (TIDCO)
CIN-U65993TN1965SGC005327

NOTICE NO. TIDCO/Projects/SC/CFC/2025

Tamilnadu Industrial Development Corporation Ltd (TIDCO) intends to select a consulting firm for Preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the Common Facilities Centre (CFC) at the Proposed Semiconductor Park, Sulur, Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu in accordance with the Terms of Reference as set out in the Request for Proposal document.

Interested Consultants can download the RFP from the website <https://tnntenders.gov.in> and <https://tidco.com>.

The schedule for processing the proposal is as follows:-

- Pre-bid meeting on 06-10-2025 at 03.00 PM at TIDCO Office, Egmore, Chennai.
- Last date and time for Submission of Proposals is on or before "27-10-2025 at 03.00 PM" through <https://tnntenders.gov.in>.
- Opening of Technical Proposals/Bids is on 27.10.2025 at 04.30 PM

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Tamilnadu Industrial Development Corporation Ltd
19-A, Rukmini Lakshmi Pathai Salai, Egmore, Chennai – 600 008,
Ph: 044 – 2855 4421; E-mail: cmd@tidco.com , karthikeyan@tidco.com;
Website: <https://tidco.com>

Date : 19.09.2025

Your feedback will keep us
Cleaner, Sharper and Bolder

Call our toll-free number
1800 102 1878

Or write to us at
customercare@thehindu.co.in

Scan the
QR code to
register your
feedback

THE HINDU thehindubusinessline.com

FRONTLINE SPORTSTAR THE HINDU YOUNGWORLD THE HINDU

CLASSIFIEDS MART

TO ADVERTISE VISIT

www.thehinduads.com

CALL: 011-43579738 ■ 011-43579797

or Contact your nearest Authorised space sellers

EDUCATIONAL

GENERAL

IAS Mains 2026 & 2027
Commerce & Accountancy

Online Exclusive courses by CA RS Agrawal

Different Need...? Different Course!

Foundation Course for graduates in Hinglish Medium starting 6th October with Paper II

Advanced Course In English Medium @ 6th October

Mentorship-cum-Intensive Test Series with Commerce QEP

Live Evaluation & Mentorship every week + Content Enrichment + Revisionary Classes. 3 Level Tests for Mains 2026. @ 1st October.

Standard Test Series @ 15th November

One-stop & To-the-point Study Material with PYQ Solutions

New Batch Starting 6th October: Admissions open

Our students in top 50 with Commerce in CSE'24

AIR 16: Madhav Agrawal (Standard + Enriched Test Series)

AIR 23: B Sivachandran (Distance Learning + Enriched T. Series)

AIR 39: Monica R (Distance Learning+ Standard+Enriched T. Series)

RANKER'S CLASSES www.rankersclasses.in 9818368018, 9818464467

Since 2001

LAW AMBITION LAW INSTITUTE

Offline/Online Mode

हिंदी / Eng. Exclusive Batch

UP APO 22 SEPT.

JUDICIARY 23 SEPT.

IAS-LAW 22 SEPT.

B-10, 1st Floor, Opposite Meerut Sweets, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi 110009

ambitionlawinstitute.com

EDUCATIONAL

SITUATION VACANT

GENERAL

MARKETING

WANTED FRANCHISEE / Freelancer – Sri Venkateswara Montessori Teachers Training School, (Regd) (Estd:2001). www.svtm.co.in Contact Phone: 9906145666, e-mail: svndesk@gmail.com

Urgently required 20 Sales Persons

Contact Phone: 9906145666, e-mail: lstenreyaes@gmail.com

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE SPECIAL DISTRICT COURT,

ERODE & ERODE D & T.

TAMILNADU

M.C.O.No. 1313/2024

ARUNKUMAR AND OTHERS Petitioner

-Vs-

Israel Patel, 564, Kohinoor Nagar, Ring Road, Indore, Madhya Pradesh - 452 001.

- 2nd Respondent

Notice to 2nd Respondent

The 2nd Respondent have been summoned in a road accident 03.05.2024 have been summoned to appear before Special District Court, Erode 10.00 A.M. in person or through a lower 09.10.2025. In this case you will know that in case of mistake, the order will be issued unilaterally in the above petition.

Advocate for Petitioner

Thiru. K.P.Ravichandran, B.Com, B.L. Advocate, Bhavani - 638301.

IN THE COURT OF THE SPECIAL DISTRICT COURT,

ERODE & ERODE D & T.

TAMILNADU

M.C.O.No. 1314/2024

ARUNKUMAR ..Petitioner

-Vs-

Israel Patel, 564, Kohinoor Nagar, Ring Road, Indore, Madhya Pradesh - 452 001.

- 2nd Respondent

Notice to 2nd Respondent

The 2nd Respondent have been summoned in a road accident 03.05.2024 have been summoned to appear before Special District Court, Erode 10.00 A.M. in person or through a lower 09.10.2025. In this case you will know that in case of mistake, the order will be issued unilaterally in the above petition.

Advocate for Petitioner

Thiru. K.P.Ravichandran, B.Com, B.L. Advocate, Bhavani - 638301.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I was previously known as RAMAN JHA S/o CHANDRAKANT JHA R/o B-114, 3RD FLOOR DWARKA, SECTOR-8, NEW DELHI - 110077 and permanent R/o Suryoday, Defence Endav, Shimla Bye Pass Road, Bhopud, Dehradun, Nagayon, Uttarakhand-248007 and after being diagnosed with Gender Dysphoria under the supervision of registered medical practitioner in New Delhi, have changed my gender as female.

I henceforth be known as RITIKA JHA, D/o CHANDRAKANT JHA R/o B-114, 3RD FLOOR DWARKA, SECTOR-8, NEW DELHI-110077 and permanent R/o Suryoday, Defence Endav, Shimla Bye Pass Road, Bhopud, Dehradun, Nagayon, Uttarakhand-248007. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in the connection.

RAMAN JHA

TENDERS

CHENNAI PORT AUTHORITY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

e-Procurement Tender No. CM01/05/2025/H Dated 19.9.2025 for OUTSOURCING OF NURSES AND PARAMEDICAL STAFF IN MEDICAL DEPARTMENT AT CHENNAI PORT AUTHORITY FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS 2025-2027 For further details, Corrigendum if any visit websites:

www.chennaiaport.gov.in<https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>

Sd/-

CMO (STAT).

CHENNAI PORT AUTHORITY MARINE DEPARTMENT

Auction Notice

No.S2/280/2025/M

e-Auction is invited for the sale of Floating Craft "Tug Bharathiar" as is where it is condition. e-Auction will be conducted by MSTC Ltd. for further details/corrigendum, if any, visit www.mstccommerce.com, [www.chennaiaport.gov.in</](http://www.chennaiaport.gov.in)

SPOTLIGHT



A transgender sex worker poses on the eve of International Labour Day in 2022, in Sonagachi, Kolkata, when the community took part in a torch rally demanding labour rights. GETTY IMAGES

'Only rights can stop the wrongs'

Kolkata's Sonagachi is one of the largest and oldest red-light areas in India with over 12,000 workers. For decades, the community has fought social taboos, STDs, violence and more. As Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, a collective of sex workers, turns 30, **Shrabana Chatterjee** talks to the community about their lives, difficult working conditions, their long-sought demand to be recognised as workers, and the irony that the soil for the Durga Puja idols comes from their part of town

Only rights can stop the wrong," reads a poster inside the community centre at the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee (DMSC) office in Sonagachi, Kolkata, West Bengal's capital. The poster dates back to 2001; it still carries the weight of an unfinished fight in the red-light area. DMSC, an organisation working for the rights of sex workers, celebrated 30 years of existence on July 15.

DMSC began distributing condoms in 1992 to combat the HIV-AIDS epidemic. Its formation was based on a consensual HIV-AIDS survey by Dr. Samarjit Jana, who was commissioned by the World Health Organization. At the time, high-risk populations were identified and coerced into testing; Dr. Jana asked for the women's permission. Over time, DMSC, which includes transgender people, has emerged as a sex workers' rights organisation, refusing to let people not from their profession speak their truth.

Sonagachi, which translates to golden tree – from the amount of money men spent in these north Kolkata lanes – has no signboard. The area and its people still bear the load of stigma. Historically, sculptors have taken soil from Sonagachi to make the Durga idols but the sex workers are not allowed into regular pandals.

In 2013, they tried to start their own Durga Puja celebration but were met with violent resistance from people. They moved the Calcutta High Court and got their rights. Though held indoors, the joy of celebrating their own Durga Puja in their own locality was a victory.

About 12,000 women in the area live through the dense, layered history of Sonagachi. There are another 28,000 associated with DMSC across West Bengal.

In the folds of the night

On a cloudy morning on July 15, about 150 women of Sonagachi have gathered at a neighbourhood park to celebrate their 30-year-old journey. "Gotor khatiye khai; sramik ardhikar chai" (I work hard for my bread; I demand workers' rights), a song streams in the background as the women prepare to play musical chairs and share a simple community lunch of rice, dal, and vegetable curry.

The women huddle together to catch up on daily gossip. Fatima Begum (name changed), 55, sits towards the back of the gathering that is facing a stage. She is pleasantly surprised to meet a friend from another part of Kolkata after 23 years. "I did everything for my parents, my family; I spent my whole life for them. What do I have left now? I am still alone," Fatima tells her friend.

She is now a field worker for DMSC and stopped sex work after her son got married. "I had to change my lifestyle so he could get social recognition," she says, adding that it's something she herself craves even though she has earned her own bread since she was a teenager.

As dusk descends, the women of Sonagachi are

Over the years, the violence has reduced as women have become empowered to say no to customers who refuse to use condoms or ask for things which they do not want to do

RIMA MONDAL
A member of the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee and a sex worker

beginning their workday. Located in the heart of Kolkata on one of the arterial roads of the city, Chittaranjan Avenue, the area starts bustling as the night progresses.

After her workday is done, an office-going woman comes onto her balcony in a multi-storeyed house in the area. A group of sex workers stands across the road. They are hardly 100 metres apart. They look at each other – that is as close as the women from the two worlds will get. The *babus* (patrons) live across both worlds.

Layered violence

Sonagachi is lined with hundreds of multi-storied brothels which have rooms stacked on each other like matchboxes, three or four floors high, amid narrow meandering lanes and bylanes. Many of these houses are centuries old, some constructed way before the British arrived.

The sex workers of Sonagachi have lived through various kinds of violence while building their lives in this area, in this profession. Workers point out that violent and intoxicated customers are one of their biggest problems.

"*Babus* get drunk or high on substances, get angry, and take it out on us. Other girls have to intervene when the violence gets out of hand," a young woman from Sonagachi says. Most women say they are used to a certain level of violence and verbal abuse – it is extreme violence they fear.

Through the years, they have fought to get the basics, like ration cards, Aadhaar cards, bank ac-

counts. When they were discriminated against, they started the USHA Cooperative, one of the first financial cooperatives in Asia that helps women control their own resources.

"It is a misconception that every sex worker is trafficked. The authorities and society use this narrative to discriminate against us," says Bishakha Laskar, secretary of DMSC. In her late 40s, Bishakha says many women join the sex trade to earn a living and feed their families. She insists that the only way to stop trafficking is to decriminalise sex work. "Trafficking is there in every section of society; even daily wage labourers are trafficked," Bishakha adds.

To address the trafficking issue, DMSC has started a group where both sex workers and external members counsel any new woman coming into the trade. They say they have rescued and rehabilitated over 2,000 girls who did not come in voluntarily.

In her office, Bishakha remembers her own journey in Sonagachi as she spells out each letter and slowly signs her name on official documents. She has learnt to read and write under the guidance of her teacher, Sanjib Mukherjee, who has taught many women in the area. "We used to sit on plastic sheets for our classes. Whatever I have learnt, I have learnt from Sir," she adds.

Owning the journey

Rima Mondal (name changed) came to Sonagachi from Murshidabad with just ₹20 when she was 15. She has spent 33 years as a sex worker even though many had advised her in her early days that she was too young to get into this business. But she came from an impoverished family and did not have other employment options to feed her family. "*Nun ante panta phuroto amader*" (By the time I got the salt, the rice was over).

Rima's family could not afford to pay ₹7,000 for her dowry, but through sex work she got her older brother married, refusing to take dowry from her sister-in-law. "No one came to feed me when I was struggling on an empty stomach. They have no right to judge my life choices now," says Rima, who does field work for the DMSC during the day and returns to her regular job at night.

One reason she does not want to be photographed is that her daughter has married a man outside Sonagachi, and she fears her daughter's in-laws may feel ashamed of her profession. In the last three decades, she has only managed to open up about her profession to her mother but the rest of her family still believes that she has a job in the city.

It is the evening. Rain lashes Kolkata, washing

the dust off trees and turning the city into a petrichor crucible. In Sonagachi, the smell of old cigarettes, pungent alcohol, and fried food is now mixed with the smell of fresh rainwater. Rima tries to duck from the rains, running into her building. She climbs up the dingy, dank, narrow serpentine stairs of the building she has lived in for the past 28 years. She is home.

Rima sits in her 4x4-ft. room on the fourth floor. She remembers that when she came into the trade, things were different. "From forced sex to violence by customers and neighbourhood goons, we have seen it all. During one of our trips to raise awareness and distribute condoms, brothel owners poured hot water on us because they thought we will force women to stop working and they would lose business," she says. "Over the years, the violence has reduced as women have become empowered to say no to customers who refuse to use condoms or ask for things which they do not want to do."

She sits on her bed, catching a moment of rest before she prepares her dinner and her customers arrive at night. Her kitchen spills over to the balcony. A single almirah and refrigerator hold all her belongings; everything has a place. There are two netted windows that barely allow light or air into the room, but keep the pests away.

On the green walls hang her awards and certificates, reminders of battles fought and milestones achieved. Hundreds of such rooms crowd these lanes, each reflecting the lives of its residents, the *Didis*, as locals call them.

Rights and wrongs

Priyanka Kar (name changed), in her 50s, calls herself a daughter of Sonagachi because her mother was paid to be the sex partner to a police officer in the area. Kar is married and says that she has been doing sex work since she was a teenager. "I cannot be one of the *line-er meye* (girls standing on the road here) because my *line-er meye* house is also here. So I had to hide and go to other places to do my work," Priyanka says, adding that her husband knew about her profession. She laughs and adds that she has always been "naughty", and never shied away from taking lovers because it was this work that helped her sustain her family.

Over time, her husband became abusive because of her profession. "I tried to kill myself when my family questioned my morality and work," she says. She found social recognition when her daughter's in-laws fought for her dignity and respected her choice, saying that she did not cheat anyone to earn a wage and did things on her own terms. She beams with pride while saying this, hoping her daughter's life will be less precarious than hers.

At a DMSC conference this January, Kingshuk Sarkar, an assistant professor at the Goa Institute of Management who had worked for the West Bengal government as a labour administrator, had said that the lack of acceptance of sex work as work causes problems in getting workers' rights and benefits. He insisted that sex workers need to be included in India's existing labour laws to normalise their work and stop human rights violations. "We all use our body parts to do work, then why is sex work different? And why are some body parts stigmatised?" said Sarkar.

The women of Sonagachi echo this, adding that they will also be protected by law if there is violence or harassment at the workplace. They can access public services without discrimination or stigma, and be included in other workers' schemes in the country.

Down the lanes of Sonagachi, there are at least a dozen different posters and banners of the local MLA Shashi Panja, the Minister of Women and Child Development and Social Welfare of West Bengal. She is a regular at DMSC events, taking away some of the stigma.

The women though, refuse for their real names to be published or their photographs taken. They know the fallout could be severe.

shrabana.chatterjee@thehindu.co.in



The sex workers of the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee in Kolkata took their movement demanding workers' rights to Parliament in Delhi in 2006. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

A journey to salvation

As Vimukt: In Search of the Sky finds acclaim at the TIFF, the makers discuss how this story, told in Braj, played out at the Maha Kumbh

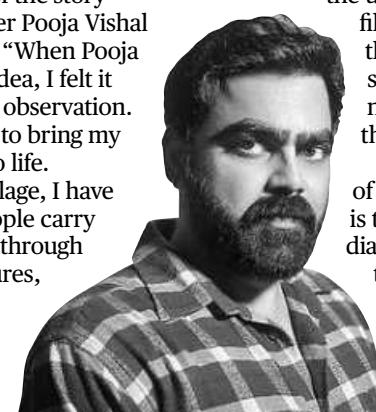
Anuj Kumar
anuj.kumar@thehindu.co.in

Ione of the less-discussed stereotypes of our films is that mental health is mainly presented as an urban problem. This week, a slice of life story from a village in Madhya Pradesh is making waves, as debutant Jitank Singh Gurjar's *Vimukt: In Search of the Sky* has won the prestigious NETPAC Award for the Best Asian Film at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF).

On the surface, *Vimukt* is the story of Naaran, a 26-year-old mentally unstable man born to an elderly underprivileged couple who struggle to save him from the derisive attitude of a patriarchal society and their own complex of having given birth to an imperfect child. The mother feels that a dip in the holy Kumbh might cure her son, while the father, struggling to make ends meet, sees it as an opportunity to abandon what people around him project as a burden.

"It's inspiring to see how our small story from Braj can find resonance in conversations about World Cinema," says Jitank, who realised the truth of the story penned by producer Pooja Vishal Sharma on screen. "When Pooja came up with the idea, I felt it was a very truthful observation. I saw it as a canvas to bring my own experiences to life. Growing up in a village, I have witnessed how people carry grief and struggles through silence, small gestures, and faith. That essence naturally shaped the storytelling."

Pooja attests



STEP OUT



Cultural pulse

In the villages of Odisha, the Bagha Nata ritual once transformed men into tigers, painted, masked, and driven into a trance. Kannu Behera, who once danced in that frenzy as a boy, has carried its spirit into his art. His canvases and prints hold the rhythm of paws against earth, the pulse of myth, and the struggle between wildness and control. The Fearful Symmetry, his solo exhibition curated by Johny ML, runs from September 19 to 25 at the Open Palm Court, India Habitat Centre from 11am to 7pm. Alongside his works, the exhibition includes a live tiger dance performance by traditional artistes, a talk on the ritual's history by Dilip Tripathy, and a concluding conversation between Behera and the curator. It is less an exhibition, more an invocation, where memory, ritual, and modernity circle one another.



Groove sessions

This weekend, the stage at Piano Man is set. On Friday, September 19, playback singer Shefali Alvares, known for hits like *Badtameez Dil* and *Subah Hone Na De*, unveils her Bolly-Jazz act, reshaping Bollywood's energy. On Sunday, September 21, the spotlight shifts to Advaita, a Delhi-based collective whose 25-year journey has defined India's fusion soundscape. The band has earned acclaim and appeared on Coke Studio. Tickets on thepianoman.in.

that we tend to imagine mental health as an "urban" subject, but the struggles in villages and smaller towns are often harsher because of silence, stigma, and a lack of resources. "It's not reportage, it's a deeply personal lens." The biggest challenge, she says, was to resist dramatising the story. "I wanted to stay true to the rhythm of a small rural family."

Beyond the apparent conflict, there is a spiritual layer to the story that makes it mystical and moving. Jitank underlines that *Vimukt* means being free – from the weight we carry within: fear, grief, and expectation. "The boy embodies life as it truly is; he doesn't linger in one mood or one way of being. He isn't just a son – he is a witness, a reflection of the fluid, ever-changing truth of existence. Through him, faith emerges not as ritual or doctrine, but as a quiet surrender to life – a way of being fully present, open, and ultimately liberated."

Born in Dabra, a small town near Gwalior, Jitank, who has a degree in Psychology and a grounding in theatre, says whenever he returns to his village, he feels that the culture he grew up in has rarely been shown in cinema. "That gave me the urge to make films rooted in this soil and share those nuances with the world."

An extension of this motivation is the use of a Braj dialect of Hindi in the film. "When it comes to language, there is Marathi

cinema, Haryanvi cinema, and many strong regional voices, but Braj or Bundeli cinema has hardly found space. Yet, approximately 20 crore people speak these dialects. I felt a responsibility to create good cinema in Braj – not just for representation, but to let its spirit, music, and culture breathe on screen."

One of the highlights of the film is Nikhil Yadav's performance as Naaran. "Nikhil is Pooja's discovery," says Jitank. "She was insistent about him, and I wasn't sure until I saw his audition – it was phenomenal. As we developed the character, we started observing people like Naaran, studying them psychologically, and creating a character history and design. We also spent time at an NGO where such people are cared for, to closely observe their everyday life. That process gave Nikhil a grounding that made the performance feel truthful."

The film's visual design also brings out the spiritual underpinnings of the story. The scenes of the Kumbh, particularly the evening scenes against the giant wheel, remind one of *Joyland*, the much-acclaimed indie from

Marathi

Pakistan. "*Joyland* is my absolute favourite film of the last decade; it inspires me," admits cinematographer and creative director Shelly Sharma.

"The visual colour reference for this was Wes Anderson's *The Darjeeling Limited*. The idea here was to make it feel like a place of excitement and uncertainty. Visually, we stayed as close as we could to bring in that added layer of cinematic elements with the help of some filters, an added layer of Vaseline on a clear glass, the use of colour in frame through costumes, and the choice of locations within the Kumbh. Also, however well we could use the limited RGB (red, green, blue) tubes we had at hand for lighting."

The best part, adds Shelly, was the already present production design in the Kumbh. "I only needed to figure out how to use it to my advantage while contributing to the character's graph significantly."

Both Jitank and Shelly remark that the Kumbh schedule was a riot. While Jitank remembers how they created fake fights in the crowd, so people would get distracted and allow them to capture the scene they needed, Shelly talks of "playing it by ear" as things and situations would change quickly. "We managed crowds without a controller unit and no proper tech recce."

Elated with the NETPAC recognition at TIFF, Pooja says, for indie filmmakers, it is not just an award, it is "encouragement, validation, and hope". "It tells us that our voices matter, that our stories can travel beyond borders and still touch hearts."

Geetika Sachdev

For centuries, India's artisans have carried memory in their hands – from the patient stitches of chikankari to the shimmer of thewaa jewellery. These creations have been displayed in museums or stores but rarely given a home that honours both process and product.

The Kunj, newly opened in Delhi's Vasant Kunj, attempts to change that. Conceived by the Ministry of Textiles through the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) and curated by cultural enterprise Cultre, it is a space where craft is not framed as a relic of the past but as a living, evolving practice. It brings artisans, designers, and audiences into conversation, creating an environment where tradition and innovation meet on equal terms.

"Indian craft is so rich that we wanted a well-curated place which shows the best of Indian handicrafts to the world but is design-led," says Amit Raj, Development Commissioner (Handicrafts).

Craft as living heritage

The most arresting corner of The Kunj is Karigar Sangam, where National awardees, Shilp Gurus, and Padma Shri artisans present their finest works. Among them, Abdul Baseer's camel bone carving – an intricate hunting scene that took a year to complete – sits beside Sakila Bano Ansari's chikankari khanpoch, its jaali embroidery as airy as breath.

Dinesh Kumar Soni's pichwai of Shrinathji glows with gold and silver leaf, echoing Nathdwara's devotional traditions. And in a contemporary turn, Imtiyaz Ahmad's Mirzapur durrie – woven over six months –



Creative space
Artifacts on display at The Kunj.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



grass dried for nearly a month before weaving. Nearby, Ashutosh Verma's sanjhi art, the devotional paper-cutting tradition of Mathura, draws from patterns once used to adorn temple floors in memory of Radha and Krishna.

"What makes craft relevant for younger audiences is when they can interact with artisans and see their practices placed alongside contemporary design. Otherwise, it's just something they've only seen in their parents' drawing rooms," says Sunil Sethi, Chairman, Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI).

The Kunj positions itself not as a shopping arcade but as a cultural hub. Recently, FDCI organised Legacy of Craft, a fashion showcase where designers Divyam Mehta, Payal Jain, Samant Chauhan, Suket Dhir, and Upavita drew directly from hand techniques – kantha, chikankari, Bhagalpuri silk, block prints, and Chanderi – to present collections that bridge heritage and contemporary fashion.

India's crafts have long been celebrated abroad, often more vigorously than at home. The Kunj is an attempt to root that celebration.

Eyes on design

The Kunj in Delhi showcases craft as both tradition and innovation through artisans, design-led retail, and live demonstrations

translates faces and figures into bold colours and flat textures.

Each piece carries its own story, allowing visitors to encounter the human voice behind the object and even purchase the work.

Beyond Karigar Sangam, The Kunj hosts over 19 curated retail spaces, with more likely to open in the future. These are not uniform store fronts but intimate, thoughtfully designed shops carrying clothing, textiles,

accessories, toys, and homeware. Here, established craft enterprises like Central Cottage Industries Emporium and Khamir sit alongside

design-forward start-ups such as IRO IRO and Mirasi, creating a marketplace that values authenticity as much as innovation.

There is also Khel Ghar where visitors can rediscover the joy of traditional Indian games and toys – handmade gilli danda, spinning

tops, and chessboards that once defined everyday play.

The Kunj is not built on the logic of passive consumption. Instead, it insists that craft is best understood through participation.

At Kala Manch, lesser-known traditions rarely seen on national platforms take centre stage. In one corner, Amrita Devi's sikki grass craft glows in gold and colour – boxes, toys, and jewellery made from strands of



Troubled transition

Interim government in Nepal must resist illegitimate demands

After violent protests that left 74 dead, Nepal's elected government has fallen, with its Parliament dissolved and former jurist Sushila Karki leading an interim government until the 2026 elections. While the Gen Z protesters had legitimate grievances including poor governance, entrenched corruption and intolerance of critical views, seen in the ousted CPN-UML-led government's banning of 23 social media websites – the transition itself was blatantly unconstitutional, violating Article 76 of Nepal's 2015 Constitution which permits dissolution only after failed Prime Minister appointments. Yet, considering the exigent circumstances, there is little purchase for judicial review of the steps taken last week. Notably, the President did not dissolve the upper house, the National Assembly. More troubling were the protesters' egregious actions which included burning Parliament and the Supreme Court (destroying vital documents). Nepal is expected to suffer severe economic losses besides governance issues due to the destruction of property and documents. The targeting of democratic institutions suggests an assault on Nepal's post-Constitutional order – institutions established after the painstaking constitution-writing process that followed the much-needed ending of a decade-long civil war in 2006, overcoming an anachronistic and discredited monarchy and which included marginalised sections beyond Kathmandu valley's power structures – even if there was half-hearted or ineffective implementation of the Constitution's spirit and letter.

The interim government must bring the criminals to justice as any inaction will lead to a normalisation of violence threatening all institutions that were set up to fulfil the promises of deeper democratisation and Nepal's transformation into a republic. Even if Gen Z protesters claim that impostors carried out the violence, their continued reliance on online forums, such as Discord, for decision-making reveals immaturity and an unrepresentative nature. The reliance on online forums, which feature anonymity, frivolity and impersonation, and the fact that there is no guarantee that these views are representative of the many marginalised groups suggest that giving into the demands from these unaccountable groups uncritically could be hazardous. The failures of mainstream leaders – the K.P. Sharma Oli-Sher Bahadur Deuba-Pushpa Kamal Dahal troika and their coterie – cannot justify discrediting democracy or the polity itself, as some protesters have made it out to be, echoing anti-social and destructive pro-monarchic elements. One outcome is that the entrenched leadership of mainstream parties could be compelled by party members to give way to fresh blood. Meanwhile, the interim government must protect Nepal's institutions and constitutional achievements while building the stage for free and fair elections – this is the surest path to safeguarding the promise of a democratic, plural and republican "Naya Nepal".

Holistic approach

India needs a multi-pronged strategy to deal with stubble burning

The Supreme Court of India has broached the possibility of prosecuting farmers, caught setting fire to their fields, to prepare for winter sowing or *rabi* crop. 'Stubble burning' is a major contributor to air pollution in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana, particularly in October and November, when the southwest monsoon has receded and adverse meteorological conditions trap toxic particulate matter emissions from vehicles, industry, garbage burning and agricultural waste. While the causes and the ways to reduce particulate matter pollution from agriculture are known, the efforts by the Centre to tackle the long-standing problem have been half-hearted. The creation of the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM), a central body with the power to reach out across the borders of Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, was a positive step and an acknowledgement that air pollution in one State cannot be tackled without the cooperation of others. However, the four-year-old statutory body has failed to exercise its powers in a manner that is independent of political pressure. Take the example of its recent order to ban the sale of petrol and diesel in the National Capital Region to 'end-of-life' vehicles, from July 1. A public outcry in Delhi and its political leaders – largely on technical grounds – and the Court's intervention, forced its implementation to November this year, that too beginning with parts of the NCR that are not a part of the Delhi municipalities. In stubble burning too, the CAQM has not been able to impress upon the judiciary that stubble burning was due to recalcitrant farmers, limited enforcement by Punjab and Haryana and the structure of agricultural economics that left the average, debt-ridden farmer with little choice. In recent years, it has emerged that Punjab has been claiming a reduction in farm fires when it was in fact increasing. The CAQM chose not to disclose this.

In the absence of a transparent mechanism to evaluate and address an issue and being cowed down by imagined political repercussions, it is not surprising that suggestions such as to "jail farmers" to act as a deterrent to others are being bandied about. While no section of citizens – farmer or industrialist – can be considered to be above the law, creating better incentives, enforcing existing laws and being transparent about what is realistically achievable are more advisable steps than 'carrot and stick' approaches.

The publication, in February 2024, of a household consumption survey by the National Sample Survey (NSS) Office, after a gap of over a decade, has made it possible to estimate the poverty rate in India. One such estimate, released by the World Bank in April 2025, has received the most attention. It points to the poverty rate being very low by now. To quote the World Bank, "Over the past decade, India has significantly reduced poverty. Extreme poverty (living on less than \$2.15 per day) fell from 16.2 percent in 2011-12 to 2.3 percent in 2022-23...." ('Poverty and Equity Brief: INDIA', 2025). If this is indeed an accurate description, it would be a source of satisfaction, for it suggests that extreme poverty has virtually disappeared from the country.

The 'thali meal' as a consumption metric
The conventional approach to poverty measurement, pioneered by the Government of India over half a century ago, entails first determining the income that would enable food intake of a specified calorific value, and then classifying those with less as poor. This is a physiological approach, and has some merit. But there could be other approaches, based on the consumption of goods, for instance. One such approach would recognise that humans are likely to approach food from an angle wider than just its calorie content, taking into account the energy it provides, which calories measure, nourishment, and the satisfaction it gives. We believe the *thali* meal reflects this thinking, making it a natural choice to measure food consumption in real terms.

As a combination of carbohydrates, protein and vitamins, the *thali* is a balanced and self-contained unit of food consumption in south Asia, even if the nomenclature may vary across it. With this in mind, we have estimated the number of *thalis* the monthly expenditure reported in the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey of 2024 would translate into. The rating agency, Crisil, has estimated the cost of a home-cooked *thali*, comprising rice, *dal*, vegetables, *roti*, curd and salad, as ₹30. Adopting this price, we found that in 2023-24, up to 50% of the rural population and up to 20% of the urban population could not have afforded two *thalis* per day at the food expenditure recorded. If two *thalis* a day is taken as the minimum acceptable standard of food consumption, our estimates point to much greater food deprivation in India than conveyed by the poverty figures from the World Bank.

A crucial reason why our findings differ is that



Pulapre
Balakrishnan

is Honorary Visiting Professor, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram



Aman Raj

is an independent economist based in Patna, Bihar

we do not assume that all of a household's income is available for spending on food. A household needs to spend on rent, transportation, telephony, health maintenance and education to just remain in the workforce. Now, expenditure on food ends up as the residual. Therefore, we have based our estimates on the actual expenditure on food.

It tends to be assumed that the Public Distribution System (PDS) deals effectively with food deprivation. To assess this, we have computed the value of food consumption including the imputed value of supplies received via the PDS – both purchased and free of cost. With the value of consumption thus adjusted, the proportion of the population that cannot afford two *thalis* declines to 40% in rural areas and 10% in urban areas. Notably, food deprivation remains very high in the former even with subsidised food.

The role of PDS

To understand how the PDS can be leveraged to alleviate food deprivation, we estimated the subsidy per person across expenditure classes. What is interesting is that both PDS purchases and free food availed of by sections of the population that can afford more than two *thalis* a day are high. For instance, in rural India, the subsidy received by an individual in the 90%-95% fractile is 88% of the subsidy received by an individual in 0%-5% fractile, even as the first has a consumption expenditure more than three times greater, and going by our own *thali* index does not require further support. By contrast, in urban India, the subsidy regime is strongly progressive. But here too about 80% receive subsidised sales from the PDS and also free food, even when they too can afford more than two *thalis* per day.

Based on the data on food deprivation and the structuring of the food subsidy regime we make a proposal on how policy should evolve. This data point to what needs to be done and how it can be achieved. First, there is scope for restructuring the food subsidy, raising it at the lower end of the distribution and eliminating it altogether at the upper. However, we learn from the most recent consumption survey that there is a constraint to be faced: cereals consumption is almost identical for individuals in the 0%-5% fractile and the 95%-100% fractile.

This suggests that the desired level of consumption of cereals, both rice and wheat, has been reached, for the richest can afford to purchase all the cereals that they desire. While it points to the success of the PDS, in that it has

equalised the consumption of a staple food, at the same time, it points to the limits to using the PDS in its present form to end food deprivation. Not only has cereals consumption very likely reached its desired level across the population but also it constitutes only 10% of the average household's expenditure.

It is unreasonable, from considerations of both logistics and expense, to expect that a government can distribute the entire food basket to any section. There is a middle path though, and that is to expand the distribution of pulses through the PDS. In a further comparison of the consumption patterns at the two ends of the distribution, we find that unlike in the case of the cereals, the per capita consumption of pulses in the 0%-5% fractile is exactly half of that in the 95%-100% fractile.

Pulses consumption

The PDS can be leveraged to equalise the primary food consumption across the population. The expansion of the PDS to ensure desirable levels of consumption of pulses – for many Indians, the only source of protein and a very costly food item – is both desirable and feasible. The financial aspect can be addressed by restructuring the PDS. The per capita consumption of rice and wheat in the 0%-5% fractile implies that the PDS entitlement of rice and wheat is well above what is necessary for a significant number.

Expanding the subsidy regime to supply cereal to 80 crore people, as done by the central government in January 2024 and the particularly large entitlement of rice given to those below the poverty line in some States, do not reflect need. Also, they come at a cost to the economy, given the alternative uses of public funds. Trimming the current entitlement of cereals to levels indicated as needed by the recent consumption survey at the lower end of the distribution and eliminating it altogether at the upper end would also require lower stocking requirements for the Food Corporation of India, with substantial gains.

We have proposed an expansion of the PDS in the direction of the food most needed by the least well-off, namely pulses, accompanied by the elimination of subsidies for those whose food consumption exceeds a reasonable norm, such as two *thalis* a day. Right now, the PDS is both unwieldy and ineffective, as it spreads resources thin. Our proposal will render it compact, enabling the equalisation of primary food consumption in India by raising that of the poorest household to the highest level observed in the economy, a globally significant outcome.

Equalising primary food consumption in India

In June this year, India secured its best-ever position in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Index, ranking 99 out of 167 nations in the 2025 edition of the SDG Report. This marked a significant improvement from its rank of 109 rank in 2024, reflecting steady progress since 2021. India has demonstrated advancement in areas such as access to basic services and infrastructure. Yet, the report also flagged pressing challenges in key sectors, particularly health and nutrition, where progress has been uneven, especially in rural and tribal communities.

There is still ground to be covered
In this backdrop, it is critical to ponder over SDG 3. Its goal is to "ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages", and is one of the most crucial, yet demanding, goals in India's SDG journey. It encompasses specific targets that India has committed to achieve by 2030. Despite gains in some areas, the overall trajectory indicates that India is not on track in most targets. For example, the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) – the number of mothers dying after childbirth per 100,000 live births – stands at 97 deaths per 100,000 live births, higher than the 2030 target of 70.

Even the under-five mortality rate remains at 32 deaths per 1,000 live births against the target of 25. In developed countries, it ranges between two and six deaths. Life expectancy now is only 70 years, falling short of the target of 73.63 years. Out-of-pocket health-care expenditure continues to burden families at 13% of total consumption, nearly double the targeted 7.83%. Even immunisation coverage, though commendably high at 93.23%, has not yet reached the universal target of 100%.

There are multiple reasons for these gaps. They include, first, lack of access to quality health care partially due to poor infrastructure and economic factors; second, non-economic factors such as poor nutrition, hygiene and sanitation and other lifestyle choices and, third, cultural

practices and stigma around physical and mental health. These cultural practices and limited awareness often prevent communities from accessing even the health-care services available to them.

If India is to accelerate progress on SDG Goal 3, a three-pronged approach is essential and one that focuses on treatment and prevention of diseases. The first is providing Universal Health Insurance to the population. World Bank studies show that countries with robust insurance systems have lowered catastrophic health-care expenditure while ensuring greater equity in access. The second is to have high-quality primary health centres across the country and coordination of primary, secondary and tertiary care.

The World Health Statistics 2022 by the World Health Organization highlights that strong primary systems help in detecting diseases earlier, reducing hospitalisation costs, and achieving better long-term outcomes. This will also require harnessing the transformative potential of digital health tools. Telemedicine and integrated digital health records can bridge access gaps, especially in rural and underserved regions. Evidence from the Lancet Digital Health Commission shows how digital platforms have improved maternal health care and vaccination tracking in several low and middle-income countries, offering lessons that India can adapt.

Health education at the school level
Prevention of diseases is more cost-effective than treating them. To prevent diseases, we need to provide health education to all schoolchildren. Children need to be educated about healthy nutrition, good hygiene and sanitation, reproductive health, road safety, and on mental health topics.

At this young age, they need to improve their health behaviour and not just their knowledge. The health habits they develop at this age will be maintained as they grow to be adults. When girls

become mothers, they will be more educated about their health and advocate this for themselves and their family. Over the long term, the school health education initiative has the potential to reduce MMR ratio, under-five mortality and deaths due to road accidents. At the same time, it can increase life expectancy and immunisation rates.

Finland's school-based health reforms in the 1970s, which wove lessons on nutrition, hygiene and lifestyle into the curricula, played a central role in reducing cardiovascular disease rates in the decades that followed. In Japan, compulsory health education has been linked to improved hygiene practices and longer life expectancy. A structured and progressive curriculum in India can achieve similar results.

Need for concerted actions

Therefore, closing the SDG gap requires action by policymakers to individual actions. Policymakers need to embed health education in school curricula while simultaneously investing in universal health coverage and primary health care.

All parents have an important role to play in the health education of youth. They can review their child's school curriculum and determine whether topics on physical, mental and social health are being covered. If not, they should push for it by communicating this to the department of education.

India's improved SDG ranking is encouraging. But it should not obscure the reality that only 17% of global SDG targets are currently on track to be achieved by 2030. Educating its youth about healthy behaviour, supported by stronger health-care systems, can act as the foundation for sustainable progress. And while 2030 is an important milestone to reach, the true vision lies further ahead – building a healthier and stronger India. A government that devotes its attention to embedding health education in school curricula can help achieve the goal of a *Viksit Bharat* 2047.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Jews and Israel today

The Jews have been the most persecuted race – the Holocaust is the darkest chapter in human history. Therefore, one would expect that the Jews would inherently imbibe qualities of empathy and tolerance, given their sufferings in the past. However, it seems that the oppressed have turned oppressor with renewed force. How else can one explain the atrocities that Israel is perpetrating in Gaza? Even today, German children are taught about

the shameful role that the Germans played in the annihilation of Jews during the World War, lest they forget. Similarly, let the people of Israel pause for a moment and rethink on how history will judge them for the genocide in Gaza. They may soon have to contend with the possibility that their victimisation during the Second World War will be relegated to the last pages of history in the aftermath of their actions.

Sharda Sivaram,
Kochi, Kerala

India's inexplicable and continued silence on the genocide in Gaza reflects its narrow-mindedness, and its strange unwillingness to challenge executive decisions on foreign policy. As the world grapples with the mounting toll of the Gaza conflict, India's role as a silent bystander is growing increasingly untenable. The Prime Minister of India and the External Affairs Minister may frame their diplomacy as pragmatic, but history will judge them as moral

failures. The cost of complicity – both for Palestine and for India's global standing – is far too high to ignore. The question now is whether India will continue down this path of strategic expediency or rediscover the courage to condemn the genocide in Gaza – which it ought to do so. The answer will shape not only the fate of Palestine but also India's legacy in the global order.

R. Sivakumar,
Chennai

A loyal BSNL customer
I have been a long-standing BSNL customer, for nearly 20 years. The only reason my family and I (nearly 75 members) have continued with BSNL is out of our conviction to support a Government of India enterprise and promote its services. We have encouraged others in our circle to use BSNL despite its known limitations.

Akhil S. Karun,
Kochi, Kerala

explanation by customer-care representatives – that eSIM facilities are not available for long-standing customers. This policy shows a disregard for loyal customers. In the absence of BSNL's rollout of eSIM services, I am left with no choice but to consider porting my number to another operator. Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Should India overlook boundary issues while normalising ties with China?

**PARLEY****Vivek Katju**

former diplomat

**Antara Ghosal Singh**Fellow,
Observer
Research
Foundation

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping shake hands during a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Tianjin. AFP

Earlier this month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi concluded his much-anticipated visit to China. Mr. Modi attended the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit and also held talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the summit. The two leaders decided to restart bilateral trade and air connectivity, and underlined the importance of peace and tranquility along the border. These decisions were significant as they were made five years after the deadly border clashes between the two neighbours in the Galwan Valley in Ladakh; and months after India launched Operation Sindo against Pakistan (at the time, China supported the Pakistani military forces). Both leaders reaffirmed that the two countries were "development partners and not rivals, and their differences should not turn to disputes," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement after the meeting. Should India overlook boundary issues while normalising ties with China? Vivek Katju and Antara Ghosal Singh discuss the question in a conversation moderated by Kallo Bhattacharjee. Excerpts:

Is it possible for India to normalise ties with China without resolving the boundary issue?

Vivek Katju: In 1988, during Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China, India and China decided to normalise ties in other sectors even as they attempted to resolve the border issue. In a way, this constituted a departure from the past. The crucial point was that peace and tranquility had to be maintained along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). While India wanted the border issue to be resolved (as part of normalising ties), China was more reluctant to do so (and wanted to set the issue aside for the time being). In the 1990s too, both countries agreed to maintain peace and tranquility (along the LAC). In 2020, the Galwan incident, which demonstrated China's aggressive approach, upset this arrangement. That didn't mean that there weren't previous incidents which constituted serious setbacks to the normalisation process, but those paled in comparison to what happened in 2020. In the last five years, both sides, through diplomatic and military arrangements, have tried to restore the system that prevailed in the 1990s. So, when you ask whether the border issue is holding us back, I think we had moved past that in 1988 and in the 1990s. And one last point: if you see the Indian and Chinese readouts of the Modi-Xi Jinping meeting at the SCO margins, you will find a distinct difference in how the two sides describe the salience of the border issue.

Antara Ghosal Singh: My understanding is that it is not an either-or situation. The overall positive turn in China-India ties is not really a sudden development or a knee-jerk reaction to the current turmoil in international politics or the recent downturn in India-U.S. ties. India-China relations have been showing signs of improvement since early last year. Both sides have been sending some positive signals towards each other. As I gather from Chinese sources, the 2024 Border Patrol Agreement was a key icebreaker. Since the Galwan clash of 2020, India has been consistently demanding that the Chinese Army withdraw to the pre-April 2020 positions and restore India's patrol rights in the disputed areas. From that perspective, India sees the restoration of patrolling points, even in Demchok and Depsang, as a diplomatic victory. Many Indian strategists have acknowledged this fact. Importantly, the Chinese side feels that they have not really suffered any loss in this agreement because it is a border patrol agreement and has nothing to do with the demarcation of sovereignty. The agreement means that two years after achieving disengagement at four places through the creation of non-patrolled buffer zones, now two more places, as demanded by the Indian side, are being disengaged through cross-patrolled buffer zones. That is the Chinese understanding from what I read.

Do you see a situation where the normalisation of relations could be disrupted by, say, a Galwan-2 in the distant future?

VK: Of course, that will disrupt relations – and disrupt them badly. In the Indian strategic community, China now looms large. China has always loomed large, but I think for historical



Despite all our differences, I have always argued that good workable ties between China and India are good for both sides.

ANTARA GHOSAL SINGH

reasons, Pakistan occupied a principal place. But today, I do believe, despite Pakistani terror and despite China's consistent support for Pakistan, there is a realisation that China is India's main threat and will continue to be so. Now, there are new formulations that suggest that India and China can be partners and not rivals. What I understand is that China is aspiring for primacy in the world. It no longer considers India to be on par with it. It believes that India is just another South Asian country it has to deal with. If you see (Chinese Foreign Minister) Wang Yi's remarks, after his meeting with (Deputy Prime Minister of Pakistan) Ishaq Dar, that part is made clear. A journalist noted that Pakistan was the Minister's final stop after visiting three countries. Mr. Wang said it was the final stop – and the most important one. That speaks volumes.

There has been a shift in India's appreciation of China. But we cannot overlook the enormous infrastructure development, especially in the military area of the Tibetan Plateau. Why is this being done? And what will that lead to? It will lead to India having to spend a fair amount of its own financial resources in ensuring that the LAC infrastructure is fortified and that the LAC is well garrisoned throughout the year. I think that is also a Chinese objective.

I don't think it will be wrong for me to say that China shows no interest in really resolving the border issue. Yes, the special representatives are going to meet, but are they going to make any headway? What does the history of the last 30 years show? And why did Galwan happen? No one has been able to come up with an authoritative reason for why it happened.

AGS: If you look at Chinese sources, you will find many theories (behind what prompted China's action in Galwan). The most popular one is the dilution of Article 370 (of Jammu and Kashmir; China protested against the move). Another argument is the competition between China and India in terms of manufacturing. It was during COVID-19 that the first round of the China-U.S. trade war took place and there was this feeling on the Chinese side that India was collaborating with the U.S. to take away China's position in the global supply chains. That caused a lot of panic within Chinese strategic circles. Ambassador Katju also mentioned that India is

often looked down upon by China; that is true. For a long time, China has chosen to believe that India is a retreating image in its rear view mirror. But it was during that time in 2020 when they started to realise that things can change and that India, a country with 1.4 billion people, can be a competitor. There is this weird 'India is a threat' theory. If you look at Chinese discussions on various platforms, you can see how they are concerned about India's economic growth and India's demographic dividend, particularly at a time when China is facing a population crisis. There is also a prevailing mood in China that it should not let Chinese industries invest in India; that it should impose various export controls; and that it should not let India develop and be a competitor to China. So, there is a change in perception within China as well, on the India issue. All these insecurities played a role in what happened in 2020.

Can the two tracks of the normalisation of India-China relations, and China's plans for South Asia, as seen in the recent Kunming trilateral featuring Pakistan, China and Bangladesh, be in harmony with each other?

VK: Of course not. I have reached the conclusion that China believes that India, if not now, then in later years, can be a rival and that it must be tackled. The way China is moving in South Asia establishes that too. Earlier, they were entering into bilateral ties. Now there are trilateral mechanisms. There is an Afghanistan, Pakistan, China mechanism. They are trying for a Bangladesh, Pakistan, China mechanism. Soon, I think they would want a mechanism involving all South Asian countries, including us. They will know that we might not take part in it.

AGS: They have their cards against us and we have our cards against them. But despite all our differences, I have always argued that good workable ties between China and India are good for both sides. We are aware of China's manufacturing prowess and how dependent India and the world is on Chinese manufacturing. The Economic Survey 2024-25 highlighted China's overwhelming manufacturing dominance in various sectors, including electric vehicles and critical minerals. It also stated how China's overall manufacturing output, which is nearly 45% of the global total, is at a level never seen before since the U.S.'s or the U.K.'s at their industrial peak.



To listen to the full interview
Scan the code or go to the link
www.thehindu.com

NOTEBOOK

Landing in the midst of a 'revolution'

Journalists tend to go to the midst of rage-filled streets to report and record events, even if they are not there on work

Ramya Kannan

What are the chances of landing in the lap of a "revolution", completely unintentionally? In the Indian subcontinent, there is a pretty high chance, given what we have seen in recent years. After the uprising in Sri Lanka against the fall in the island nation's economic fortunes, and the protests in Bangladesh against the job quota system, the guarantee of peace in the region is shaky. The possibility of flights getting disrupted, arson and looting on the streets, curfews shutting down cities for days on end, and a palpable fear everywhere is not that remote.

For a journalist, there is also a measure of headiness. As vulgar as it may sound, even an unintended encounter with chaos counts as ecstasy for a reporter – to be amidst such a crisis and report on it. Something in our DNA takes us to the midst of rage-filled streets to report and record events, even if the purpose of visiting the place is different.

Who could have imagined that in the five-odd hours that it took to hop on to a flight in Chennai and hop off – first in New Delhi and then in Kathmandu – that things would fall apart so rapidly in Nepal? Protesters had initially turned up with flowers and books. They sang songs, demanding that the ban on social media be lifted. However, the situation deteriorated after reports of deaths began trickling in. The first few reports from the Himalayan kingdom stated that the number of dead stood at 19, and included a child.

Despite this, there is no panic among those who were already on the ground in Kathmandu and not part of the protests. Conference mates in the city lend assurance, recording how other people had arrived by air without any issues and how there are no disruptions on their side of the city.

On the first evening (September 8), everything seems fine. The airport is milling with people walking about normally. That the quotidian routine went on un-

disrupted is falsely calming. There are never-ending traffic jams on the way from the airport. This changes drastically overnight.

The next morning dawns with the smell of smoke. Thick, grey columns rise to blur the blue of the distant Himalayas. Protesters have set government buildings, institutions, and homes of politicians on fire. They have occupied a couple of media houses. The youth burn property in the middle of the road, unnerved by shoot-at-sight orders. On the sidelines of the "revolution", and roads, people stand fearlessly, watching the burning piles. As can be expected during such a mass upheaval, bystanders mutter: "This government needs to go." There is no fear on the main roads, but no cheering either. Pictures shot then tell the ambivalent side story of this South Asian equivalent of the Arab Spring.

That changes that evening: the youth cheer and give each other high fives and take out a victory march, a show of mostly testosterone. They sit on bikes, waving flags, sticks, even a rifle, yelling "victory". It seems to some that the protests have quickly ended.

The next day dawns in sharp contrast. There is a calm and a curfew in place. The annoying hoots of pigeons holed in the eaves of buildings replace the sounds of the previous day's raucous victory cries. Every shop is shut, and army pickets are within viewing distance on both sides of the winding roads. Army trucks whizz past, their sirens blaring. Hotels lock their gates and gently warn visitors against venturing out.

But that is for everyone else to follow. The journalist DNA drags one by the nose to the empty streets, the army pickets, into the centre of action. A video shot on an empty street seems disquieting. But for a journalist responding to the news, there are adrenaline hits with every photo and video recording history being rewritten, mostly in swirls of smoke.

ramya.kannan@thehindu.co.in**PICTURE OF THE WEEK**

Moving slowly in a fast-paced city



An aerial view of traffic snarls at the Dadar TT junction, a bustling centre in Mumbai, as demolition work on the century-old Elphinstone Road overbridge – a key east-west connector between Parel (East) and Prabhadevi (West) – commenced last Saturday. EMMANUEL YOGINI

FROM THE ARCHIVES**FIFTY YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 19, 1975**

Proposal for flood relief stamp to raise Rs. 100 crores

New Delhi, Sept. 18: The Government is examining a proposal to raise Rs. 100 crores for flood relief in Bihar, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh from the issue of a special stamp, the use of which will be obligatory while posting letters. Such special stamps were issued at the time of the Bangladesh crisis to augment resources.

The Hindu

Since the issue of special stamps alone may not net in the projected Rs. 100 crores, it is proposed to ask the State Governments to introduce certain additional levies on stamp papers for registration of documents, motor vehicles taxation, etc.

The Centre, deeply perturbed over the extensive damage caused by the floods, particularly in Bihar, is examining various proposals for effectively coming to the rescue of the flood-affected States. The special stamp and additional levies proposal is, however, likely to face some resistance from the other State Governments, though they did not object to the issue of the Bangladesh stamp.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO SEPT. 19, 1925

Wire-nail industry

Calcutta, Sept. 18: Giving evidence before the Tariff Board to-day, Mr. Khusiram, proprietor of the Punjab Wire-nail Factory, Amritsar, said that they could not run their factory at a profit nor compete with the foreign-made articles unless protection was granted. He pointed out that many of the articles made by them, such as panel pins, tacks, etc., were already subject to a duty of 10 per cent whilst they paid about 35 per cent customs duty on the wires imported for manufacturing such articles in India.

Text & Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Number of 'illegal' structures targeted by demolition drive

700 The Gandhinagar civic administration and other authorities launched a mega demolition drive on Thursday to clear encroachments on 1 lakh square metres of government land along the Sabarmati riverbank, said a senior police official. PTI

Life-term serving prisoners released by West Bengal since 2011

840 West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday said that the State government has released 840 prisoners serving life-term since 2011. She also announced that an additional 45 inmates are now being released following due legal process. PTI

Maldives' government bonds to India to be repaid

50 in \$ million. India on Thursday said it has rolled over, for one more year, \$50 million Maldives' government bonds as "an emergency financial assistance" to the archipelagic nation. The deadline for the repayment was extended once again "on the request of Maldives government." PTI

Water tax owed by companies to the Odisha government

3.7 in ₹ thousand crores. As many as 42 industrial houses have owed water cess to the Odisha government till March, the Assembly was informed. CM Mohan Charan Majhi said they draw water from Mahanadi, Kolab, Bramhani, Baitarani, Indravati, Rushikulya and Subarnarekha rivers. PTI

Estimated costs of climate-related health risks by 2050

1.5 in \$ trillion. The World Economic Forum report assessed climate-driven health impacts in four of the most affected economic sectors: food and agriculture; the built environment; health and healthcare; and insurance. PTI
COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

Follow us facebook.com/thehindu X.com/the_hindu instagram.com/the_hindu

Why did India condemn Doha strike?

How does India's reaction differ from its past responses? Why is Qatar treated differently from other countries? What role do India-Qatar ties play? Why has India stayed largely silent on Gaza? What does this mean for India's West Asia policy?

EXPLAINER

Suhasini Haidar

The story so far:

India's condemnation of Israel's bombing in Doha last week as a "violation of sovereignty" is a shift from its more muted positions on previous Israeli operations in other countries, leading some to wonder if there's a larger change in New Delhi's stand on the crisis in West Asia. However, experts said that while the strong wording of the statement denotes growing distress over mounting civilian casualties in the war in Gaza, India's intervention has more to do with its close ties with Qatar and the Gulf region than with an assertion of principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. This has become particularly important, given New Delhi's concerns over the Saudi-Pakistan mutual defence agreement signed in Riyadh on Wednesday.

Why did India criticise the Doha strike?

On September 16, India referred to the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) bombing on September 9 of a home in Doha where leaders of Hamas gathered to discuss the United States' latest ceasefire proposal, as actions that "threaten peace, stability and security" in the region and worldwide. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu defended the strike, which killed five, saying that it was "justified" as Qatar "harbours and funds" Hamas operatives.

"India is deeply concerned about the recent attacks in Doha and their impact on the security situation in the region. We unequivocally condemn the violation of the sovereignty of Qatar," said India's Ambassador to the UN Mission in Geneva Arindam Bagchi, speaking at the UN Human Rights Council, also invoking the UN charter and international law.

"Any escalation must be avoided, and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States must be upheld," Mr. Bagchi added, in a statement that built on an earlier statement by the Ministry of



A damaged building, following an Israeli attack on Hamas leaders, in Doha, on September 9. REUTERS

External Affairs, and another statement issued after Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani on September 10, expressing "solidarity with the Qatari people".

How does this differ from India's past reactions?

The statements are in stark contrast to New Delhi's reactions to Israel's bombings of several other countries in the region, including Lebanon, Yemen, Tunisia, Syria, and Iran.

When Israel bombed the Iranian Embassy in Damascus last April, the MEA had expressed some "concern", as it had when Israeli forces attacked a UN Peacekeeping post in southern Lebanon, but remained largely silent over other Israeli attacks on other countries. When Israeli intelligence detonated hundreds of mortar bombs against Hezbollah in Beirut in September 2024, Indian Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi called the operation a "masterstroke". On Iran – a country with close ties with India and where investments such as the Chabahar port are at stake – the government's reactions have been more puzzling. In June, India called for dialogue after Israeli

and U.S. strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities, which Iran responded to. However, New Delhi disassociated from a statement issued by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) days later, which condemned the strikes on Iran. In a subsequent flip-flop, India signed on to the SCO joint declaration on September 1 that "condemned" Israel and the U.S. for the June strikes.

Why is Qatar treated differently?

"India's ties with the other countries mentioned are not the same as ties with Qatar, with its large Indian diaspora and personal relations at the highest levels between PM Modi and the Qatari Emir," explained former Ambassador to the UAE and Egypt, Navdeep Suri. "Eventually, in an age of 'transactionalism', this is not as much about values and principles as about the bilateral relationship with each of these countries, including Israel," he told *The Hindu*.

The MEA declined to respond to a question from *The Hindu* on why the Modi government has taken conflicting positions on the issue. Experts said a number of reasons explained the varied statements, from geopolitical to regional and bilateral.

According to former

Ambassador and author of *West Asia at War*, Talmiz Ahmad, India's response to the attack on Qatar had "no larger strategic purpose" but focused on Qatar being a "crucial supplier of gas".

He also pointed out that Israel's attack on Qatar had put Gulf countries that house U.S. military bases and count on the U.S. to guarantee security "on notice", indicating a "fundamental geopolitical shift in the region", which India may need to take note of.

"The message Israel has given is that every Arab country, every Gulf country, is within their target zone and put them all on notice. Israel has now ended the process of normalisation and made it clear that ties with other West Asian countries are not a priority over its operations. Thirdly, Israel has shown that the U.S. is no longer a guarantor of security for these GCC countries," Mr. Ahmad said, speaking at a seminar organised by the India-America Friendship Association on Tuesday.

The alarm among Gulf countries was visible at an emergency joint session of the Arab League and the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) conference in Doha this week, which condemned Israel's actions, even as the Gulf Cooperation Council committed to building a "joint defence mechanism" to deal with future threats.

What does this mean for India's broader West Asia policy?

In addition, experts said India's silence on Gaza – where more than 65,000 have been killed, including at least 20,000 children, in Israel's incessant bombardment of Gaza, including the latest offensive against Gaza City – is straining its ties with the Arab world. In a rare response to media queries on August 27, the MEA called the killing of journalists and civilians by the IDF "shocking and deeply regrettable". India also voted in favour of a UNGA resolution endorsing the two-state solution for Palestine on September 12, indicating that, despite the steadfast relationship with Israel, the Modi government's shifts may indicate that it needs to factor in the rest of the region as well.

THE GIST

▼ India condemns Israel's bombing in Doha as a 'violation of sovereignty' and expresses concern over regional peace and security.

▼ The strong stance reflects India's close ties with Qatar and the Gulf region rather than a shift in principles on sovereignty.

▼ India's silence on Gaza and varied reactions to other Israeli strikes show a careful balancing of strategic, regional, and bilateral interests.

Why are Maharashtra's onion farmers protesting?

Is the government's buffer stock policy hurting farmers?

Vinaya Deshpande Pandit

The story so far:

Since September 12, thousands of farmers from Maharashtra, India's largest onion-producing State, have been holding a protest. The main reason for the agitation is the distress caused by the fall in market prices of onions. Farmers are demanding immediate government intervention and aid of ₹1,500 per quintal. Experts say the problem is systemic. Maharashtra has produced more onions than needed this year, and the quality of stored Rabi onions has deteriorated, lowering market prices. They argue that the government must streamline onion exports, establish a uniform export policy, build trust among importers, and hold discussions with key buyers to secure stable markets.

Why are farmers protesting?

At present, farmers say they earn only

₹800 to ₹1,000 per quintal for their onions, while the production cost stands at ₹2,200 to ₹2,500 per quintal. The Rabi onions stored by farmers in the hope of better rates are deteriorating, forcing them to sell at even lower prices. At the same time, the government has released its buffer stock in the market at cheaper prices, further dragging down rates.

"NCCF and NAFED should be stopped from selling their stocks in cities across the country," one of the key demands put forth by the Maharashtra State Onion Producer Farmers' Organisation said. National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India Ltd. (NCCF), a major consumer cooperative in India; and National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED), the apex cooperative organisation for promoting and developing the cooperative marketing of agricultural produce for the benefit of farmers, jointly procure, store and

thereafter sell the onions in the market as a part of the Government of India's price stabilisation policy.

How is the onion price stabilisation policy affecting the farmers?

India's onion price stabilisation policy focuses on maintaining a strategic buffer stock under the Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF) to manage price volatility. The government procures onions to build this buffer, and during periods of high prices or lean supply, they are released from the stock into major consumption centres through outlets and mobile vans to ensure affordability for consumers and prevent hoarding.

However, at present, farmers are still sitting on the stocks of Rabi onions and are trying to sell them in the market.

At a time when their produce is receiving a market price lower than the production cost, the prices are brought down further due to the NAFED and

NCCF stocks.

What solutions are farmers and experts proposing?

According to government data, 25.25 lakh tonnes of onions were exported in the year 2022-23, a significant surge compared to previous years. But within two years, exports fell by more than half – in 2024-25, only 11.47 lakh tonnes were exported. "There is an urgent need to restore competitiveness and secure India's position in global onion markets. Bangladesh and Sri Lanka were the two main importers of Indian onions. Today, both of them have looked away from us. The government needs to have a stable export policy. Any flip-flops lead to a loss of credibility for the country in the international market," an exporter who did not wish to be named said.

Farmers and exporters want the government to incentivise exports, as India is one of the leading growers of onions in the world. During the flux in the government's export policy, countries like China and Pakistan have taken over India's export market, farmers said.

Meanwhile, the Andhra Pradesh government has announced procurement of onions at ₹1,200 per quintal, a base price considered crucial to protecting farmers. One of the suggestions given to the government of Maharashtra is to emulate the Andhra model and incentivise the onion farmers.

THE GIST

▼ Farmers in Maharashtra, India's largest onion-producing State, are protesting as market prices have plunged to ₹800–₹1,000 per quintal, far below their production costs of ₹2,200–₹2,500.

▼ They demand stable export policies and a halt to buffer stock sales that further drag down market rates.

ABSTRACT



GETTY IMAGES

How the DeepSeek-R1 AI model was taught to teach itself to reason

Reinforcement learning alone, with the right design, could produce reasoning behaviour that was previously thought to require human examples; DeepSeek-R1 shows signs of reflection, verification, and adaptability without supervised fine-tuning

Vasudevan Mukunth**The story so far:**

For many decades, one of the great challenges in artificial intelligence (AI) has been teaching machines to reason. Reasoning goes beyond memorising facts or completing sentences. It's the ability to follow steps, reflect on mistakes, and adjust strategies until the right answer is found.

Humans use reasoning for everything from solving maths problems to writing computer programmes, from negotiating their daily lives to deciding whom to vote for. Large language models (LLMs) such as GPT-4 or DeepSeek-V3 have surprised scientists by showing signs of reasoning when scaled to large sizes. Another method, called chain-of-thought prompting, where the model is nudged to "think step by step", has also boosted performance.

But both these approaches come with limits. Training models to reason usually demand human-made examples. E.g., people show an AI model how to solve problems and the AI learns to copy the method. This is slow, expensive, and introduces human biases. It also caps the AI's creativity because the model can't explore problem-solving methods that humans didn't think of.

In a paper published in *Nature* on September 17, the DeepSeek-AI team reported that it was able to reach its model, called R1, to reason by asking an ambitious question: what if we allowed the model to teach itself to reason without showing it human examples first? That is, they found that R1 could develop new forms of reasoning using reinforcement learning, a method of trial and error guided only by rewards for correct answers.

What is reinforcement learning?

The team's aim was to make the model smarter at maths and coding, as well as to

uncover how reasoning behaviours might emerge naturally when a machine is given the proper incentives.

DeepSeek researchers began with V3 Base, a large language model similar to other state-of-the-art systems. Instead of using the usual supervised fine-tuning, where humans provide the reasoning steps, they applied 'group relative policy optimisation', a reinforcement learning method designed for efficiency.

In this setup, the model, called R1-Zero at first, was asked to solve mathematical and algorithmic problems. For each attempt, it had to produce two parts: a reasoning process inside `<think>...</think>` tags and a final answer inside `<answer>...</answer>` tags. The only reward came from whether the final answer was correct, judged by rule-based systems like answer keys or code compilers. No one told the model how its reasoning should look.

Over thousands of training steps, the model learned by trial and error. If an answer was wrong, the path that led there was discouraged; if it was right, the path was reinforced. Importantly, the researchers also tracked how the model's thinking time, i.e., the number of tokens it used in its reasoning section, changed. Strikingly, the model began writing longer and more reflective reasoning chains on its own, sometimes including phrases like "wait" or "let's try again", revealing an ability to self-correct.

Was there human intervention?

To address weaknesses such as poor readability and mixing English with Chinese, the team built R1 from R1-Zero. This process included adding incentives for consistently using one language, supervised fine-tuning with both reasoning and non-reasoning data. The final model thus inherited the raw reasoning power of R1-Zero while also becoming easier to use and safer.

The results were striking. On the American Invitational Mathematics

Examination (AIME) 2024, a tough competition that usually the smartest high-school students attempt, R1-Zero's accuracy jumped from just 15.6% at the start of training to 77.9% by the end. With more tuning, it reached 86.7%, surpassing the average performance of human students.

At a certain stage, R1-Zero began using the word "wait" more often in its reasoning, just like a human might have when a mistake is spotted. The researchers said this meant the model wasn't blindly following a path but actively rethinking steps when something seemed off. In effect, reinforcement learning had coaxed the AI into behaviours that resembled reflection and verification, both elements of reasoning.

The ultimate R1 model was even stronger: it was good at maths and coding as well as on benchmarks for general knowledge, answering questions, and following instructions. Compared to its predecessors, R1 was also more consistent with its choice of language and better aligned with human preferences for helpfulness and safety. When evaluated with frameworks like AlpacaEval 2.0 and Arena-Hard, which test how well a model follows instructions, R1 improved by 25% and 17%, respectively, which are considered large.

What are the pros and cons of reasoning?

Many large language models, including widely used systems like ChatGPT, often demand large amounts of computational resources during testing. R1, on the other hand, could adapt how much it "thought" depending on the task's difficulty. Simple problems were met with short reasoning chains, while harder ones led to longer, more elaborate chains. This dynamic allocation avoided demanding power on questions that didn't warrant it. However, reinforcement learning itself is energy-intensive.

Taken together, the findings confirm

that reinforcement learning alone (with the right design) could produce reasoning behaviours that were previously thought to require human examples. This could change the way we think about how intelligence might grow in artificial systems. For instance, in the future, researchers could build verifiers that check answers and let the model figure out its own strategies. If the answer to a maths problem, a computer programme or a factual question can be reliably checked, then reinforcement learning can do the rest. This could speed up progress while reducing human labour and bias.

Indeed, traditional LLM training pipelines bank heavily on large human-labelled datasets – people writing question-answer pairs, reasoning steps, preference judgments, etc. They are expensive and often assembled under exploitative labour conditions. If machines can be taught to reason using reinforcement learning alone, the demand for human-annotated data can shrink, thus also reducing pressure to source cheap labour worldwide. However, the study paper also acknowledges that tasks without clear ground-truthing still rely on human-labelled data for reward models. So human input is not eliminated; only its scope may shrink to areas where no reliable verifier can be built.

A model that learns to reason will also demand better reward signals for open-ended tasks like writing, which is difficult, as well as stronger safeguards as it becomes capable of generating dangerous or manipulative content. In fact, watching a machine develop reflective behaviour (pausing, checking, revising, etc.) raises questions about how far such systems can go. If reasoning emerges from incentives rather than instructions, could creativity or deeper forms of understanding emerge in the same way?

Time will tell – unless DeepSeek-R1 figures it out first.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Actor and director Robert Redford died at the age of 89 on September 16. How well do you know his work?

Radhika Santhanam**QUESTION 1**

This film is centred around a scandal that brought down the Nixon government. Redford played one of the journalists who broke the story of the scandal. The journalist worked for *The Washington Post*. Name the film and the journalist.

QUESTION 2

Karen Blixen, also known by her pen name Isak Dinesen, was a Danish author. Her best-known book was about her life in Kenya. Redford starred in the film that was based on this book. Name the film, also starring Meryl Streep.

QUESTION 3

Redford's final appearance on screen was in an American superhero film

based on the Marvel comics. Name the film.

QUESTION 4

One of the leading film festivals in the world was named after a character played by Redford. Name the festival and the film that features this character.

QUESTION 5

This film, directed by Redford, dramatised the rigged TV shows of the 1950s.

QUESTION 6

Redford said about a famous song that was part of one of his films: "When the film was released, I was highly critical: How did the song fit with the film? There was no rain. At the time, it seemed like a dumb idea. How wrong I was, as it turned out to be a big hit!" What is the name of this famous song that was also used in the background of a montage in *Spider-Man 2*?

**Visual Question:**

Redford was nominated at the Academy Awards for Best Actor for his performance in this film. Name the film.

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:

1. This person was the first democratically elected Prime Minister of Nepal. **Ans: Bisweshwar Prasad Koirala**

2. Considered the key founder of the communist movement in Nepal, this person played a major role in the struggles against the autocratic Rana dynasty in Nepal, which ended in 1951. **Ans: Pushpa Lal Shrestha**

3. The younger brother of the person mentioned in Question 1, this leader played a prominent role in the 1990 Jan Andolan. **Ans: Girija Prasad Koirala**

4. A prominent Communist leader, this person was also actively involved in Jan-Andolan I. **Ans: Madan Bhandari**

5. This former Prime Minister of Nepal is considered one of the key architects of the process of electing a popular Constituent Assembly to rewrite its Constitution and in the transformation of Nepal from a constitutional monarchy into a republic. What is his connection to Jawaharlal Nehru University? **Ans: Baburam Bhattarai**

He completed his PhD at JNU

Visual: Identify the two prominent Nepali leaders in the picture. **Ans: B.P. Koirala and former king Tribhuvan**

Early Birds: Anubhav Gupta | Pranab Biswas

**FROM THE ARCHIVES**

Know your English

Upendran

"COME on in! Where is Suresh? I thought he was coming with you."

"He is on his way. He should be here briefly.

"You mean 'shortly', don't you?"

"Is there a difference between 'shortly' and 'briefly'?"

"Yes, there is. If something happens or is done briefly, it happens or is done for a very short period of time. For example, the villain smiled briefly before pulling the trigger."

"Is it O.K. to say, Anita looked up at me briefly before walking on?"

"Sounds good to me. Here's another example. The old woman paused briefly before continuing to speak."

"Don't pause now. Tell me what 'shortly' means."

"It means 'in a little while'. For example, the Principal will be with you shortly."

"Good God! I don't want to see the Principal now. How about this? The Manager informed us that the movie would begin shortly."

"Excellent! Yesterday, I returned home shortly after 6 o'clock."

"Meanning a little after 6-00?"

"That's right. Now tell me, what..."

"... how do you pronounce b.o.n.k.e.r.s?"

"The 'o' in the first syllable sounds like the 'o' in 'pot', 'hot' and 'lot'. The 'e' in the second syllable is like the 'a' in 'China'."

"So it's pronounced BONKERS with the stress on the first syllable!"

"That's right. By the way, the final 's' is pronounced like the 'z' in 'zoo' and 'zip'. Do you know what 'bonkers' means?"

"I haven't a clue."

"'Bonkers' is a slang expression meaning to be slightly silly or mad. For example, girls went bonkers when they saw Amir Khan."

"Can I say, my uncle Govind is bonkers?"

"You certainly can. One can also be bonkers about someone or something."

"Does it mean you are mad at someone or something?"

"Not 'mad at', but 'mad about' someone or something. In other words, you like the person/thing very much. For example, Karthik's sister, Amala, is bonkers about Shah Rukh Khan."

"My cousin Chandira is bonkers about noodles."

"Bonkers about noodles! I hate noodles."

"You hate noodles! I pity you."

"You don't 'pity on' someone, but 'pity someone'. For example, I pity Govind for being such a fool."

"I pity the people who were put on election duty."

"That's a good example. I pity the candidates who lost their deposit."

"You pity politicians! You must be bonkers. But tell me, when do you say 'pity on'?"

"You usually 'take pity on' someone or something. The hunter took pity on the deer and set it free."

"Our physics teacher took pity on us and postponed the test."

"He took pity on his wife and helped her clean up the mess."

"I hope that was just an example. My physics teacher doesn't have a wife to take pity on."

"I thought he was married."

"Are you kidding! Any woman that marries him must be bonkers."

Published in The Hindu on March 3, 1998

Word of the day**Veracity:**

unwillingness to tell lies

Synonyms:

honesty, truthfulness, credibility

Usage:

I admire the veracity of her statements.

Pronunciation:

newsth.live/veracitypro

International Phonetic Alphabet:

/vərəsət̬i/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to letters@thehindu.co.in with the subject 'Text & Context'

From Page One**'CEC is protecting those destroying democracy'**

In a subsequent post on X, he said the CEC should stop giving "excuses" and added had the alleged "vote theft" not been caught, the Congress candidate would have lost the Assembly seat.

Recently, *The Hindu* had reported on the Karnataka CID's probe into a systematic attempt to remove names of 5,994 voters from electoral rolls by forging Form 7 in the Aland constituency of Kalaburagi district ahead of the 2023 Assembly election.

Before making a detailed presentation on the Aland seat, Mr. Gandhi clarified that these revelations were not the "hydrogen bomb" that he had talked about earlier and promised that too will come soon. "I am just creating the foundation. This is going on for 10-15 years. India's democracy has been hijacked. Democracy can only be saved by the people of India. Rahul Gandhi can show the truth. The day the people realise that their democracy and Constitution have been stolen, the job will be done," he said.

Elaborating on the attempted voter deletions in Aland, the Congress leader alleged that the top 10 booths with maximum deletion applications were Congress strongholds.

Citing examples, he said, in one case, someone had used the name of a 63-year-old woman Godabai to apply for 12 deletions and then played out a video in which she denied having anything to do with such an application.

Mr. Gandhi called on stage a voter, Suryakant, whose identity was used to apply for 12 deletions in 14 minutes, but the Karnataka resident said he had no knowledge of it.

The Congress leader gave the example of Maharashtra's Rajura constituency where he claimed 6,850 voters were added in a fraudulent manner using automated software.

"We are pretty sure that this is being done using a software at a call centre," he said, adding, "Same system is doing this. It is doing it in Karnataka, Maharashtra, it has done it Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and we have proof of it".

The poll panel is not giving the details because it will lead to where this operation is being conducted, Mr. Gandhi said. "EC knows who is doing this. I want every youngster in India to know this. They are doing this to your future. When they are not giving this information, they are defending the murderers of democracy," he said.

Mr. Gandhi said it will take two-three months for the research and presentations on alleged "vote chori". "When we are done with these presentations, you will have no doubt in your mind that State after State (elections) and Lok Sabha after Lok Sabha are being stolen. My job is to lay bare the truth and show it to the people of the country," he added.

Attack on one of us is an attack on both, says pact

The official was quoted as saying that Saudi Arabia "will utilise all defensive and military means deemed necessary depending on the specific threat".

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have a defence relationship stretching back decades, in part due to Islamabad's willingness to defend the Islamic holy sites of Mecca and Medina in the kingdom. Pakistani troops first travelled to Saudi Arabia in the late 1960s over concerns about Egypt's war in Yemen at the time.

Those ties increased after Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution and the kingdom's fears of a confrontation with Tehran.

Retired Pakistani Brig. Gen. Feroz Hassan Khan, in his book on his country's nuclear weapons program called "Eating Grass: The Making of the Pakistani Bomb," said Saudi Arabia provided "generous financial support to Pakistan that enabled the nuclear programme to continue, especially when the country was under sanctions."

U.S. visas of Indian executives revoked

"Individuals and organizations involved in the illegal production and trafficking of drugs to the United States, along with their families, will face consequences that may include being denied access to the United States," he added.

The statement did not name the "business executives and corporate leadership", but added, "The Embassy is further flagging executives connected with companies known to have trafficked fentanyl precursors for heightened scrutiny if and when they apply for U.S. visas."

The Embassy announcement follows several U.S. executive orders aimed at combating drug trafficking organisations and demanding "reform by source countries from which illicit drugs and precursor chemicals flow into the United States."

In January this year, two Indian companies – Raxuter Chemicals and Athos Chemicals – were charged with criminal conspiracies to distribute and import fentanyl precursor chemicals to the United States. Bhavesh Lathiya, founder and senior executive of Raxuter Chemicals, was arrested in New York on January 4 for smuggling fentanyl precursors to the United States.

Mr. Lathiya was charged on January 6, just ahead of the swearing-in of Donald Trump for his second term as the President of the United States. Mr. Trump had made a campaign pledge to crack down on fentanyl if re-elected.

India studying defence pact between Saudi, Pak.; vows to guard its interests

Any aggression against either country will be seen as aggression against both, says pact signed by Saudi Arabia and Pakistan; MEA says India was aware that such a pact was under consideration

Kallop Bhattacharjee

NEW DELHI

Hours after Pakistan signed a mutual defence agreement with Saudi Arabia, India has said that it was aware of the development and reiterated its commitment to "comprehensive national security".

The Indian response came after Saudi Arabia and Pakistan issued a joint statement during the visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to Riyadh that said, "Any aggression against either country shall be considered an aggression against both."

The government was aware that this development, which formalizes a long-standing arrangement between the two countries, had been under consideration. We will study the implications of this development for our national security as well as for regional and global stability. The government remains committed to protecting India's national interests and ensuring comprehensive national security in all domains

We will study the implications of this development for our national security as well as for regional and global stability. The government remains committed to protecting India's national interests and ensuring comprehensive national security in all domains

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS



security in all domains," said the Ministry of External Affairs in response to the Saudi-Pakistani mutual defence agreement.

Following talks between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the two sides issued a joint statement on September 17 in which they highlighted bilateral relations over the past nearly eight decades and said, "This agreement which reflects the shared commitment of both nations to enhance their security and to achieving security and peace in the region and the world, aims to develop aspects of defense cooperation between

the two countries and strengthen joint deterrence against any aggression." The agreement states that any aggression against either country shall be considered an aggression against both.

On September 15, Mr. Sharif had participated in the extraordinary Arab-Islamic summit held by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Doha, where Israel's September 9 bombing of Qatar was condemned.

Saudi Arabia has close ties with India and had sent Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubair to New Delhi, hours after India targeted locations inside Pakistan Army Chief Qamar Javed Bajwa in 2022.



Krishnadas Rajagopal

NEW DELHI

After 48 hours of incessant social media outrage over his oral remarks made in a hearing on a damaged Lord Vishnu idol, Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai broke his silence on Thursday to clarify in open court that he believes in all religions, visits sites of worship of every faith, and firmly trusts in "true secularism".

"Someone told me the other day that the comments I made are being portrayed in social media. I believe in all religions. I respect all..." Chief Justice Gavai said to the assembled courtroom when the Bench re-assembled after the lunch break.

Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, who was pre-

sent, said he had known the Chief Justice for over a decade and knew of his visits to "temples and religious places of all religions".

Chief Justice Gavai added to Mr. Mehta's response by saying that he had visited dargahs and gurdwaras too. "I believe in true secularism, in all religions," the CJI reiterated.

On September 16, the court was hearing a petition seeking directions to reconstruct/replace or rejuvenate the seven-foot Lord Vishnu idol at the Jvari temple, which forms a part of the Khajuraho group of monuments, a UNESCO World Heritage site in Madhya Pradesh.

Declining the plea, the CJI, speaking for the Bench with Justice Vinod Chandran, had orally remarked

that this was purely public interest litigation.

"Go and ask the deity himself to do something. If you are saying that you are a strong devotee of Lord Vishnu, then you pray and do some meditation," the CJI was reported to have told the petitioner, Rakesh Dalal.

On Thursday, the CJI explained that his remarks were intended to convey that the court could not

Modi calls Nepal's PM Karki, reaffirms India's support

Kallop Bhattacharjee

NEW DELHI

Marking a fresh beginning, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday spoke with Sushila Karki, the newly appointed Prime Minister of Nepal's interim administration, and condoled the loss of lives in last week's protests.



Had a warm conversation with Mrs. Sushila Karki, Prime Minister of the Interim Government of Nepal. Conveyed heartfelt condolences on the recent tragic loss of lives and reaffirmed India's steadfast support for her efforts to restore peace and stability.

However, in comparison, the Saudi relations with Pakistan have been marked prominently by the generous support that Riyadh extended to Pakistan, especially after the humiliating defeat in the 1971 India-Pakistan war. Saudi Arabia first came to Pakistan's rescue with a \$300 million assistance that King Faisal extended after meeting Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Foreign Minister in Riyadh in 1974.

Over the years, Pakistan has intensified defence cooperation with Saudi Arabia and in recognition of that, Saudi Arabia conferred the prestigious King Abdulaziz Medal of Excellent Class on then Pakistani Army Chief Qamar Javed Bajwa in 2022.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri had visited Nepal on August 18 and invited then-Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli to visit India. Mr. Oli resigned after a massive uprising following the killing of youth who revolted against his sweeping order banning most social media platforms.

I believe in true secularism, in all religions', CJI says putting the quietus on a controversy

Krishnadas Rajagopal

NEW DELHI

After 48 hours of incessant social media outrage over his oral remarks made in a hearing on a damaged Lord Vishnu idol, Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai broke his silence on Thursday to clarify in open court that he believes in all religions, visits sites of worship of every faith, and firmly trusts in "true secularism".

"Someone told me the other day that the comments I made are being portrayed in social media. I believe in all religions. I respect all..." Chief Justice Gavai said to the assembled courtroom when the Bench re-assembled after the lunch break.

Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, who was pre-

sent, said he had known the Chief Justice for over a decade and knew of his visits to "temples and religious places of all religions".

Chief Justice Gavai added to Mr. Mehta's response by saying that he had visited dargahs and gurdwaras too. "I believe in true secularism, in all religions," the CJI reiterated.

On September 16, the court was hearing a petition seeking directions to reconstruct/replace or rejuvenate the seven-foot Lord Vishnu idol at the Jvari temple, which forms a part of the Khajuraho group of monuments, a UNESCO World Heritage site in Madhya Pradesh.

Declining the plea, the CJI, speaking for the Bench with Justice Vinod Chandran, had orally remarked

that this was purely public interest litigation.

"Go and ask the deity himself to do something. If you are saying that you are a strong devotee of Lord Vishnu, then you pray and do some meditation," the CJI was reported to have told the petitioner, Rakesh Dalal.

On Thursday, the CJI explained that his remarks were intended to convey that the court could not

possibly intervene as the area was a protected monument. He noted that the comments had been taken out of context. "We said it is within the monuments controlled by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), and how can we pass orders," he explained.

The Chief Justice said the petition had come up when the waqf case was still fresh in his mind. He referred to an ASI report which had led to the insertion of a provision in the Waqf (Amendment) Act of 2025.

Wrong reaction

"Really unfortunate the way it was shown on social media... Earlier, we used to

by a social media ban.

"It [social media] is designed that way, to multiply. That is their revenue model," Mr. Mehta commented.

Army scales up induction of drones, aims to make every soldier a drone operator

Saurabh Trivedi

NEW DELHI

The Army is rapidly scaling up the induction of drones and counter-drone systems, with multiple units already operational and drone centres established at premier training institutions. On Thursday, the Chief of the Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi, visited one such facility at Likabali in Arunachal Pradesh, underscoring the Army's focus on operationalizing drone capabilities.

The CBI findings have shown that funds, invested in RCFL and RHFL by Yes Bank, were subsequently siphoned through multiple layers, demonstrating a systematic diversion of public money, the statement said.

parallel to create layered protection.

The Army chief had earlier, during the 26th Kargil Vijay Diwas at Dras (July 26), announced that every infantry battalion will have a drone platoon, artillery regiments will be equipped with counter-drone systems and loiter munitions, and composite Divyashastra batteries will be raised to boost precision and survivability. "Our firepower will now increase manifold in the coming days," Gen. Dwivedi had said.

This dual thrust – arming soldiers with drones while strengthening counter-drone defences – reflects the Army's recognition that unmanned systems are no longer niche but essential elements of modern warfare.

Court issues notice to NIA in Malegaon case

The Hindu Bureau

MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Thursday issued notices to seven persons acquitted in the 2008 Malegaon blast case, acting on an appeal filed by family members of the victims who died in the explosion.

A Division Bench of Chief Justice Shree Chandrashekhar and Justice

Gautam Ankhad also issued notices to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and the Maharashtra government, directing that they be served within two weeks. The appeal is posted for further hearing after six weeks.

The appeal challenges the special NIA court's July 31 judgment acquitting the accused in the case of all charges.



APPEAL
MS AVANTHIKA NARAYAN BHINGARKAR, Hospital Code INN21059, 5 years daughter of Mr. Narayan Gangadhara Bhingarkar admitted in Health 1 Super Speciality Hospitals is suffering from Thalassemia Major and has been on regular blood transfusion from 05 months of age. The only curative option for this condition is bone marrow transplantation (B.M.T.). The overall cost of the transplant would be about Rs. 14,00,000/-

Kindly send donation however small by Cheque/D.D./M.O. favouring Save Poor Lives A/c. State Bank of India, R.A. Puran, and IFSC CODE: SBIN0001855, UPI Id: savepoorlives@oksbi. All donations are exempted under 80G of I.T. ACT.

SAVE POOR LIVES REGISTERED PUBLIC CHARITABLE TRUST, Flat No. A1, Ceebos Garden, Ground Floor, Old No. 76 Kamraj Salai, Raja Annamalaiapuram, Chennai - 600 028. Contact No. 044-42044165 & 044-35691848, Mobile: 9884607377, Email: savepoorlives@gmail.com. Our website: www.savepoorlives.com.

Poll panel says allegations made by Congress leader are 'incorrect', 'baseless'

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Election Commission on Thursday termed the allegations made by the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar "incorrect" and "baseless".

It said that "no deletion of any voter can be done online by any member of the public, as 'misconceived' by Mr. Gandhi".

Mr. Gandhi, at a press conference here, mounted a scathing attack on the CEC, accusing him of protecting those who were "destroying" Indian de-



A senior EC official said that the poll panel had filed a complaint to investigate the matter.

mocracy by refusing to share technical details of the people who were behind an attempted voter deletion from an Assembly seat in Karnataka.

A senior EC official said that in "2023, certain un-

successful attempts were made for deletion of electors in the Aland Assembly constituency in Karnataka and an FIR was filed by the authority of EC itself to investigate the matter".

As per records, the Aland seat was won by Subhadra Guttedar (BJP) in 2018 and B.R. Patil (Congress) in 2023, the EC official said.

Recently, *The Hindu* had reported on the Karnataka CID's probe into an alleged systematic attempt to remove names of 5,994 voters from electoral rolls by forging Form 7, in the Aland constituency in Kalaburagi district, ahead of the 2023 Assembly polls.

Addressing a press conference at the BJP's national headquarters in New Delhi on Thursday, former Union Minister and BJP leader Anurag Thakur said Mr. Gandhi's repeated accusations against the Election Commission showed his lack of faith in Indian democracy.

Mr. Thakur made these remarks after a press conference by Mr. Gandhi at the neighbouring Congress headquarters on what the Congress leader alleged were attempts to delete names of over 6,000 vo-

ters from the electoral rolls in the Aland constituency in Karnataka.

"Infiltrators-first politics" seemed to be the sole agenda of Mr. Gandhi, Mr. Thakur alleged, adding that it was the interests of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes that would be harmed the most if the Congress's alleged agenda of protecting illegal voters was allowed.

"While the Election Commission of India is functioning without bias, Rahul Gandhi is weakening democracy, misleading ci-

Rahul's charges show lack of faith in democracy: BJP

Infiltrators-first politics seems to be sole agenda of Congress leader, says Anurag Thakur; daring Rahul to go to court if his arguments had strength, BJP leader accuses him of misleading citizens

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party on Thursday accused the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, of levelling baseless charges against the Election Commission over "vote theft", alleging that the Opposition was demonstrating an agenda of "infiltrators-first politics".

Defending the EC after Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar was repeatedly criticised by Mr. Gandhi at his press conference, Mr. Thakur hit back by citing the association of past CECs with the Congress, including the late M.S. Gill, who became a Minister in the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government, and T.N. Seshan, who

fought the Lok Sabha election on Congress ticket.

Mr. Thakur dared Mr. Gandhi to go to court if the latter's arguments had strength.

Mr. Gandhi on Thursday accused Mr. Kumar of protecting "vote thieves", citing data from a Karnataka Assembly constituency to claim that names of Congress supporters were being systematically deleted ahead of elections.

"The Election Commission must stop this and provide within a week the information sought by the Karnataka CID (Criminal Investigation Department) in an investigation into voter deletions," the Congress leader said at a press conference at the Congress's Indira Bhavan headquarters here.

The BJP leader said that it was the Congress that had been elected from the Assembly constituency mentioned by Mr. Gandhi, and asked if it was a result of "vote theft".

tizens, and trying to create a situation like Bangladesh and Nepal," the BJP leader said.

ANURAG THAKUR,
BJP leader

Rajura in the eye of a storm over 'voter fraud' charges

Vinaya Deshpande Pandit

MUMBAI

The Rajura Assembly constituency in Maharashtra is in the eye of the storm yet again. After Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi's press conference on Thursday, where he highlighted alleged "voter fraud" in Rajura and Karnataka's Aland, the phone lines of Congress leader Subhash Dhote's office have been ringing non-stop.

Mr. Dhote, who lost to the BJP's Devrao Bhongle in the Assembly election by a margin of 3,050 votes in the constituency in Chandrapur district, told *The Hindu* that he has been speaking about the issue since last year. He says there were attempts to add nearly 18,000 bogus names to the voters' list in the constituency between the Lok Sabha election in April-May 2024 and Assembly election in November. While an attempt to enrol over 6,800 bogus votes was thwarted after the Congress's intervention, there are concerns over addition of 11,036 names in the period, he said.



Subhash Dhote

However, the office of the Sub-Divisional Officer, also the Electoral Registration Officer of Rajura, denied there was any wrongdoing of additional voters, and in fact said "suo motu" timely action by the administration prevented bogus voter registration" in the constituency.

Thorough inquiry

"Taking serious note of the matter, the District Election Officer instructed the Electoral Registration Officer and Sub-Divisional Officer, Rajura, to conduct a thorough inquiry into all applications and to initiate necessary criminal proceedings under the provisions of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 and the Information Technolo-

gy Act, 2000. Consequently, Crime No. 629/2024 was registered at Rajura Police Station, and further investigation is being carried out by the Police Department," a statement released on Thursday said.

On allegations that 11,036 names were added to the voters' list between the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, the District Information Officer told *The Hindu*: "It was a natural increase in the summary revision."

Rajura SDO Ravindra Mane, who spoke to *The Hindu*, also made a similar assertion. "Earlier, there was only one qualifying date to make additions. Now, there are four - January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. Thus, additions to the voters' list happens regularly. There is a natural summary revision. The additional names in the voters' list are valid. As far as the other 6,853 names are concerned, they had been bogus. A complaint has already been registered," he said.

However, Mr. Dhote said the police had not made any headway in the investigation so far.

A year before Adani case ex-parte gag, Supreme Court had warned of 'SLAPP' against journalists

Krishnadas Rajagopal

NEW DELHI

Over a year before a civil court imposed an ex-parte injunction on journalists from publishing or circulating allegedly unverified and defamatory material against Adani Enterprises, the Supreme Court had been worried about courts recognising 'SLAPP' suits across jurisdictions.

'SLAPP' stands for 'Strategic Litigation against Public Participation', a three-judge Bench headed by then Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud had written in a May 2024 judgment.

"It is an umbrella term used to refer to litigation predominantly initiated by entities that wield immense economic power against members of the media or ci-

vil society, to prevent the public from knowing about or participating in important affairs in the public interest. We must be cognisant of the realities of prolonged trials... While granting ad-interim injunctions in defamation suits, the potential of using prolonged litigation to prevent free speech and public participation must also be kept in mind by courts," the Bench had cautioned in the verdict in *Bloomberg Television Production Services India Private Limited and others versus Zee Entertainment Enterprises Limited case*.

The apex court underscored that pre-trial, ex-parte injunctions by courts spelt the "death sentence to material sought to be published, well before the allegations have been proven".



The apex court underscored that pre-trial, ex-parte injunctions spelt the 'death sentence to material sought to be published, well before the allegations have been proven'.

Staying the civil court's ex-parte injunction order of September 6, District Judge Ashish Aggarwal on Thursday (September 18, 2025) said the journalists were not given a reasonable opportunity to be heard.

The Supreme Court has made it clear in numerous judicial precedents that the protection of journalistic expression was a "constitutional mandate" and "courts must tread cautiously while granting pre-trial interim injunctions".

Chief Justice Chandrachud, who authored the Bloomberg judgment, invoked the 'Bonnard standard' laid down by the Court of Appeal (England and Wales), which mandated that interim injunctions in defamation suits should be given only in "exceptional situations". A gag order affects not only the journalists but also the right of the public to know.

"In essence, the grant of a pre-trial injunction against the publication of an article may have severe ramifications on the right to freedom of speech of the author and the public's right to know. An injunction particularly ex-parte, should not be granted without establishing that the content sought to be restricted is 'malicious' or 'palpably false'. Granting interim injunctions, before the trial commences, in a cavalier manner results in the stifling of public debate," the Supreme Court has held in 2024.

The top court had set down a three-fold test trial judges ought to follow before granting the interim relief of an injunction. They include establishing a prima facie case of defamation, balance of convenience and irreparable loss or harm that would be caused by publication. The 2024 judgment had warned courts from applying the three-fold test mechanically, especially against journalistic pieces.

Modi-Xi meet repaired India-China relations, but its importance should not be overstated: experts

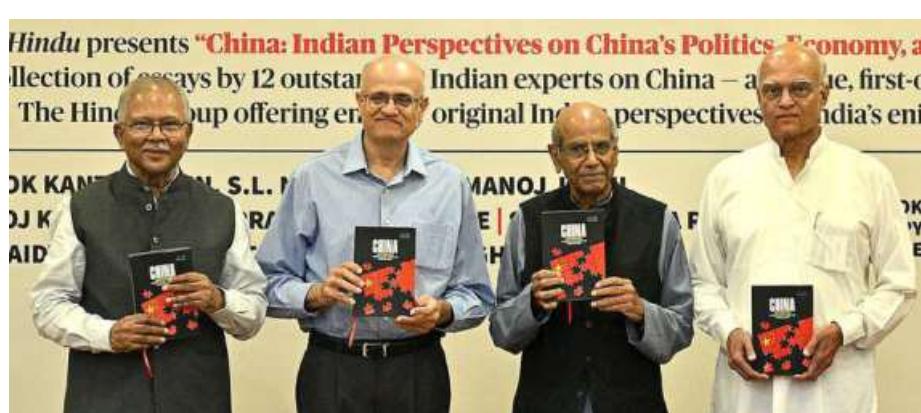
The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Tianjin has "repaired" India-China relations but its importance should not be "overstated", veteran diplomats and commentators said at the launch of the book *China: Indian Perspectives on China's Politics, Economy, and Foreign Relations*, a special publication by The Hindu Group, here on Thursday.

Delivering the keynote address, former National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon praised the initiative by The Hindu Group and said, "The book is an Indian view of China. It tells us how to look at China in the future. It tells you what need to learn [about China]."

Speaking on the occasion, former Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said, "This book begins the conversation we need to understand China. It really is a great start. It is the most



Ashok Kantha, Vijay Gokhale, K. Shyam Saran and Shivshankar Menon at the release of *China: Indian Perspectives on China's Politics, Economy and Foreign Relations* on Thursday. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

comprehensive survey of contemporary China in all aspects."

Participating in a panel discussion moderated by *The Hindu's* Diplomatic Affairs Editor Suhasini Haidar, former Indian Ambassador to China Ashok Kantha said, "We start repairing our China ties in early 2024. It begins to gain pace with PM Modi and President Xi Jinping's meeting in Kazan. The meeting in Tianjin stabilises our ties in the troubled world right now."

"Even now we know so little of the engagement with China. Disengage-

ment with China at the border is one of the major issues that India is still facing today. But, let's not overstate the value of the summit."

Mr. Joshi also highlighted the importance of Tibet and said, "Tibet is extremely important from Indian perspective. Tibet is a point of conversation between India and China. It is important to India from geographical and religious perspectives. Tibet opens up many conversations to where India stands with China."

Greater engagement Former Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale cautioned

tainly propels the relationship to where it stands today. But, let's not overstate the value of the summit."

Introducing the volume, Varghese K. George, Resident Editor, *The Hindu*, spoke about the ongoing e-book series by *The Hindu* that covers various segments such as politics, technology, and the Constitution. "The extraordinary group of contributors brought together by Ananth Krishnan compelled us to bring out this issue [the book on China] in print," he said.

Suresh Nambath, Editor, *The Hindu*, and Ananth Krishnan, Director, The Hindu Group Publishing Private Ltd., were present.

about the internal developments in China. "Chinese President's policies to control China and centralise power is strangling China's economic growth," he said.

He also called for greater engagement and said, "If we do not visit China, we have very unreal view of China. China has grown very fast and it's because the country is under an autocratic regime. It makes a lot of difference because in that sense India is a democracy."

Introducing the volume, Varghese K. George, Resident Editor, *The Hindu*, spoke about the ongoing e-book series by *The Hindu* that covers various segments such as politics, technology, and the Constitution. "The extraordinary group of contributors brought together by Ananth Krishnan compelled us to bring out this issue [the book on China] in print," he said.

Suresh Nambath, Editor, *The Hindu*, and Ananth Krishnan, Director, The Hindu Group Publishing Private Ltd., were present.

Karnataka CEO says all data handed over to police

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Responding to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's allegation over attempts to delete names of voters in the Aland constituency, the Chief Electoral Officer, Karnataka has said that his office, on the instructions of the EC, "has handed over all the available information with ECI for completing the investigation to the Superintendent of Police, Kalaburagi district, on 06.09.2023".

The CID has been asking for "destination IPs and destination ports" of the sessions through which forged Form 7 applications were made. The CEO, in a press release on Thursday, said it had provided "objector's details, including form reference number, name of the objector, his EPIC number of mobile number used for log-in and mobile number provided by the objector for processing, software application medium, IP address, applicant place, form submission date and time, and user creation date".

On past CEOs

Defending the EC after Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar was repeatedly criticised by Mr. Gandhi at his press conference, Mr. Thakur hit back by citing the association of past CECs with the Congress, including the late M.S. Gill, who became a Minister in the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government, and T.N. Seshan, who

stayed the civil court's ex-parte injunction order of September 6, District Judge Ashish Aggarwal on Thursday (September 18, 2025) said the journalists were not given a reasonable opportunity to be heard.

"In essence, the grant of a pre-trial injunction against the publication of an article may have severe ramifications on the right to freedom of speech of the author and the public's right to know. An injunction particularly ex-parte, should not be granted without establishing that the content sought to be restricted is 'malicious' or 'palpably false'. Granting interim injunctions, before the trial commences, in a cavalier manner results in the stifling of public debate," the Supreme Court has held in 2024.

The top court had set down a three-fold test trial judges ought to follow before granting the interim relief of an injunction. They include establishing a prima facie case of defamation, balance of convenience and irreparable loss or harm that would be caused by publication. The 2024 judgment had warned courts from applying the three-fold test mechanically, especially against journalistic pieces.

On behalf of the President of India, online item rate tenders are invited through e-tendering for the following work:

1. "Civil Works for Supersonic Flow Test facility - Cold flow test facility for NGLV at SMP & ETF, SDSC SHAR" (Rs 157 Lakhs).

2. "Widening and Improvements of roads (belonging to SHAR) at Sullurupeta" (Rs 144 Lakhs).

Last date for sale (Tender documents can be downloaded up to 29/09/2025 14:30 hrs. Interested tenderer may visit www.isro.gov.in or www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO for details).

For more information, please contact the Project Manager, S. Rameshbabu, Head, CMG / SDSC SHAR.

IN BRIEF**SP's Azam Khan secures third bail from HC in past fortnight**

The Allahabad High Court on Thursday granted bail to senior Samajwadi Party (SP) leader and former Uttar Pradesh Cabinet Minister Azam Khan in an alleged case of land encroachment. This was the third bail given to the SP leader by the High Court in the past fortnight. Justice Sameer Jain granted bail to Mr. Khan in a case related to alleged encroachment on the Quality Bar property in Rampur. Mr. Khan had approached the High Court for bail in this case after a local MP/MLA court has rejected his bail. Sources in the SP said that Mr. Khan had obtained bail in almost all the cases against him and may walk out of jail soon.

Man killed by Maoists for working as 'police informer'

A 25-year-old man was allegedly abducted and killed by Maoists on suspicion of being a police informer in Madhya Pradesh's Balaghat district, officers said. Two notes have also been recovered with the banned Communist Party of India (Maoist) taking responsibility of the act. According to the police, Devendra Yadav was abducted on Tuesday near his village in the Lanji police station limits when he was attending to his cattle with another man. His body, with several injury marks, was recovered on Thursday. Shiyaz K.M., Commandant of the State's anti-Maoist Hawk Force, told *The Hindu* that an FIR under murder charges has been lodged but denied that the individual was an informant.

U.S. to revoke waiver on Chabahar port sanctions

Decision will hamper India's plans for regional connectivity, investment of over ₹200 crore in the project in Iran; move comes just days after U.S., India had signalled rapprochement on trade issues

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

In yet another harsh measure by the Donald Trump administration, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced on Thursday that the country was revoking its waiver of sanctions over the Iranian port of Chabahar within 10 days, ending a special waiver given to India in 2018.

The decision, among a number of other moves by the U.S. to impose "maximum pressure on Iran", including designating several entities involved in Iran's oil trade, will affect India's plans to develop the Shaheed Beheshti terminal at the Chabahar port as an alternative trading route for India, circumventing Pakistan, to send cargo to Afghanistan and Central Asia.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) did not respond to requests for a comment on the development, which could severely hamper India's plans for regional connectivity.

President Trump had first announced that he planned to end the waiver given to India in his pre-



Key link: The Chabahar port is being developed by India and Iran to boost connectivity and trade ties. GETTY IMAGES

vious term, on February 5 this year, as he signed an executive order mandating Mr. Rubio to "rescind or modify" all such orders that provided any relief to Iran.

"Consistent with President Trump's maximum pressure policy to isolate the Iranian regime, the Secretary of State has revoked the sanctions exception issued in 2018 under the Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act (IFCA) for Afghanistan reconstruction assistance and economic development, effective September 29, 2025," the State department said in a statement.

"Once the revocation is effective, persons who op-

erate the Chabahar port or engage in other activities described in the IFCA may expose themselves to sanctions under the IFCA," it added.

Earlier this month, National Security Adviser Ajit Dovval had discussed intensifying India's engagement with Iran on Chabahar during a conversation with Iranian SNSC Secretary Ali Larijani over telephone. According to an Iranian official release issued in Tehran, Mr. Dovval discussed "expanding cooperation in economic ties, security and defence relations, and advancing the Chabahar port project," adding that the two sides would meet in Delhi soon.

According to a note issued by the Shipping Ministry in 2024, India has spent about ₹200 crore of a total allocation of ₹400 crore on the Chabahar project since 2016.

"The port recorded a 43% rise in vessel traffic and a 34% increase in container traffic in 2023-24" the note said.

The imposition of sanctions on Chabahar is the fourth such round of sanctions the Trump administration has passed that directly affects India, and comes just days after the two sides had signalled a rapprochement on trade issues.

In 2017-18, India had conceded to the U.S.'s demand to end all oil imports from Iran and then from Venezuela. India has not so far agreed to cutting down its imports of oil from Russia this year, despite the U.S.'s demand and imposition of a penalty tariff of 25% on all Indian goods in addition to a 25% "reciprocal tariff" already in place.

The sanctions will cost India in terms of its investment in the Iranian port, for which the Modi government signed a 10-year lease agreement in May 2024.



Mansukh Mandaviya

transparency in PF transfers. At present, when employees change jobs, their PF accounts are transferred to the new employer's PF office through Form I3 online. After their transfer, a transfer certificate (Annexure K) is generated by the previous PF office and sent to the new PF office.

"Until now, Annexure K was only shared between PF offices and was made available to members only on their request. From today (Thursday), members can directly download Annexure K in PDF format from the members' portal itself," the Minister said.

He said members could track the status of transfer applications online. "This ensures full transparency and allows members to easily verify their PF transfers...," he said.

If the price of oil comes down, Putin will settle and drop out of Ukraine war: Trump

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

If the price of oil drops, Russian President Vladimir Putin will end the war with Ukraine, U.S. President Donald Trump said on Thursday, suggesting that European countries, India, and China stopping the purchase of Russian oil was key to this.

Mr. Trump's comments were made during a joint press conference at Chequers, the official country residence of British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, at the end of his two-day state visit to the U.K.

Over the weekend, Mr. Trump had said EU and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military alliance countries should altogether stop oil purchases from Russia. Last week, the U.S. administration was reportedly attempting



For peace: U.S. President Donald Trump says Russian President Vladimir Putin had 'let him down by killing many people'. AFP

to persuade European countries to apply secondary tariffs of up to 100% on India and China for their trade with Russia.

"Very simply, if the price of oil comes down Putin will settle. He's going to have no choice. He's going to drop out of that war," Mr. Trump said, and he brought India into the picture as well.

"And when I found out that the European nations were buying oil from Russia... and as you know, I am

very close to India, I'm very close to the Prime Minister of India," Mr. Trump said as he went on to describe his Tuesday phone call with Mr. Modi.

"I spoke to him the other day, wished him a happy birthday. We have a very good relationship. He better had a beautiful statement too... but I said, you know, I sanctioned them," Mr. Trump said, referring to the additional 25% tariff he has imposed on Indian goods exported to the U.S.,

a rate imposed on India for its energy and arms trade with Russia. The 25% is on top of a "reciprocal tariff" rate of 25%.

The resulting 50% tariff rate and then, Mr. Modi's meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Mr. Putin in Tianjin two weeks ago, had resulted in a low in India-U.S. relations not seen in years. In recent days, ties have thawed.

Posting on X on Tuesday, responding to the birthday message from Mr. Trump, Mr. Modi had told the U.S. President that he supported his initiatives on resolving the Ukraine conflict.

Mr. Trump said China was paying a high tariff to the U.S. The Trump administration has argued that China is already paying a high tariff (and that it may not be in America's economic interests to increase

it further) when previously quizzed on why New Delhi and not Beijing was being subject to a "penalty" tariff for trade with Russia.

"China is paying a very large tariff right now to the United States, but I'm willing to do other things, but not when the people that I'm fighting for are buying oil from Russia," he said.

The President said Mr. Putin had "let him down".

Mr. Trump also claimed to have ended several conflicts. He repeated a claim India has denied – that he was responsible for ending the four-day armed conflict between India and Pakistan.

Mr. Trump emphasised that he used trade as leverage.

"That was purely for trade. You want to trade with us, you're going to have to get along. And they were going at it hot and heavy," he said.

Two dead, seven missing after rain batters Chamoli

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Uttarakhand CM tells officials in flood-hit areas to restore roads and power supply at the earliest

Torrential rain lashed Chamoli district of Uttarakhand on Thursday, with gushing waters and debris reducing homes to rubble. The deluge left two persons dead, while at least seven others remain missing.

Just two days ago, rain and floods wreaked havoc in the State capital of Dehradun, leaving 21 dead and 17 missing.

The Chamoli district administration said several villages in the Nand Nagar area suffered extensive damage. Teams of the National Disaster Response Force, State Disaster Response Force, police, doctors, and paramedics were rushed to the affected sites, with rescue operations launched on a war

footing. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami reviewed the situation with senior officials, and directed them to ensure every possible effort to save lives.

He instructed the Chamoli District Magistrate to airlift the seriously injured to the AIIMS, Rishikesh, while officials in flood-hit districts were ordered to restore roads, power and water supply, and communication networks at the earliest.

Arrangements for shelter, food, clean drinking water, and medicines were also mandated.

Minister flays Cong. stance on Nicobar project

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav on Thursday hit out at the Congress for opposing the Great Nicobar infrastructure project, accusing it of spreading confusion and indulging in "negative politics".

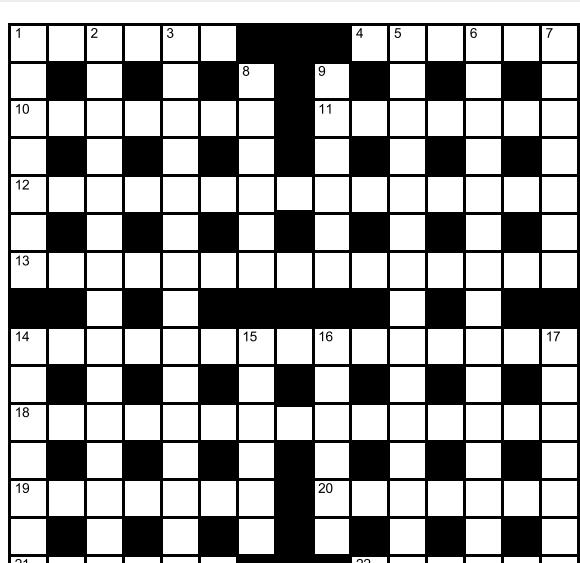
Speaking at an event organised by The Public Affairs Forum of India here, Mr. Yadav asserted that the mega project was crucial for national security and strategic connectivity in the Indian Ocean Region. He said only 1.78% of Great Nicobar's forest area will be used for the project.

"...Raising doubts over every developmental effort and writing columns when it comes to national security is nothing but negative politics," he said.

TH CROSSWORD 14593 (set by Vidwan)

14593

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site.
<https://qrqo.page.link/ijpTn>



Across

- Intern's commission, good going for beginning of career (6)
- Hawk CA smuggling African currency (6)
- Runs, runs free and quietly to stimulate (7)
- One doing wrong, one deposed by father, one that is an impediment (7)
- Attached positively to coloured garments (3-4)
- Casualwear model managed his runs on time (1-5)
- Slip talks, in impudent manner (4,3)
- Large horn without tip for pirate (6)
- Barren, cold deserts influence outcome in the end (6)
- Attached positively to coloured garments (3-4)

SUDOKU

9	7					4	1
6		4				7	
3			2	1	9		
		4				6	1
7		9				4	
8	1		3				
	9	2	8			4	
5			4			9	
2	8				6	5	

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

No SS644 Distribution: www.knightfeathers.com

Solution to previous puzzle: ARCHIVE ARRIADINE ZOTYLMJX INUTERODIMPASTO MNRLBAASG WULTRAUSA LAITKA TETTBEBM MHEREMERALD JICY MA A L AWEAPANAGE AXED DAMPRNRK ISSUESIREOVINE PURSMTS OGREISH CRITICISE SECUNSEN ECSTASY ENMASSE

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku: 652347981 847961325 319528647 921874563 763215498 584693712 238456179 475189236 196732854

FAITH

Significance of Navaratri

Followers of Hinduism worldwide celebrate Navaratri, a unique festival where the goddesses are worshipped for nine nights at a stretch. Our scriptures say Brahman is formless, characterless but attains all those by joining with Sakti. Like a mother birthing a baby, nurturing, protecting it and raising the child, similarly Sakti answers the appeals of devotees who petition her when beset by problems, said B. Damodara Deekshithar.

One of the hardest things to face in life is sudden, unexpected misfortune, leaving one in utter despair. At such moments, one should pray to Ambal. She is each one's personal favourite female goddess, is known by various names, including Parvati, Kamakshi, Mariamma, Kaliamma, etc., said Adi Sankara. One of his students wondered how praying to Ambal would help one surmount one's problem. The preceptor replied saying that the world is run by the devatas. While a person's success or failure, joy or sorrow, failings and victories are determined by one's actions in previous births (*karma*), the ones who dispense these life aspects in the current birth are these devatas, who are themselves guided by Ambal. When a sufferer prays to Ambal, she guides the servitor devatas in such a way that the problems dissipate. Adi Sankara further states that all gods starting with Brahma, Vishnu and Siva pray to Her, thereby becoming complete. Therefore, when a devotee prays to Vishnu and petitions Lakshmi as well, the benefit of placing such faith in Her is immeasurable, specially during Navaratri. One may wonder which goddess one should pray to, these special days. The goddess is one but Her name changes as per her residence.

INBRIEF



Nvidia bets big on Intel with \$5 bn stake, chip partnership

Nvidia on Thursday said it will invest \$5 billion in Intel, throwing its heft behind the struggling U.S. chip foundry, but stopped short of giving Intel a crucial manufacturing deal. The pact, which also includes a plan for Intel and Nvidia to jointly develop PC and data center chips, represents a potential risk to Taiwan's TSMC. TSMC currently manufactures Nvidia's flagship processors, business that the world's most valuable company could one day extend to Intel. REUTERS

Anand Rathi Share and Stock Brokers to float IPO on Sept. 23

Anand Rathi Group's brokerage arm, Anand Rathi Share and Stock Brokers, on Thursday fixed a price band of ₹393 to ₹414 per share for its upcoming ₹745-crore initial public offering (IPO). The company's maiden public offering is scheduled to open for subscription on September 23 and conclude on September 25. The broking firm's IPO is entirely a fresh issuance of shares worth ₹745 crore with no offer-for-sale (OFS) component. PTI

MeitY to set up 500 AI data labs across country: Vaishnaw

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) will set up 500 AI Data Labs across the country, IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Thursday. The labs will be located in a diverse set of districts, he said. The Minister was speaking at a pre-event for the AI Impact Summit to be hosted by India in February 2026. Additionally, an AI Governance Framework, based on a draft released earlier this year, will also be released in the coming days, he added.

NHAI moves to curb subcontracting work

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has tightened bidding norms for highway projects in order to curb subcontracting by concessionaires, including by imposing penalties.

The changes have been notified through a policy circular on qualification criteria for engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) projects issued in August.

According to the modifications, any unauthorised subcontracting and subcontracting beyond permissible limits, would be classified as an undesirable practice where the NHAI is entitled to forfeit and appropriate the bid security and performance security provided by bidders.



The NHAI has tightened bidding norms for highway projects.

In a media statement, the NHAI said such malpractices amounted to a breach of contractual provisions, and undermined quality assurance, disrupted project timelines and weakened regulatory oversight. Subcontracting highway development works was among the issues flagged by the Parliamentary Accounts Committee (PAC) chaired by Congress MP K.C. Venugopal.

Weak finances deter municipal bond issue'

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

The weak balance sheets of municipal bodies are a challenge in the development of municipal bond market in India, said Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairperson Tuhin Kanta Pandey.

"Municipal bonds have been a cornerstone of city-level development, enabling urban local bodies to raise long-term funds for essential projects such as water supply, sanitation, transport, and waste management... challenge lies in project readiness and credibility. Many municipal bodies struggle with weak balance sheets or delayed clearances," he said at an event here.

"While the municipal bond market in India is still at a nascent stage, its po-

SEBI gives clean chit to Adani Group in Hindenburg case

All the money has come back with interest before the start of the investigation, impugned transactions have not been held as related party transactions, says markets regulator

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

In a further step towards making the crucial Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT) functional, the government has notified the timelines for appeals and has expanded the scope of cases that can be taken up by the Principal Bench of the GSTAT.

During its 56th meeting on September 3, the GST Council had decided that the GSTAT would be made operational for accepting appeals before the end of September and would begin its hearings before the end of December this year.

In a notification dated September 17, the Ministry of Finance notified that appeals against orders communicated before April 1, 2026, can be filed up to June 30, 2026. It added that appeals against orders communicated on or after April 1, 2026, must be filed within three months.

"The notifications operationalising the GST Appellate Tribunal is nothing short of a game-changer for India's indirect tax landscape," Manoj Mishra, Partner and Tax Controversy Management Leader at Grant Thornton Bharat said. "For years, taxpayers were stuck in a vacuum with appeals piling up, cash flows locked, and litigation costs escalating."

"This structured framework finally delivers predictability and timely access to justice," he added.

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on Thursday gave a clean chit to Adani Group, stating that the group companies -- Adani Ports & Special Economic Zone Limited and Adani Power Ltd. -- had not violated regulations as alleged by U.S.-based shortseller Hindenburg Research.

"Having considered the matter holistically, I find that the allegations made against noticees in the SCN [show cause notice] are not established. Consider-



Big boost: SEBI has reaffirmed what we have always maintained, that the Hindenburg claims were baseless, said Gautam Adani. PTI

ing the above, the question of devolution of any liability on noticees does not arise and hence the question of determination of quantum of penalty also does not require any deliberation," said SEBI Whole

Time Member Kamlesh Chandra Varshney. "The transactions cannot be classified as manipulative or fraudulent transactions or unfair trade practice as there was no allegation of siphoning off of money or

diversion of fund; all the money has come back with interest before the start of the investigation; and the impugned transactions have not been held as related party transactions," SEBI said in the final order.

Responding to the outcome of the probe, Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani said, "After an exhaustive investigation, SEBI has reaffirmed what we have always maintained, that the Hindenburg claims were baseless." "We deeply feel the pain of the investors who lost money because of this fraudulent and motivated report," he said in a post on X.

Indian Oil to buy 10 crude carriers from Shipping Corp JV

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The U.S. Federal Reserve cut interest rates by a quarter of a percentage point on Wednesday and indicated the central bank will steadily lower borrowing costs for the rest of this year, as policymakers responded to concerns about weakness in the job market in a move that won support from most of President Donald Trump's central bank appointees.

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) is likely to place an order to buy at least 10 medium-range oil tankers from a Shipping Corporation of India (SCI)-led joint venture, with the vessels to be built at an Indian shipyard, sources said.

Having indigenously built ships was seen as not just helping the cause of energy security but also creating jobs. However, the proposal, floated over a year ago, has remained on the drawing board due to a lack of shipbuilding expertise, three sources with direct knowledge of the matter said.

other state-owned oil firms had initially planned to jointly establish a shipping company to build vessels in India.

The world's third largest oil importing and consuming nation relies heavily on hired ships to ferry its energy supplies. IOC and

JK Tyre diverts U.S. exports to other markets

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

JK Tyre & Industries Ltd has diverted its exports from India to the U.S. to other markets, its MD Anshuman Singhania said.

"The company is serving the U.S. markets through its Mexico plant. There is postponement of tariffs on tyre exports from Mexico to the U.S. by about 90 days as of now," he said at a media interaction on Thursday.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	THURSDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	83,014	0.39
US Dollar	88.20	-0.39
Gold	1,13,200	-0.52
Brent oil	67.51	-0.91

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter.	2402.00	0.00
Adani Ports	1412.80	6.70
Apollo Hosp	7850.50	-37.50
Asian Paints	2478.70	-14.90
Axis Bank	1133.00	7.00
Bajaj Auto	9075.00	-9.00
Bajaj Finance	996.50	11.00
Bharti Elect.	409.90	-2.30
Bharti Airtel	1941.10	-0.20
Cipla	1578.20	18.60
Coal India	393.15	-6.60
Dr Reddys Lab.	1322.70	11.30
Eicher Motors	6924.50	34.00
Eternal En.	337.85	9.60
Grasim Ind.	2878.80	13.40
HCL Tech	1493.80	12.30
HDFC Bank	976.90	10.40
HDFC Life	784.60	16.55
Hero MotoCorp	5370.00	20.00
Hindalco	750.15	0.05
Hind Unilever	2586.80	17.10
ICICI Bank	1421.70	2.50
IndusInd Bank	735.45	-3.60
Infosys	1540.60	18.20
ITC	411.55	2.25
Jio Financial Servic-	317.35	1.50
JSW Steel	1121.10	10.10
Kotak Bank	2054.60	4.30
L&T	3686.00	0.50
M&M	3642.20	9.00
Maruti Suzuki	15817.00	16.00
NestleIndia	1209.10	4.80
NTPC	336.95	0.55
ONGC	235.59	-1.29
PowerGrid Corp	389.10	1.95
Reliance Ind.	1415.00	1.20
SBI Life	1821.80	17.80
State Bank	854.35	-2.80
Shriram Finance	626.90	3.65
Ltd.	1648.60	28.40
Tata Consumer Pro-	1129.30	-7.00
Tata Motors	711.20	-7.95
Tata Steel	172.03	0.67
TCS	3176.70	3.90
Tech Mahindra	1550.70	3.50
Titan	3511.30	-11.70
Trent Ltd.	5144.00	-53.50
UltraTech Cement	12626.00	-95.00
Wipro	256.93	2.78

'No impact on Oil India's Russia production'

Oil India CMD Ranjit Rath said there was no impact on the firm's production or exploration ambitions post Ukraine's recent drone attack in Russia's northwestern region.



Ramco Cement thanks Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji



GST 2.0
Next Gen Reform to support the common man

From 22nd September 2025

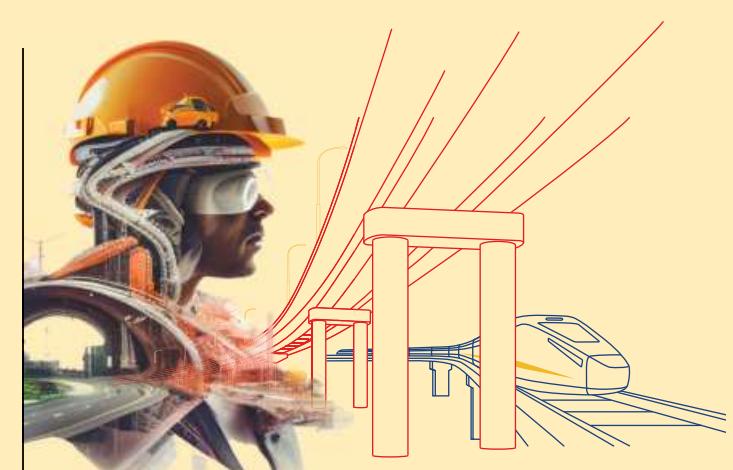
GST on cement will reduce

from 28% to 18%.

The construction sector will get a tremendous boost and contribute significantly to our

GDP growth. A major stride towards our Nation's Mission:

Viksit Bharat 2047.



RAMCO
CEMENT

ctor said. Citing reports that highlighted supply disruptions and prolonged delay in refill deliveries, the regulator said safeguarding consumers from service failures and ensuring uninterrupted access to this essential fuel is necessary.

There may be other reasons too – consumer's freedom of choice on the LPG company/dealer being one, especially when the cylinder price is same. PNGRB said it was seeking steps to facilitate timely access to refills – by enabling consumers to be served from the nearest available distributor via improved

coordination and flexible delivery arrangements within existing network.

While porting was discussed in the past, the move was given up. Switching distributor or company involves surrendering the equipment and some cost to the consumers.

When it is done during times of disruption and as a temporary measure there will be practical issues, especially on how refills and pressure regulator, which differ from one company to another, are deposited with the concerned company, sources in the industry said.

ers cannot migrate to another distributor.

"While interoperability has been adopted in telephony with much success, the same has not happened in LPG," the regula-

N. Ravi Kumar
HYDERABAD

The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) has invited stakeholder and consumer comments on an LPG interoperability framework that would allow households to draw refills from distributors of other PSU oil companies, similar to mobile number portability.

The move follows more than 17 lakh consumer complaints annually, mainly about refill delays.

PNGRB noted while oil marketing companies address grievances, consum-



Delivery men carry LPG cylinders on rickshaws. PTI

WASHINGTON

Trump says designating Antifa a major terrorist organisation'



U.S. President Donald Trump said he would designate "Antifa" as "a major terrorist organisation," a move he threatened in his first term. The White House did not immediately offer details on how the label could be applied. Critics of the Republican President warn such a move could be used as a pretext to quash dissent. AFP

DAMASCUS

Syria, Israel advance security talks as U.S. pushes peace settlement



Syria expects to finalise security and military deals with Israel this year, officials said on Thursday, marking progress after Assad's ouster. With the U.S. pushing for a settlement, Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shaibani arrived in Washington to discuss talks with Israel and the possible lifting of sanctions on Syria. AFP

PHNOM PENH

Cambodia accuses Thailand of blocking families at border



Cambodia's leader Hun Sen has accused Thailand of preventing more than 20 families from returning to their homes on the disputed border, according to his letter to the head of the UN released on Thursday. The Thai army said the Cambodian residents had "illegally occupied" Thai territory. AFP

TAIPEI

In first, Taiwan, U.S. firm to make missile and underwater drone



Taiwan and U.S. defence firm Anduril will jointly produce a missile and underwater drone, marking Taiwan's first such deal with a foreign company. Officials said it strengthens self-defence amid China's threat, boosts local production, and supports Taipei's growing defence budget and military modernisation efforts. AFP

Qatar meets ICC head as it mulls action against Israel

Five Hamas members and a Qatari official were killed in the Israeli strike in Doha that targeted the group's top leadership; Qatar, as an observer state at the ICC, cannot itself refer cases to the court

Agence France-Presse

DOHA

Qatar has met with the president of the International Criminal Court as it seeks legal action against Israel over its unprecedented strike on its territory last week, an official said on Thursday.

The emir's chief negotiator, Mohammed al-Khulaifi, met in The Hague on Wednesday with the president of the ICC, Judge Tomoko Akane, as it pursues "every available legal and diplomatic avenue to ensure accountability for those responsible for Israel's attack on Qatar," the Qatari official said.

Last week's deadly Israeli strike targeted Qatari-based leaders of Palestinian militant group Hamas and sent shock waves through the Gulf states that have long depended on the United States for their security.

Hamas has said top offi-



The emir's chief negotiator says it is 'exploring legal avenues to respond to the illegal Israeli armed attack against Qatar'. AFP

cials of its political bureau, hosted in Qatar with U.S. blessing since 2012, survived the strike but it said five members were killed, along with an officer of Qatar's internal security force.

Speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the discussions, the official called Israel's attack "unlawful", adding it "constitutes grave violations of international humanitarian law".

Qatar, as an observer

state at the ICC, cannot itself refer cases to the court.

But after emergency talks in Doha, the Arab and Islamic blocs called on their members on Monday to take "all possible legal and effective measures to prevent Israel from continuing its actions".

In a post on X after his meeting with the ICC chief, Mr. Khulaifi said his visit had been "part of the work of the team tasked with exploring legal avenues to

respond to the illegal Israeli armed attack against the State of Qatar".

Last year, the ICC launched a prosecution of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for war crimes and crimes against humanity during Israel's war in Gaza, including by intentionally targeting civilians and using starvation as a method of war.

The ICC also sought the arrest of Israel's former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant and Hamas commander Mohammed Deif, who has since been confirmed killed by Israel.

The Gaza war was triggered by Hamas's October 2023 attack, which resulted in the deaths of 1,219 people, most of them civilians.

Israel's retaliatory campaign has killed at least 65,441 people, also mostly civilians, according to figures from the territory's Health Ministry that the United Nations considers reliable.

U.K. deports first migrant to France under new deal

Sriram Lakshman

LONDON

The U.K. has returned the first person to France, under a migrant return deal signed by the French and British governments in July. The man is an Indian citizen as per reporting from the BBC and the Telegraph. The French Interior Ministry confirmed to *The Hindu* that one migrant was received by France on Wednesday but declined to confirm citizenship details.

The deal to return migrants arriving on 'small boats' from France across the English Channel was announced during French President Emmanuel Macron's State visit to the U.K. in July. For every migrant returned to France, the U.K. will accept a vetted migrant from France under the 'one-in-one-out' arrangement. Preference would be given to those who have U.K. ties.

"A man who arrived in the U.K. by small boat in August was removed on a commercial flight this morning marking another major step in the government's action to dismantle



Migrants wade through the sea in an attempt to board an inflatable dinghy to cross the English Channel to reach Britain. REUTERS

the criminal networks profiting from human misery," the U.K. Home Office said in a statement that did not specify the man's citizenship.

The U.K. government said more flights are due to take off this week and next.

Border security

The government – which has pitched much of its push against illegal migration as a fight against people smuggling gangs – boosted funding for Border Security in August by £100 million to disrupt trafficking gangs.

The deal will run on a trial basis until July 2026. However, the process has

already run into legal issues, with migrants not making it on deportation flights scheduled for earlier this week.

The High court in London blocked a 25-year old Eritrean man from being returned to France to allow his lawyers more time to provide evidence that he may have been the victim of modern-day slavery.

"I will continue to challenge any last-minute, vexatious attempts to frustrate a removal in the courts," newly appointed U.K. Home Minister Shabana Mahmood said. The Home Office has also begun to review the country's modern slavery legislation.

Ukraine hits Russian oil refinery deep behind front

Agence France-Presse

KYIV

Ukrainian drones on Thursday hit a major Russian oil refinery some 1,400 km from the front line, triggering a fire, officials from both countries said.

The strike is the latest in a wave of drone attacks on Russia's energy infrastructure as Kyiv seeks to knock out Russia's vital energy revenues that fund its army.

A source in Ukraine's SBU security agency said its drones had hit "the heart" of a refinery in the central Bashkortostan region run by state-controlled energy giant Gazprom. Unverified images on Russian social media showed a fire at the facility and a plume of dark smoke rising above it.

Russia typically does not confirm Ukrainian strikes, but Radiy Khabirov, the Russian head of the region, said on Thursday the refinery had been hit. Strikes over the summer months have knocked out a notable portion of Russia's refining capacity.

Trump says U.S. is trying to 'get back' Bagram Air Base

Sriram Lakshman

LONDON

The Trump administration is trying to negotiate a take over of Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan, U.S. President Donald Trump announced on Thursday. Mr. Trump's comments were made at Chequers, the official country residence of U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer at a joint press conference with the two leaders, at the conclusion of the President's two-day State visit to the U.K.

Mr. Trump said that when his first administration (2016-2020) had planned on taking U.S. troops out of Afghanistan, it had planned to hold on to Bagram, a 77 sq. km airbase with a 11,800 ft runway,

which was a focal point for logistics for U.S. troops in Afghanistan. U.S. troops exited Afghanistan – including Bagram – in a chaotic manner on February 29, 2020 under the newly-appointed administration of Joe Biden.

Mr. Trump said that the U.S. had "given" Bagram to the Taliban for "nothing". The Taliban took over Afghanistan after America's exit.

"We're trying to get it back, by the way. Okay, that could be a little breaking news. We're trying to get it back, because they [the Taliban] need things from us. We want that base back, but one of the reasons we want the base is, as you know, it is an hour away from where China makes its nuclear weapons," Mr. Trump said.

Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India
Krishi Bhawan, Dr Rajendra Prasad Road, Central Secretariat, New Delhi-110001

INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries and Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India invites sealed Proposals from interested and experienced firms/companies/organizations involved in domestication and breeding programmes of potential candidate species for coastal aquaculture to produce Specific Pathogen-Free (SPF) Brood Stocks of *L. vannamei*, either independently or through a Joint Venture with the local partner from India. EOI document containing the details of criteria, submission requirement, objective, scope of work etc. can be downloaded from the website <http://dof.gov.in>, <https://nrdb.gov.in> and <https://caas.gov.in>.

Further details/questions, if any, may be obtained from Fisheries Development Commissioner, Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries and Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India, Krishi Bhawan, Dr Rajendra Prasad Road, Central Secretariat, New Delhi-110001. Telephone No.91-23386379; E-mail: fdc-india@dof.gov.in during working hours.

This is a rolling EOI. Sealed envelope marked to the below address, containing the proposal with all relevant documents may be submitted mentioning "Expression of Interest for establishing Nucleus Breeding Centres (NBC) for *L. vannamei* in India on the top of the envelope.

The Joint Secretary (Marine Fisheries)

Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries and Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India
Krishi Bhawan, Dr Rajendra Prasad Rd, Central Secretariat, New Delhi-110001

Fisheries Development Commissioner
Department of Fisheries,
Ministry of Fisheries and Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India,
Room No.242-C, Krishi Bhawan, Dr Rajendra Prasad Rd, Central Secretariat, New Delhi-110001

मर्त्य पालन विभाग,
मर्त्य पालन एवं पशुपालन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार कृषि भवन,
डॉ. राजेंद्र प्रसाद रोड, केंद्रीय सचिवालय, नई दिल्ली-110001

रुचि की अधिकार्यक्रिया के लिए निम्नलिखित आंओआई

मर्त्य पालन विभाग, मर्त्य पालन और पशुपालन एवं डेवरी मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार कृषि भवन शहरी क्षेत्र में स्थित है। इसके के ऊपर मुख्य भवन के साथ संगम उड़ान के माध्यम से एक बन्धन के लिए न्यूक्लियर ब्रिंजिंग सेटर (एन्सीसी) की स्थापना होते रुचि की अधिकार्यक्रिया भवें।

अधिकार्यक्रिया भवें, यदि कोई हो, तो मर्त्य पालन विभाग, मर्त्य पालन और पशुपालन एवं डेवरी मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, डॉ. राजेंद्र प्रसाद रोड, केंद्रीय सचिवालय, नई दिल्ली-110001 पर प्राप्त किए जा सकते हैं।

यह एक चलिंग आंओआई है। नीचे दिए गए पाते पर एक सीलबंद लिफाइको भेजें, जिसमें सभी प्राप्तिक्रम संस्थानों से स्वाक्षर भवन के लिए मुख्य व्यवस्था अनुमति देता है। मार्गदर्शन, प्रस्तुत करने की आवश्यकता, उद्देश्य, कार्य का दरार आदि का विवरण देने वाला इंसोआई दस्तावेज वेबसाइट <http://dof.gov.in>, <http://https://nrdb.gov.in> और <https://caas.gov.in> से डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है।

अधिकार्यक्रिया भवें, यदि कोई हो, तो मर्त्य पालन विभाग, मर्त्य पालन और पशुपालन एवं डेवरी मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, डॉ. राजेंद्र प्रसाद रोड, केंद्रीय सचिवालय, नई दिल्ली-110001 पर प्राप्त किए जा सकते हैं।

संस्करण मर्त्य पालन विभाग, मर्त्य पालन और पशुपालन एवं डेवरी मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, डॉ. राजेंद्र प्रसाद रोड, केंद्रीय सचिवालय, नई दिल्ली-110001

मर्त्य विभाग आयुर्वेद
मर्त्य पालन विभाग,
मर्त्य पालन और पशुपालन एवं डेवरी मंत्रालय
भारत सरकार
कृषि भवन, डॉ. राजेंद्र प्रसाद रोड, केंद्रीय सचिवालय, नई दिल्ली-110001

मर्त्य विभाग आयुर्वेद
मर्त्य पालन विभाग,
मर्त्य पालन और पशुपालन एवं डेवरी मंत्रालय
भारत सरकार
कृषि भवन, 242-सी, कृषि भवन, डॉ. राजेंद्र प्रसाद रोड, केंद्रीय सचिवालय, नई दिल्ली-110001

IISER**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH BERHAMPUR**

Established by the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India

Dated: 18.09.2025

No.: IISERBPR/DFOA/2025/2
Opening date for submission of application: 0900 hrs. of 19.09.2025
Closing date of submission of application: 1700 hrs. of 20.10.2025
Crucial date for calculation of age/qualification/experience: 20.10.2025

Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) Berhampur is a premier autonomous Institution of National Importance established by the Ministry of Education (MoE), Govt. of India (GoI) for promotion of high-quality science education and research in the country. IISER Berhampur was set up as the 7th IISER by Govt. of India in 2016 under NITSER Act, 2007. The Institute is having a sprawling scenic campus touching the seashore on east coast of Odisha.

The Institute invites online applications from Indian Nationals including eligible Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs) as covered under the rules possessing excellent academic record and relevant work experience for vacant positions at the level of Professor, Associate Professor & Assistant Professor-Gr-1 in the following areas of specializations under the respective Departments:

S. No.	Department	Position	Vacancy					Area of Specialization
UR	OBC NCL	SC	ST</th					

IN BRIEF



Van Dijk snatches Liverpool's thrilling win over Atletico

Virgil van Dijk scored a dramatic late winner to grab Liverpool a 3-2 Champions League victory over Atletico Madrid, while Paris Saint-Germain kicked off its title defence by thrashing Atalanta on Wednesday.

The results: Olympiakos 0 drew with Pafos 0; Slavia Prague 2 (Mbodji 23, 74) drew with Bodo/Glimt 2 (Bassi 78, Brunstad Fet 90); Ajax 0 lost to Inter Milan 2 (Thuram 42, 47); Bayern Munich 3 (Chabala 20-0g, Kane 27-pen, 63) bt Chelsea 1 (Palmer 29); Liverpool 3 (Robertson 4, Salah 6, Van Dijk 90+2) bt Atletico Madrid 2 (Llorente 45+3, 81); PSG 4 (Marquinhos 3, Kvaratskhelia 39, Mendes 51, Ramos 90+1) bt Atalanta 0.

Sindhu, Satwik-Chirag enter China Masters quarterfinals

P.V. Sindhu and the men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty entered the China Masters badminton quarterfinals in Shenzhen on Thursday.

The results (second round): Women: P.V. Sindhu bt Pornpawee Chochuwong (Tha) 21-15, 21-15. **Men: Doubles:** Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty bt Hsiang Chieh Chiu & Wang Chin-Lin (Tpe) 21-13, 21-12.

FC Goa loses to Iraq's Al Zawraa in AFC CL 2

Indian Super League (ISL) side FC Goa fought hard but suffered a 0-2 defeat at the hands of Iraq's Al Zawraa SC in their AFC Champions League Two Group-D match, in Margao on Wednesday. Reziq Banhani (44th minute) and Nizar Alrashdan (90+5) scored.

LIVE TELECAST

World Athletics Championships: SS Select 2 (SD & HD) & JioHotstar, 2 p.m. & 4 a.m. (Saturday)
Ireland vs England: 2nd T20I, FanCode, 6 p.m.
Men's T20 Asia Cup: India vs Oman, Sony Sports Ten 5 (S & HD) & LiV, 8 p.m.
PKL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & JioHotstar, 8 p.m.
LaLiga: FanCode, 12.30 a.m. (Saturday)

Shruti breezes past Sofia, in quarterfinals

TENNIS

Sports Bureau

GURUGRAM

Shruti Ahlawat gave a hint of her attacking ability as she raced past Sofia Suslova 6-2, 6-3 in the pre-quarterfinals of the \$15,000 ITF women's tennis tournament at the Tennis Project, Baliwas, on Thursday.

The 19-year-old Shruti, who has been training at DLTA High Performance Centre for the last few months, exhibited better temperament and the ability to adapt to situation, in finding her way to an authoritative performance.

The Russian opponent was quite good, and had beaten the fourth seed in the first round. But, Shruti did not give her much



Shruti. KAMESH SRINIVASAN

scope to stretch her stay on court.

In the quarterfinals, Shruti will play sixth seed Vlada Mincheva.

Top seed Zeel Desai continued with her fighting ability and pipped Anna Sedysheva 4-6, 7-5, 7-6(2) in a high quality contest. It was the second match in a

row, after the one against qualifier Sahira Singh, that Zeel was bouncing back after losing the first set.

Zeel will next play Eva Desvignes of Singapore.

Akanksha Nitture was the third Indian to make quarterfinals, and did so at the expense of Laxmisiri Dandu, with a mature performance backed by consistently strong strokes.

It could have been four Indians in the quarterfinals, but Pooja Ingale missed two match points and lost to fifth seed Paola Lopez in the third set tie-break.

Credit to Paola as she came up with four solid serves to wriggle out of those two match points in the ninth game of the decider. Pooja dropped the serve easily in the tenth game and took a 6-1 lead in

the tie-break to scotch all hopes. Though she flickered bright in climax, it was late to turn the tide.

The results: Pre-quarterfinal:

Zeel Desai bt Anna Sedysheva 4-6, 5-7, 7-6(2); Eva Desvignes (Sgp) bt Soha Sadiq 6-3, 6-3. Akanksha Nitture bt Laxmisiri Dandu 6-1, 6-3; Maria Mikhailova bt Carolynn Delaunay (Cal) 6-3, 2-6, 7-5; Vlada Mincheva bt Jih Shin (Kor) 6-4, 6-4; Shruti Ahlawat bt Sofia Suslova 6-2, 6-3; Paola Lopez (USA) bt Pooja Ingale 4-6, 6-4, 7-6(4); Shihomi Leong (Mas) bt Michika Ozeki (Jpn) 6-4, 7-5.

Doubles (quarterfinals): Anna Sedysheva & Sofia Suslova bt Akanksha Nitture & Soha Sadiq 6-2, 6-4; Sravya Shivan & Pranjala Yadlapalli bt Jennifer Luukhan & Bela Tamhankar 2-6, 6-1, [10-7]; Elena Jamshidi (Den) & Maria Mikhailova bt Diva Bhatia & Sai Samitha 6-2, 6-4; Mahika Khanna & Sohini Mohanty bt Carolynn Delaunay (Cal) & Paola Lopez (USA) 7-6(6), 4-6, [10-6].

Tennis

Sports Bureau

GREATER NOIDA

Karik Singh continued to be on top of his game as he opened a three-shot lead with a three-under 67 on the second day of the IGPL golf tournament at the Jaypee Greens on Thursday.

With the course being affected by heavy rain, the par was reduced to 70 for the second round, with hole four becoming par-3 instead of par-5.

Kartik had shot four-under 68 in the first round, and thus was sitting pretty on top with seven-under 135 in only his second pro-

fessional tournament. He was tied eighth last week in Chandigarh.

Karandeep Kochhar and Pukhraj Singh Gill were in the joint second place with four-under 138.

The champion of the last tournament, Gaganjeet Bhullar, was tied-fourth with two-under 140 along with Kartik Sharma, Veer Ganapathy and Raghav Chugh.

"I have played good golf in the first two days. I hope to keep going the same way and make fewer mistakes," said Kartik, as he visualised a strong finish on the third day.

Sports Bureau

Greater Noida

Kartik Singh continues to be on top of his game as he opened a three-shot lead with a three-under 67 on the second day of the IGPL golf tournament at the Jaypee Greens on Thursday.

Kartik had shot four-under 68 in the first round, and thus was sitting pretty on top with seven-under 135 in only his second pro-

fessional tournament. He was tied eighth last week in Chandigarh.

Karandeep Kochhar and Pukhraj Singh Gill were in the joint second place with four-under 138.

The champion of the last tournament, Gaganjeet Bhullar, was tied-fourth with two-under 140 along with Kartik Sharma, Veer Ganapathy and Raghav Chugh.

"I have played good golf in the first two days. I hope to keep going the same way and make fewer mistakes," said Kartik, as he visualised a strong finish on the third day.

Sport

Sachin finishes fourth; Neeraj disappoints

Debutant uncorks an 86.27m personal best effort while the defending champion ends up eighth after failing to cross the 85m mark

ATHLETICS

Agencies

TOKYO

Defending champion Neeraj Chopra endured a nightmarish outing at the World Championships' men's javelin throw final to end a disappointing eighth even as debutant compatriot Sachin Yadav logged in a personal best to finish a creditable fourth here on Thursday.

On a day when no thrower managed to cross 90m, Neeraj was ousted after the fifth and penultimate round, which he fouled, with a best effort of 84.03m that left him eighth overall at the venue where he won a history-making Olympic gold back in 2021.

Before Thursday, his worst was 82.27m while winning gold at the Federation Cup in May 2024.

The last time Neeraj had finished outside of the top two in a major athletics event final was in June 2021

at the Kuortane Games in Finland where he came third.

Sachin's 86.27m, which came in the very first attempt, was a personal best performance and he bested not just Neeraj but also German star Julian Weber (86.11m, fifth) and Olympic champion Arshad Nadeem (82.75m, 10th) among others.

The gold went Keshorn Walcott (88.16m) of Trinidad and Tobago, followed Grenada's Anderson Peters (87.38m) and Curtis

Thompson (86.67m).

Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone ran the second fastest time ever to win gold in the women's 400 metres. The 26-year-old American clocked 47.78s.

Botswana's 21-year-old Busang Collen Kebintshihi won the men's event.

Cuba's Leyanis Perez Hernandez took the women's triple jump while Yulimar Rojas, winner of the last four World titles, claimed a remarkable bronze in her first competition for two years.



So near, yet... Sachin missed out on the bronze medal by 40 centimetres. AFP

Archery joins list of sporting leagues with APL

Uthra Ganesan

NEW DELHI

Some of the top Indian and foreign archers were among the 48 players drafted into six franchises as the inaugural edition of the Archery Premier League (APL) was launched on Thursday.

The competition will be held from October 2-12 in a double round-robin format at the Yamuna Sports Complex followed by semifinals and final. With eight archers per team - four men and women each - including two foreigners, the Archery Association of India is hoping to make the sport more viewer-friendly.

Top Indians, including Deepika Kumari and Dhiraj Bomma Deva, will be the main draws in recurve while Jyothi Surekha and Rishabh Yadav are the top-ranked Indians in compound. Among the foreign participants will be World No. ones Andrea Becerra (Mex) and Mike Schloesser (Ned) in compound and Brady Ellison (USA) in recurve. Powerhouse South



At the launch: Jyothi Surekha, second from left, and Rishabh Yadav, fifth from left, along with the other Indian archers and AAI officials. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Korea, however, has decided to skip the event.

"For the first time we will have combined mixed teams of recurve and compound archers competing together. The shooting distances will be Olympic standard -- 70m for recurve, 50m for compound - and we will be holding three matches every day under lights. Each match with four archers each will last 20 minutes with the shooting time reduced to 15 seconds," APL Director Anil Kamineni explained.

The teams: Pritviraj Yodhas (Delhi); Recurve: Matias Grande, Krish Kumar, Gatha Anandrao, Sharvari Somnath; Compound: Abhishek Verma, Priyansh, Andrea Becerra, Pranjal Salve;

Rajputana Royals (Rajasthan):

Recurve: Mete Gazoz, Sachin Gupta, Ankita Bhakat, Basanti Mahato; Compound: Prathamesh Fuge, Ojas Deota, Ella Gibson, Swati Duhdwal;

Katkiya Knights (Telangana):

Recurve: Neeraj Chauhan, Rohit Kumar, Elia Canales, Tisha Punia.

Compound: Nico Wiener, Jignas, Jyothi Surekha Vennam, Aveet Kaur.

Mighty Marathas:

(Maharashtra): Recurve: Dhiraj Bomma Deva, Mirnal Chauhan, Alejandra Valencia, Bhajan Kaur;

Compound: Mike Schloesser, Aman Saini, Parneet Kaur, Madhura D.

Chera Archers (Jharkhand):

Recurve: Rahul, Atu na Das, Katharina Bauer, Kumkum Mohod; Compound: Mathias Fullerton, Sahil Rajesh, Prithika Pradeep, Madala Hamsini.

Chola Chiefs (Tamil Nadu):

Recurve: Brady Ellison, Tarun Ray, Deepika Kumari, Anshika Kumari; Compound: Rishabh Yadav, Pukkit, Meeri-Marita Paas, Taniparthi Chikitha.

Shivaji Warriors (Goa):

Recurve: Rishabh Yadav, Pukkit, Meeri-Marita Paas, Taniparthi Chikitha.

(Karnataka): Recurve: Dhiraj Bomma Deva, Mirnal Chauhan, Alejandra Valencia, Bhajan Kaur;

Compound: Mike Schloesser, Aman Saini, Parneet Kaur, Madhura D.

APL: First round: Mariam Atia (Egy) bt Ashmita Easwaran 6-1, 6-0;

Doubles: Quarterfinals: Saoirse Breen (Fiji) & Ashmita Easwaran 6-0, 6-3.

\$15,000 ITF women, Hurghada (Egypt): First round: Mariam Atia (Egy) bt Ashmita Easwaran 6-1, 6-0;

Pre-quarterfinals: Fanny Norin (Swe) bt Tanisha Kashyap 6-4, 6-3.

\$15,000 ITF women, Hurghada (Egypt): First round: Mariam Atia (Egy) bt Ashmita Easwaran 6-1, 6-0;

Pre-quarterfinals: Fanny Norin (Swe) bt Tanisha Kashyap 6-4, 6-3.

\$15,000 ITF women, Hurghada (Egypt): First round: Mariam Atia (Egy) bt Ashmita Easwaran 6-1, 6-0;

Pre-quarterfinals: Fanny Norin (Swe) bt Tanisha Kashyap 6-4, 6-3.

\$15,000 ITF women, Hurghada (Egypt): First round: Mariam Atia (Egy) bt Ashmita Easwaran 6-1, 6-0;

Pre-quarterfinals: Fanny Norin (Swe) bt Tanisha Kashyap 6-4, 6-3.

\$15,000 ITF women, Hurghada (Egypt): First round: Mariam Atia (Egy) bt Ashmita Easwaran 6-1, 6-0;

Pre-quarterfinals: Fanny Norin (Swe) bt Tanisha Kashyap 6-4, 6-3.

\$15,000 ITF women, Hurghada (Egypt): First round: Mariam Atia (Egy) bt Ashmita Easwaran 6-1, 6-0;

Pre-quarterfinals: Fanny Norin (Swe) bt Tanisha Kashyap 6-4, 6-3.

\$15,000 ITF women, Hurghada (Egypt): First round: Mariam Atia (Egy) bt Ashmita Easwaran 6-1, 6-0;

Pre-quarterfinals: Fanny Norin (Swe) bt Tanisha Kashyap 6

Always late but never too late: Liverpool's early season winners just plain luck or champion mentality?

Ruthless but not clinical would be a fair assessment of the Reds' campaign so far; for all the flair and potency in its attack, the Premier League title-holder is also susceptible to conceding goals



Teenage hero: Ngumoha scores Liverpool's 10th minute stoppage time winner against Newcastle. AP

Sankar Narayanan E.H.

It's a good sign that Liverpool is getting the better of its opponents without being at its absolute best?

How do you evaluate the side's early season late winners? Is it champion mentality or just the Reds getting the rub of the green?

Whether it be the four last-gasp wins in the Premier League before the theatrical 3-2 victory over Atletico Madrid in their UEFA Champions League opener, Arne Slot's men sure do have a knack for bulging the net in the closing moments.

Liverpool was just getting started with the 11th-hour drama when Federico Chiesa restored the side's lead in the 88th minute in the 4-2 win over AFC Bournemouth.

Ever since Chiesa said it was "better late than never" for him to score his first Premier League goal, it's been always late but never too late for Liverpool.

Rio Ngumoha netted in the 10th minute of stoppage time for a 3-2 win at Newcastle United before Dominik Szoboszlai's 83rd-minute free-kick helped Liverpool beat title-contender Arsenal 1-0 in a cagey affair at home. Interestingly, the Gunners are yet to concede another goal this season apart from that stupendous 32-yard effort from Szoboszlai.

Then Mohamed Salah broke Burnley's hearts by converting from the penalty spot in the fifth minute of added time as Liverpool escaped with a 1-0 win at Turf Moor.

With these results, Liverpool became the first team in Premier League history to win four straight games with the winning goal scored in the final 10 minutes or later.

Coach Slot had an honest take on his team's domestic campaign so far.

"For us to be on 12 points now is so much more than I expected, especially after the changes we made this summer," he said during the pre-match press conference for Liverpool's continental clash against Atletico.

Last but not least, skipper Virgil Van Dijk's precise header in the 92nd minute condemned Diego Simeone's men to a 3-2 loss in a roller-coaster of a contest on Wednesday.

"We need to get back to winning a bit simpler and easier," Liverpool left-back Andy Robertson said after the Champions League game.

"The assistant manager turned to me when Virgil put it in and said he's getting too old for it, so I can't imagine what the fans are like. It's a great thing to have, being able to keep going until the end,

[but] when you're 2-0 up and playing so well in the first half, it should've been a more comfortable night," Robertson added.

And there have been conflicting opinions on what to expect from Liverpool after such a volatile start to the season.

"I'm unsure about Liverpool. They should be mid-table. They've been gifted six points. You could take six points off Liverpool and no one would have argued," football columnist Paul Merson wrote in a *Sky Sports* article published on September 16.

Ruthless but not clinical would be a fair assessment of Liverpool's campaign; the side, however, would certainly be looking at this from a glass-half-full perspective.

Need some time

As Slot alluded to in his press conference, this Liverpool team is coming off a busy summer transfer window and will need some time for all the hot new signings to settle down.

The fact that the Reds have an unblemished record despite the churning makes things that much easier during the transition period. Points on the board sure do take a load off, even for the defending champion.

"They're settling in this new wave of players like [Florian] Wirtz and [Hugo] Ekitike into the club, and the team is not at its absolute purring best. However, they've got something, and they are winning, and that's really important," former Manchester United defender and football commentator Gary Neville said after Liverpool's victory over Burnley.

"Obviously, you can't keep on winning by playing below your best and

performing like they did today, but they keep on getting over the line; they've demonstrated that in the first few weeks of the season, and they've carried it on after the international break," Neville opined.

Liverpool's run of thrilling triumphs had some football pundits compare the team to Sir Alex Ferguson's Manchester United, and how the famed outfit used to walk away with a win with a last-minute goal or two.

While it is still premature to use 'Fergie Time' and 'Slot Time' in the same vein for the art of finding late winners, Liverpool will do well for itself if it can emulate what Ferguson & Co. pulled off in their prime.

Former Manchester United captain Roy Keane, somebody who very well knows the feeling of coming in clutch when it matters the most, lauded Liverpool's tenacity.

"They keep going. They've got quality players, and they have the desire to win football matches. Liverpool stuck at it, and you have to keep going until the end. That's what the top teams do," Keane told *Sky Sports* after the Burnley game.

Former Crystal Palace striker Clinton Morrison said Liverpool's victories cannot be dismissed as pure luck. "Everyone keeps saying Liverpool leaves it late, but it can't be lucky the number of times they've done it already this season. They've got big players and big characters," Morrison told *Sky Sports' Soccer Special* after Liverpool's victory over Atletico.

These positive takes on Liverpool's prospects may also be coming from the fact that the Reds have been consistently finding the net since Slot took over last season. In fact, the last time Liverpool

failed to score in the Premier League was on September 14, 2024, against Nottingham Forest, and the side has been on a 38-game scoring streak in the league since then.

It's almost as if Liverpool has made legendary Dutch footballer Johan Cruyff's famous quote its motto: "To win, you have to score one more goal than your opponent."

Egyptian magician Salah

Egyptian magician Salah's role in Liverpool's ascendancy to the Premier League crown last season could not be overstated. He rightly won the Player-of-the-Season award for matching Alan Shearer and Andrew Cole's record for the most direct goal involvements in a league season (47).

The prolific winger, however, has been blowing hot and cold in the 2025-26 campaign. His best performance yet came against Atletico, where he outmuscled and outmanoeuvred three defenders to give the host a two-goal lead in the sixth minute. Liverpool will hope this was a sign of Salah finding his feet ahead of yet another glorious season.

Matter of intrigue

Record signings Wirtz and Alexander Isak's output was another matter of intrigue, and both players are slowly coming into their own after dealing with their own set of challenges.

While the German attacking midfielder took some time to get used to the rigours of Premier League football, the Swedish forward's troubles were more off the pitch than on it.

Just like Salah, Wirtz found his mojo against Atletico. According to Squawka, no Liverpool player had more touches in the opposition box (seven), created more chances (five) or created more big chances (two) than Wirtz in that Champions League contest.

Liverpool will also be pleased with Isak finally getting some game time after a tumultuous transfer window that saw him miss the crucial pre-season training period. Wirtz and Isak also produced some lovely combination plays on Wednesday, with the best one coming in the 42nd minute through the No. 7's run from midfield to find Isak for a dangerous one-two in front of the Atletico goal.

For all the flair and potency in its attack, Liverpool is also susceptible to conceding goals. Missing out on signing Crystal Palace's Marc Guehi on deadline day has accentuated the side's lack of competition in the centre-back position.

But for now, it's where there's a will, there's a late Liverpool winner!

THE GIST

The Liverpool team is coming off a busy summer transfer window and will need some time for all the hot new signings to settle down

Whether it be the four last-gasp wins in the Premier League before the theatrical 3-2 victory over Atletico Madrid in their UEFA Champions League opener, Slot's men sure do have a knack for bulging the net in the closing moments

It's almost as if Liverpool has made legendary Dutch footballer Cruyff's famous quote its motto: "To win, you have to score one more goal than your opponent."

While it is still premature to use 'Fergie Time' and 'Slot Time' in the same vein for the art of finding late winners, Liverpool will do well for itself if it can emulate what Ferguson & Co. pulled off in their prime



Unlikely star: Chiesa celebrates after giving the Reds the lead against Bournemouth. AP

SCIENCE

Ageing arteries, lingering risks: COVID's quiet impact on heart health

A large, multinational investigation into pandemic's impact on the cardiovascular system has found that survivors, particularly women, are left with stiffer arteries, equivalent to an age about five to ten years older; with nearly 700 million people surviving COVID worldwide, long-term healthcare burden of accelerated ageing could be significant

Anirban Mukhopadhyay

What if a single COVID-19 infection could make your arteries behave as though they were five to 10 years older? That unsettling possibility emerges from the CARTESIAN study, the largest multinational investigation yet into the pandemic's hidden impact on the cardiovascular system. Recently published in the *European Heart Journal*, it tracked nearly 2,400 participants across 18 countries and found that survivors of COVID-19 had stiffer arteries – a recognised marker of “vascular ageing” – compared to those never infected. The effect was most pronounced in women, whose arteries showed changes equivalent to an extra decade of age.

“The pulse wave velocity in women after COVID corresponded to that of women five to ten years older,” said Rosa Maria Bruno, lead author and cardiologist at Inserm, France’s National Institute of Health and Medical Research, in Paris.

Why it matters

As arteries stiffen, the heart pumps harder, blood pressure rises, and the risk of heart attack, stroke, kidney disease, and dementia increases. Unlike wrinkles, these vascular changes are invisible until serious events occur. That is what makes CARTESIAN worrying. The WHO estimates nearly 700 million people worldwide have survived COVID. If even a fraction experience accelerated vascular ageing, the long-term healthcare burden could be significant. Notably, stiffening appeared even in survivors of mild infections.

What the study did

CARTESIAN – short for *COVID-19 effects on Arterial Stiffness and Vascular Ageing* – asked whether COVID leaves a vascular imprint. Researchers from 38 centres across 18 countries recruited 2,390 adults, average age 50, about half of them women. Groups included uninfected controls and three survivor categories: non-hospitalised, hospitalised, and intensive care. Tests were performed around six months after infection, with follow-ups at twelve months.

The team measured carotid-femoral pulse wave velocity (PWV), a gold-standard indicator of arterial stiffness. PWV tracks how fast blood pressure waves travel: the stiffer the artery, the faster the wave. Comparing COVID-positive groups with controls revealed whether infection accelerated ageing.

Results were clear. Every COVID-positive group had stiffer arteries



Long-term impact: The effect was most pronounced in women, whose arteries showed changes equivalent to an extra decade of age. They showed higher stiffness regardless of illness severity. FILE PHOTO

than controls. After adjusting for age, sex, blood pressure, diabetes and smoking, survivors still showed PWV about 0.4 metres per second faster – equivalent to arteries five years older. The effect, however, was striking only in women. They showed higher stiffness regardless of illness severity, and ICU patients had the equivalent of an extra decade of ageing.

Persistent symptoms mattered. Women with fatigue, breathlessness or muscle aches months later – often labelled “long COVID” – had even stiffer arteries. “Women mount a stronger immune response, which protects them during infection, but if that response lingers, it can damage blood vessels,” Dr. Bruno explained.

Vaccination and recovery

One hopeful signal was that stiffening did not worsen indefinitely. In a subgroup followed for about a year, survivors’ stiffness stabilised or slightly improved, while controls showed the gradual increase expected with normal ageing. Still, the damage did not vanish. “No return to baseline has been observed,” Dr. Bruno cautioned. “An improvement has been observed mostly in very severe cases, whereas PWV is mostly stable in most individuals.”

Vaccination blunted the impact, particularly in women. Those with at least one dose had lower stiffness than unvaccinated peers.

Not all cardiologists are convinced though. Balbir Singh, group chairman of

cardiac sciences at Max Healthcare, Delhi, urges caution. “I don’t think we can make very firm conclusions based on the CARTESIAN study,” he said, citing the absence of pre-COVID baseline data as a major limitation. “These findings suggest arterial stiffness could be accelerated in patients who had COVID, but do not conclusively prove it.” From his own practice, Dr. Singh adds, he has not observed a marked shift. “Are we seeing higher hypertensive patients than before? I’m not seeing that. Am I seeing those who went into the ICU during COVID now coming back with heart problems? I’m not seeing that.”

Elsewhere, clinicians have been drawing different lessons from what they encounter. At the Cleveland Clinic, a nonprofit academic medical centre based in Ohio, U.S., Stanley Hazen has argued that a history of COVID-19 should inform preventive care, based on his research connecting the virus to heart problems, stroke, and death. “As clinicians, we should consider a patient’s history of prior COVID-19 when formulating cardiovascular prevention plans – these effects [his findings] are not a small subgroup finding but a global signal that will translate into more cardiovascular disease,” he said.

Observations from other centres echo this. Dara Lee Lewis – writing from Brigham and Women’s, a teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School, U.S. – described cases of myocarditis and persistent palpitations in previously

healthy individuals. Meanwhile, Bruce Levy, of the same hospital, points to autonomic dysfunction such as POTS (Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome) – where the heart races upon standing – as an example of how COVID can disrupt vascular regulation in practice.

At Mount Sinai in New York, physicians using advanced imaging have detected signs of inflammation in the hearts and large vessels of patients who had only mild infections.

India's picture

CARTESIAN, like most large European studies, was not representative of South Asia. “A small proportion identified as Asian, and while their arteries appeared less stiff than Western participants in the uninfected group, this difference disappeared after COVID – suggesting the virus erased any ethnic advantage,” Dr. Bruno noted.

For India, that gap leaves open an urgent question. If COVID might accelerate vascular ageing elsewhere, what does it mean for a population already carrying one of the heaviest burdens of cardiovascular disease worldwide? Without rigorous home-grown data – the kind that is now guiding international researchers and physicians – the risk remains largely invisible.

(Anirban Mukhopadhyay is a geneticist by training and science communicator from Delhi. anir.deskspace@gmail.com)

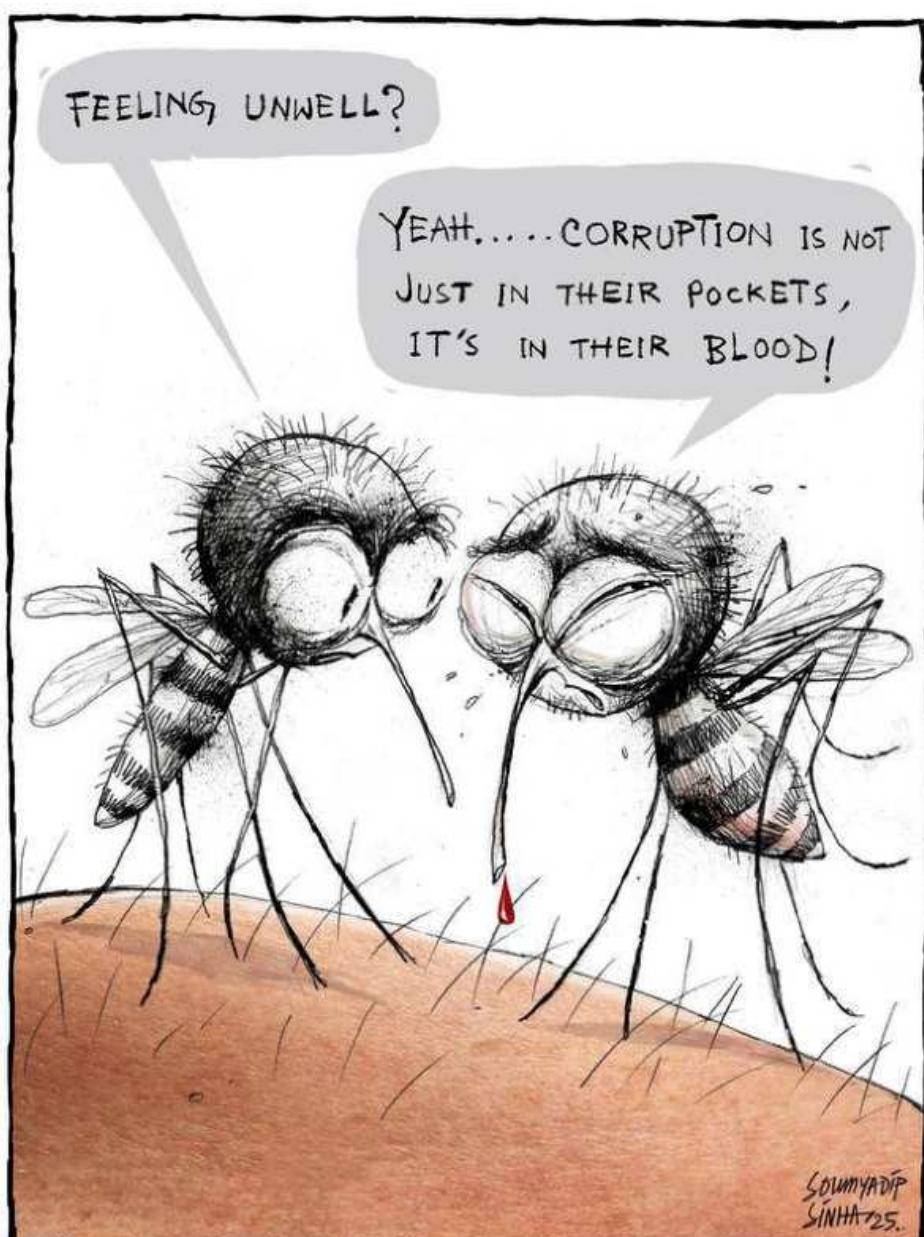
THE GIST

▼ As arteries stiffen, the heart pumps harder, blood pressure rises, and the risk of heart attack, stroke, kidney disease, and dementia increases. Unlike wrinkles, these vascular changes are invisible until serious events occur

▼ Recently published in the *European Heart Journal*, the study tracked nearly 2,400 participants across 18 countries and found that survivors of COVID-19 had stiffer arteries – a recognised marker of “vascular ageing” – compared to those never infected

▼ One hopeful signal was that stiffening did not worsen indefinitely. In a subgroup followed for about a year, survivors’ stiffness stabilised or slightly improved, while controls showed the gradual increase expected with normal ageing

HUMERUS



Why prompt medical attention is crucial in cases of testicular torsion in children

D. Venkat Subramaniam

Children's testicular pain is frequently brushed off as a minor injury, or it is assumed that it will go away on its own. Testicular torsion is one condition though, where a delay could mean the difference between saving or losing the testicle. Raising awareness is the first line of defence against long-term effects.

When the testicle twists around the spermatic cord and cuts off its blood supply, this condition is known as testicular torsion.

The testicle may sustain permanent injury if treatment is not given immediately, typically within four to six hours.

Although it can happen at any age, newborns and children as well as teenagers during puberty are more likely to sustain this condition, when growth spurts cause the testicles to become more mobile. Timely intervention is critical. Taking the pain seriously and seeking immediate medical care can ensure the testis is saved.

Children might not always be able to express their symptoms as well as adults do. Parents need to be aware of any unexpected changes, such as: sudden, severe pain in one testicle, scrotal swelling or redness, nausea and vomiting, the child walking

Tips for parents

- There is no guaranteed way to prevent torsion, but awareness makes all the difference
- Do not dismiss sudden testicular or groin pain in children
- Seek immediate emergency care rather than trying home remedies
- Encourage older boys to report any scrotal discomfort without embarrassment
- Fast action can preserve fertility and prevent future complications



awkwardly, refusing to sit or play and pain that comes on after a minor injury but continues to worsen.

Children frequently arrive at the emergency room hours after the pain starts, which can significantly lower the testicle's chances of survival. Awareness is key. Teenagers, young adults, and parents must be educated about the symptoms of torsion and the need for immediate medical attention. Until proven otherwise, treat scrotal pain in children as an emergency. A physician can confirm the diagnosis through an

examination or with an ultrasound. Emergency surgery to untwist the spermatic cord and fix both testicles is the standard treatment for testicular torsion in order to prevent recurrence. The testicle can be saved if blood supply to it is promptly restored. Delays longer than six to eight hours, however, significantly reduce the affected testicle's chances of surviving.

In cases where the testicle cannot be saved, removal may be required. Even then, with one healthy testicle, boys usually maintain normal fertility and hormonal function. Although a

normal sexual life and good quality of life are possible even with a single testis, the goal should always be to preserve both, for the physical and psychological well-being of the individual.

Although torsion is uncommon, it can have major consequences. The testicle can be saved with early detection and prompt treatment.

(Dr. D. Venkat Subramaniam is senior consultant urologist & executive director at Asian Institute of Nephrology and Urology, Chennai. drvenkat@ainuindia.com)

Staying safe: Children might not always be able to express their symptoms as well as adults do. Parents need to be aware of symptoms. REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

JOIN OUR PAID SERVICE - 2025

ENGLISH

The Hindu, Indian Express, Hindustan Times, Business Line, Business standard, The Live Mint, Times of India, Telegraph, New Indian Express, Asian Age, Statesman, Tribune, Pioneer, Financial Express, The Economic Times, Mumbai Mirror, Mid-Day, Deccan Chronicle, Employment News

HINDI

दैनिक जागरण, अमर उजाला, दैनिक भास्कर, हिंदुस्तान, बिज़नेस स्टैण्डर्ड, राजस्थान पत्रिका, हरी भूमि, लोकसत्ता, पायनियर, दैनिक ट्रिब्यून, द हिन्दू, राष्ट्रीय सहारा, नवभारत टाइम्स, पंजाब केसरी, जनसत्ता, देशबंधू

Get All Editions of These Premium Newspapers



All Bonus

All in One Package. Telegram

1 Month = ~~149~~ ₹99
3 Month = ~~349~~ ₹199
6 Month = ~~549~~ ₹299
12 Month = ~~999~~ ₹499

Special Offer

The Hindu, BL, IE & NIE Only

1 Month = ~~149~~ ₹59
3 Month = ~~349~~ ₹149
6 Month = ~~549~~ ₹249
12 Month = ~~999~~ ₹349

Special Offer

Times of India, ET, IE & NIE

1 Month = ~~149~~ ₹49
3 Month = ~~349~~ ₹129
6 Month = ~~549~~ ₹229
12 Month = ~~999~~ ₹329

Special Offer

Hindustan times, Mint, IE & NIE

1 Month = ~~149~~ ₹49
3 Month = ~~349~~ ₹129
6 Month = ~~549~~ ₹229
12 Month = ~~999~~ ₹329

Special Offer

Amit Raj (UPSC Aspirant)

Thanks to your team! I get The Hindu, Indian Express & Business Line daily between 7:00-8:30 AM – consistent and super helpful for my UPSC prep.

9:16 AM

Shalini Verma
Roz 7:30 baje sab newspapers ek jagah mil jaate hain, Tayari smooth ho gayi hai. Aapki service laajawaab hai

9:19



Kunal Sinha

Tried many sources – nothing beats this group's timing, quality, and value. Perfect for serious readers.



9:20 AM

Sneha D. (Law Student)

Best decision ever! No delays, no searching – just the right newspapers every morning. Helps me stay focused and productive.

9:18 AM

Order Now



LIMITED TIME OFFER

CLICK HERE



Join US ON
Telegram