THURSDAY
July 9, 2026
CHENNAI
CITY EDITION
20 Pages ₹ 5.00

THE HINDU

www.thehindu.com
INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

Vol. 149 • No. 162
Regd. TN/ARD/110/2024-2026
RNI No. 1001/1957

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Indian among inmates killed in Sri Lankan jail

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A crisis on wheels in Kerala

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11 trapped as building collapses in heavy rain

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NEARBY

T.N. moves SC over BC status of converts to Islam

NEW DELHI
The State has moved the Supreme Court against a Madras High Court verdict, which scrapped a Government Order that allowed converts to Islam to claim Backward Class status. » PAGE 4

Commercial tax: virtual hearings to begin today

CHENNAI
The Commercial Taxes Department will introduce virtual hearings for taxpayers at its 15 appellate offices from Thursday. It has also brought in a random allocation system for GST refunds. » PAGE 4

METROPLUS » 4 PAGES

Trump declares end to truce but says he will let talks go on

- U.S.strikes in southern Iran killed 8 military personnel, says Tehran
- Iran claims it hit 85 U.S. military assets in the Persian Gulf region
- MoU now 'ineffective', says Iran as Trump threatens more strikes

Stanly Johny

The ceasefire between the United States and Iran is "over", U.S. President Donald Trump said on Wednesday, while leaving the door open for more talks, after the two sides exchanged fire amid a dispute over the status of the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran said the U.S. "violations" have rendered parts of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the two countries "ineffective".

"As far as I am concerned, it is over," Mr. Trump said at a NATO summit in Ankara, Turkiye, when asked about the ceasefire. "It is just a waste of time dealing with them," he added. "I will let our wonderful negotiators keep talking if they want, but I do not see it. I do not like these people." He added that the U.S. would hit Iran again on Wednesday night.

His remarks came after Iran claimed that it targeted 85 U.S. military assets in the Persian Gulf following U.S. air strikes on "several monitoring and surveillance centres" on Iran's southern coast.

The U.S. strikes killed eight military personnel, Iranian state television said. "Following the criminal aggression carried out this morning by the U.S. terrorist army against areas in southern Iran, eight courageous members of the Islamic Republic of Iran's military fell as martyrs," the state television said, citing a statement from the military.

This is the second time the U.S. and Iran have exchanged fire since they signed the MoU on June 17, promising to extend the ceasefire and begin talks for a final settlement.

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IS THE DEAL FALLING APART?
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"As far as I am concerned, it [ceasefire] is over. It is just a waste of time dealing with them [Iranians]... I will let our wonderful negotiators keep talking if they want, but I do not see it [happening]"

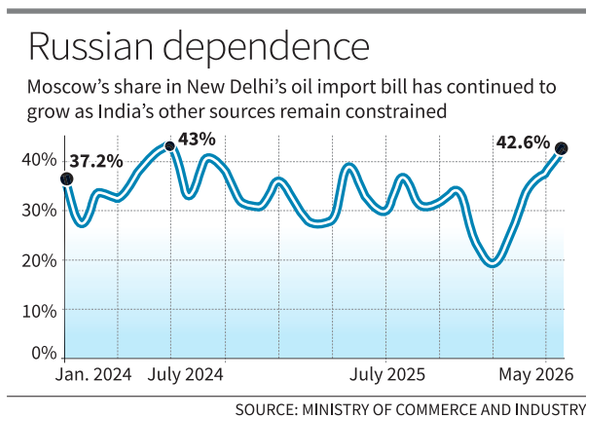
DONALD TRUMP
U.S. President

Crisis reignited: A screengrab from a social media post shows smoke and flames rising after an explosion in Bandar Abbas, Iran, on Wednesday. REUTERS

Stock indices dip 2% as Iran, U.S. restart clashes

MUMBAI
Benchmark Nifty and Sensex dipped over 2% to 23,882.05 and 76,503.60 points respectively on Wednesday after renewed Iran-U.S. clashes sent global oil prices soaring. The indices opened about 0.6% down from the previous close before tumbling during the day. » PAGE 11

Russian oil share in India's imports rises



T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

Russia's share in India's oil imports rose above 40% in May 2026, the highest in nearly two years, according to official government data.

Further, the data shows that Russia charged India a premium for its oil, while other sources such as the U.S. and even the UAE sold India oil at lower-than-average prices.

Russia had been providing India a discount on its oil as recently as February.

Notably, an analysis by *The Hindu* of the data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry shows that India is trying to diversify its sources of oil, including once again importing oil from Iran and Venezuela in April and continuing to do so in May 2026.

The U.S. had, in February, started allowing Venezuela to export oil.

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Bishnoi, Brar ordered killing of Nijjar in Canada: U.S. DoJ

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The United States Department of Justice (DoJ) said on Wednesday that jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi and his associate Satinderjeet Singh, alias Goldy Brar, ordered the June 18, 2023, assassination of pro-Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Surrey, British Columbia, Canada.

The murder strained the diplomatic relations between India and Canada, with Ottawa under the then Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, alleging the involvement of "agents of the Indian government" and designating Indian diplomats as "persons of interest" in the investigation.

The investigations under "Operation Hard Ball" were jointly conducted by law enforcement in U.S., Canada, and Europe, the DoJ said. A total of 37 accused, including a serving Punjab Police inspector, were charged by the DoJ on Wednesday.

Though there was no statement from the Ministry of External Affairs or the Union Home Ministry, Bill Essayli, first assistant, U.S. attorney, told a press conference that the "Indian authorities have been very cooperative and India is happy with today's operations."

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MORE REPORTS ON
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Lawrence Bishnoi, who is currently imprisoned in India, has been charged with several crimes around the world. FILE PHOTO

Ammonia gas leak: officials seal Tiruvallur seafood unit

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Tiruvallur district administration on Wednesday sealed the St. Peter and Paul Pvt. Ltd. seafood processing unit in Kannigaipair in Tiruvallur district, where an ammonia leak on June 21 claimed the lives of 18 workers.

Collector S. Kavitha said the process of pumping out ammonia from the unit, which began on Saturday morning, was completed by Tuesday evening. "We ensured that the entire process was completed without any untoward incident," she said.

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Key accused in rape and murder of minor in West Bengal killed in police encounter

Shiv Sahay Singh
Senjuti Sengupta
KOLKATA

Prabhas Mondal, one of the prime accused in the rape and murder of a 12-year-old girl at Baruipur in West Bengal, was killed in a police encounter in the early hours of Wednesday.

According to police sources, a team from the Baruipur police station took Mondal to Suryapur within the limits of the same police station for the reconstruction of the crime scene around 45 minutes past midnight.

"Just before initiating the reconstruction of the crime scene at the PO (place of occurrence) in Suryapur, the accused snatched the arms of one police personnel, fired one round at our team, and attempted to flee the scene. During the return firing by the police, Prabash Mondal was injured, and he was immediately shifted to Baruipur Hospital, where the attending doctor declared him dead. Further legal procedure is being done," said Superintendent of Baruipur Police, Palash Chandra Dhali.

Security personnel stand guard outside a hospital in Baruipur, West Bengal, where the body of the accused has been kept. PTI

Questions raised

This is the first police encounter in West Bengal after the Bharatiya Janata Party came to power in the State in May.

While Opposition parties raised questions about the encounter, State BJP spokesperson Debjit Sarkar described the death as "divine justice".

In a social media post, Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra criticised the incident, alleging that there was "jungle law" in the State.

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INBRIEF

TANKER Foundation receives donation of ₹25 lakh from GRT

The TANKER Foundation received a donation of ₹25 lakh from GRT Group as a part of their Corporate Social Responsibility initiative on Tuesday. Chairman of GRT Group G. Rajendran, and managing directors G.R. Ananthapadmanabhan, G.R. Radhakrishnan, and Jayashree Vummidi handed over the donation during a special programme. The company contributed a total of ₹8.5 crore to 15 NGOs working across various sectors. The support to TANKER will significantly enhance access to life-saving transplant and dialysis treatment for underprivileged patients battling kidney disease, a press release said. Latha A. Kumaraswami, managing trustee of TANKER Foundation, thanked the group for their support. Lakshmi Rao, trustee of the foundation, was also present.

Text & Context and Science

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carry explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (July 9, Thursday), the following articles are available:

- What is the right to be forgotten? **newsth.live/righttobeforgotten**
- The quantum computing age will only begin when we silence the noise **newsth.live/quantumage**

You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access these articles. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access an article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.

34 electricity substations to come up in city, three neighbouring districts

This is to improve the distribution network in Chennai, Tiruvallur, Chengalpattu, and Kancheepuram. City's power demand crosses previous peak of 5,000 MW. While overall availability remains adequate, localised outages continue to occur: official

POWER POINT

R. Srikanth
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu Power Distribution Corporation Limited (TNPDCL) will soon begin work on setting up electricity substations of varying capacities to improve distribution network in the city and the neighbouring districts of Tiruvallur, Chengalpattu, and Kancheepuram.

With Chennai's power demand having crossed the previous peak of 5,000 mega watt (MW) for the first time this year, the residents have been complaining of power disruptions in various parts of the city.

Infrastructure upgrade: A senior TNPDCL official said a total of 13 substations would be established in the North Circle and 21 in the South Circle. FILE PHOTO

White Paper

The White Paper, presented by Minister for Energy Resources C.T.R. Nirmalkumar recently, had blamed the power disruptions, particularly in the city, on the failure to commission new substations of 230-kilo volt (KV) as well as the 110- and 33-KV ones to replace the old substations on the distribution side.

A senior official of the TNPDCL said Chennai city, along with its three neighbouring districts, had been witnessing sustained growth in residential, commercial properties, and industries, increasing the power demand to an all-time high of 5,000 MW.

The official added that while the overall power availability remained adequate, localised interruptions continued to arise due to network constraints, overloading of transformers and feeders during evening peak hours, an ageing infrastructure, inadequate source redundancy, and underground cable failures.

The TNPDCL, along with the Tamil Nadu Transmission Corporation (Tantransco), had proposed to establish a total of 34 substations of various capacities in both the Chennai North Circle, which covers Tiruvallur, and South Circle, which covers Kancheepuram and Chengalpattu. The 34 substations would be established at a total cost of ₹3,214 crore within this financial year.

The official said that a total of 13 substations would be established in the North Circle and 21 in the South Circle.

New substations have been proposed at Ennore, Kanagavallipuram of Tiruvallur, Perambur Barracks Road, Perumcherry, Thirumazhisai Industrial Estate, Egmore, and Medavakkam. In Medavakkam, a 110/11-KV substation would be set up on the multi-storey apartment site at Puravankara, he said.

Residential corridor

The TNPDCL has also set a road map for the burgeoning residential corridor along the GST Road for establishing a 400/230/110-KV substation.

Similarly, substations are proposed to be constructed in Ambattur, Selavoyal, Vanagaram, Nolambur, Thalambur, Irumbuliyur, Manapakkam, Vengal, and Sunnambu Kolathur on the Thoraipakkam-Pallavaram Radial Road.

T. Ashok, a resident of Perumbakkam, said that with the Metro line coming on the Sholinganallur-Medavakkam stretch, power transmission had to be improved to prevent low voltage and power disruptions.

Nagenthran urges Minister to provide textbooks to schools

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

BJP State president Nainar Nagenthran on Wednesday cited a report published in *The Hindu* that pointed out that even a month after classes began, many government schools across the State were yet to receive their textbooks. He criticised Minister for School Education Rajmohan for the delay.

Referring to the report, Mr. Nagenthran said it had come as a shock to parents. The Minister assumed office just about the time when schools reopened after the summer vacation. He should have ensured that textbooks were available for the students, the BJP leader said.

Mr. Nagenthran further criticised Mr. Rajmohan for supporting his Cabinet colleague S. Keerthana over her recent comments. "The [School] Education Department is given to you. The future of children is dependent on your actions." He further requested the Minister to ensure the quality of education and safety of children in government schools.

Apollo Children's Hospital launches centre of excellence in paediatric urological robotic surgery

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Apollo Children's Hospital, on Wednesday, launched a Centre of Excellence in Paediatric Urological Robotic Surgery, marking the completion of more than 400 paediatric robotic procedures.

Speaking at a press conference on the occasion, V. Sripathi, senior consultant paediatric urologist and robotic surgeon, traced the journey of the robotics programme, from skill mastering and performing increasingly complicated procedures on children and infants, to building awareness and finally, training surgeons, and other healthcare institutions all over the country.

Dignitaries at the launch of the centre of excellence at Apollo Children's Hospital in Chennai on Wednesday. M. SRINATH

Noting that the outcomes of their procedures were analysed, Dr. Sripathi said that they had found a 98.4% success rate in an analysis of 200 pyeloplasty procedures performed over a period of 10 years, and the results of this were published.

Overseas collaboration

The aims of the Centre of Excellence included performing advanced urological procedures, adding services for robotic thoracic surgery, gastrointestinal surgery, and hepatobiliary procedures. This apart, overseas collaborations were also being looked into, Dr. Sripathi further said.

Ilankkumaran Kaliamoorthy, chief exective officer, Apollo Hospitals, Chennai Region, highlighted the significance of robotic procedures for children: minimal blood loss, shorter hospital stays, less pain and very small scars, and quicker recovery periods.

Sindoori Reddy, director - strategy, Apollo Hospitals, formally launched the Centre of Excellence.

The event was attended by a number of parents and their children who had undergone robotic procedures.

Sushila Narayanasamy, unit head, Apollo Women's & Children's Hospitals, Chennai, was among those who participated.

2,385 non-bailable warrants executed across Tamil Nadu

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

T.N. Police arrest 949 offenders in a week-long operation held across the State

In a week-long Statewide operation focused on proactive and preventive policing measures, the Tamil Nadu Police arrested 949 offenders and executed 2,385 non-bailable arrest warrants.

Acting on the instructions of Director-General of Police and Head of the Police Force Mahesh Kumar Aggarwal, intensive enforcement drives were launched against History Sheet (HS) rowdy elements, habitual offenders, and absconding accused persons involved in various criminal activities.

In the operation that commenced on July 1, continuous checking and surveillance were undertaken against the suspects. A total of 24,025 HS rowdies and others who had come to the adverse notice of the police were checked, of whom 949 offenders were arrested and sent to jail.

During the special drive on Non-Bailable Warrant (NBW) execution, 2,385 NBWs were executed through sustained enforcement efforts. Intensive efforts were also being undertaken to execute pending NBWs and secure absconding accused.

The sustained enforcement measures and special drives had enhanced coordination among field units, strengthened preventive policing, improved execution of warrants, and facilitated focused action against habitual offenders and trouble-mongers, thereby reinforcing law enforcement and contributing to the maintenance of public order and safety of women and children across the State, an official statement issued by the police headquarters said.

Issue of appointment of V-Cs to State-run varsities heats up

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

T.N. government has sent a proposal to the Governor for the expansion of Search Committees for V-Cs

The issue of appointment of Vice-Chancellors to State-run universities is heating up once again. While Higher Education Minister P. Viswanathan said on Tuesday that the government had sent a proposal to the Governor for the expansion of Search Committees for V-Cs, the Madras High Court has ordered notice to the UGC and the State government on a plea seeking urgent intervention over the failure to appoint V-Cs.

The petition made two pleas: either a direction to the University Grants Commission (UGC) to step in and draw up a scheme for the appointment of V-Cs under Section 12 of the UGC Act, 1956, or the appointment of a high-powered panel headed by a retired Chief Justice of a High Court or a Supreme Court judge to oversee the process of appointment of V-Cs.

The Bench of Chief Justice S.A. Dharmadhikari and Justice Arul Murugan posted the case for next hearing on July 29, along with other cases related to V-C appointments.

"The plea is limited to an interim solution for appointment of V-Cs only, pending the decision by the court on the validity of the Acts," said Senior Advocate N.L. Rajah, counsel for the petitioner, P. Bhaskar.

"Fifteen universities are headless, five more are going to be, soon. This is sure to have affected the students, the standard of education, and the finance flow of these universities," Mr. Rajah said.

The Tamil Nadu situation was quite similar to that of West Bengal, where a stand-off between the Governor and the State government over V-C appointments had led the Supreme Court to appoint a Search-cum-Selection Committee, headed by former Chief Justice of India U.U. Lalit, in 2024 to oversee the process, the petition submitted.

Meanwhile, the Higher Education Minister's statement on expansion of Search Committees has raised hopes of a truce between the Lok Bhavan and Fort St. George. In October 2024, the then Governor, R.N. Ravi, had directed the State government to notify a search committee with four members, including a UGC Chairperson's nominee, for the appointment of a V-C to the Tamil Nadu Physical Education and Sports University. The State government objected to this stand, setting off a chain of events and court cases leading to the present stalemate.

In the past couple of weeks, at least two review meetings of the Higher Education Department were chaired by Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay, where issues pertaining to the stalemate over V-C appointments were discussed as priority. It is reliably learnt that the proposal for expansion of Search Committees was sent to the Law Department for clarification. The ball, now, is in the Governor's court.

A total of 139 entries receive awards in *The Hindu* Margazhi Competition 2025

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The results of *The Hindu* Margazhi Competition 2025 are out and the list of winners in both Hindustani and Carnatic styles is now available on its website.

A total of 139 prizes, including 43 first prizes, 43 second prizes, and 27 third prizes, have been awarded by the panel of judges. There are also special mention certificates for children who did well and earned appreciation from the vidwans and vidushis who marked their performances.

A total of 1,063 video entries were received from Carnatic and Hindustani music enthusiasts for *The Hindu* Margazhi Music Contest that ended mid-January 2026.

The entries were sorted and sent to the judges in March 2026, who watched the presentations to check if the raga, krithi, and thala were perfect and took tough decisions to finalise the marks.

Violin vidushis and composers LN Sisters - M. Lalitha and M. Nandini - who judged entries in the instrumental category, said: "Over the years, we have been seeing more and more dedicated students participating in this competition. We are able to see that they are also very knowledgeable. This is a very unique platform for students of music for this category to showcase their talent and hard work and get recognition from *The Hindu*. We wish the participants all the very best to keep the tradition alive and take it forward."

Vocalist Varalakshmi Anandkumar, senior disciple of late vidwan D.K. Jayaraman, said: "It has been a privilege to judge the Margazhi competitions of *The Hindu* for the past several years and I have never ceased to be amazed by the wealth of talent exhibited by the contestants. In fact, judging these competitions is both an aural delight and an agonising dilemma, as each singer demonstrates their talent in different dimensions. To choose the best among these formidable line-ups often calls for multiple listening sessions. It is amazing to listen to a girl or boy, barely out of the teens, sing a Dhanyasi or Thodi with the kind of understanding that one could gain only with years of singing and listening. In the same way, it is amazing that brilliant singers emerge from areas that are seldom heard of, in Kerala, Andhra, Karnataka, and even in the U.S. Hats off to *The Hindu* for promoting solid musical values through the Margazhi Music Competitions."

Hindustani guru and vocalist Lalita Sharma, who trained under Pandit Jasraj, said: "I am very happy to see more number of singers and instrumentalists participating in this competition every year. I see that over one-third of the participants are good and have a sound base in music. It is very promising to see such youngsters, who are singing with so much awareness."

Two new judges

The panel of judges this time had two new faces – mridangam vidwan Sridharan Sankaran, who started learning mridangam from Thiruvarur S. Janakiraman in the Palani Subramanya Pillai lineage and received advanced training from Mannargudi Easwaran, and Carnatic vocalist Sajeev Chandramana, who started learning music at the age of four and underwent advanced training under Varkala C.S. Jayaraman.

Both musicians said that they had enjoyed watching the entries and giving marks. They were also fascinated by how young children had patiently learnt to perform and sent in their entries.

For the full list of winners, click on newsth.live/winnerslist.

CINEMA ❖ ARTS ❖ EVENTS

MUSIC DANCE DRAMA

The Music Academy Madras
Mid Year Dance Festival 2026 Today: At the Kasturi Srinivasan Hall: From 6.00 p.m. to 7.15 p.m. - Bharatanatyam recital by P Sundaresan – From 7.30 p.m. to 8.45 p.m. - Kuchipudi recital by Pranamya Suri – Programme under the endowment by the family of late Shri M N Subramaniam

Kedaram (R) 9884066767
Today 9.7.26 6.15 p.m. @ Raghasudha Hall Ch-4 Rithvik Raja - Vocal, SaiRakshith - Violin, N.C. Bharadwaj -Mrudangam, Dr. S. Karthick - Ghatam. All are welcome.

Narada Gana Sabha Trust, Ph: 24993201
Today Main Hall (Sathguru Gnanananda Hall)- 6.30 pm - Vaggeyakara Bharatham - Musician - Baby Sreeram. Dancer - Roja Kannan and Disciples (Endowment by Nrithyopasana) All are welcome.

Pushpanjali Cultural Trust
Today 5.30 p.m. at R.K Swamy auditorium Mylapore Bharathanatyam by students of Tamil Isai Kalloori Guru Dr. Himaja Athulkumar 7 p.m. Bharathanatyam by Ms. SREE VIHANIKA (Dis.of Smt Kala Srinivasan)

The Mylapore Fine Arts Club(Regd.) Phone 24997755/42607755
22nd Year Drama Festival Today 6.45 P.M. Theatre Marina presents ANNIYAL by Prasanna & R.Giridharan. All are Welcome

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INBRIEF

Greater Chennai Police hold drug awareness programme

The Greater Chennai Police, in association with Easwari Engineering College, organised a 'Drug Free Tamil Nadu-2026' awareness programme at the college in Ramapuram on Wednesday. Greater Chennai Police Commissioner A. Amalraj participated in the event and urged students to stay away from drugs and adopt healthy habits during their college years. He highlighted the physical, mental, and social consequences of substance abuse. As part of the programme, students took the "I am Against Drugs" pledge. The Commissioner also launched the "I am Against Drugs" signature and selfie awareness campaign to reinforce the anti-drug message.

Man found hacked to death inside math in Vyasarpadi

A 20-year-old man was found hacked to death inside a math at Samiyar Thottam in Vyasarpadi in the early hours of Wednesday. The police launched an investigation to ascertain the motive and identify those involved. The deceased was identified as Naresh, 20. According to the Vyasarpadi police, he was found lying in a pool of blood with severe injuries and his face mutilated. The murder is suspected to have taken place around 3 a.m. The police are analysing CCTV camera footage from the area to trace the assailants.

CMDA plans to shelve projects as it grapples with outstanding liabilities up to ₹3,500 cr.

The liabilities are mainly due to the construction work, land acquisition, and the *Vada Chennai Valarchi Thittam*, which constitutes ₹1,000 crore. A source says that CMDA took up a lot of works without realising the financial burden and cannot take up new works in the present financial position

CITY MATTERS

R. Aishwaryaa
CHENNAI

The Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) is mulling cancellation of certain infrastructure projects, including the Global Sports City plan, beachfront development, and waterfront restoration plans, as it grapples with outstanding liabilities of roughly ₹3,500 crore.

The liabilities are mainly due to the construction work, land acquisition amounting to ₹1,500 crore, and the *Vada Chennai Valarchi Thittam*, which constitutes ₹1,000 crore.

This proposal to cancel the projects will take shape only after the State government takes a call, according to a source.

"Whichever project has not yet been taken up, CMDA is in the process of cancelling it. Once the proposal [for cancellation] is approved [by the State], the CMDA will formally announce the cancellations," the source said.

The Global Sports City project, for which former Chief Minister M.K. Stalin had laid the foundation stone in February 2026, will be handed over to the Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu, the source added.

It was planned across a 127-acre site near Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology at an estimated cost of ₹261 crore. This project took shape in November 2024, after the then Deputy Chief Minister and Sports Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin held a meeting with officials of various departments, including Tamil Nadu Sports Development Authority, Water Resources Department, Tamil Nadu Housing Board, and CMDA.

Among other projects proposed to be dropped are beach-front development works, covering the stretches from Marina to Besant Nagar, Elliot's Beach to Neelankarai, Neelankarai to Akkarai, Akkarai to Kanathur and Kanathur to Kovalam, including Marina Beach, Broken Bridge, Elliot's Beach, Thiruvanmiyur, Neelankarai, Akkarai, Uthandi, Muttukadu, and Kovalam.

Facing uncertainty: A concept image of the Global Sports City, one of the projects the CMDA plans to shelve.

Marina corridor

Notably, in April 2025, the CMDA unveiled the ₹18.45-crore Marina Heritage Corridor Development Project, as part of this, spanning 2.5-km from Lighthouse to Island Grounds, with plans for heritage-style bus stops, viewing decks, cycle tracks, police booths and improved pedestrian infrastructure, to enhance the Marina promenade, while preserving its historic character.

In 2024, the CMDA prepared detailed project reports for the rejuvenation of 10 lakes across the Chennai Metropolitan Area with an estimated ₹100-crore State allocation. The proposed works include lakefront promenades, walking tracks, viewing decks, ecological restoration, wetland restoration, birdwatching areas, and recreational facilities at Velachery, Retteri, Mudichur, Puzhal, Adambakkam, Sembakkam, Perumbakkam, Kolathur, Madambakkam, and Ayanambakkam lakes, according to the CMDA.

"The CMDA does not have funds to go ahead with these projects. The authority is not the custodian [of the waterbodies]. The waterbodies belong either to the WRD or the respective local body," the source said.

The operation and maintenance of completed projects, including the M.S. Swaminathan Wetland Eco Park at Porur and the air-conditioned bus stand at Retteri Junction, Kolathur, will be handed over to the Greater Chennai Corporation, and that is the model to be followed for the other finished or nearly finished works by CMDA, the source added.

"CMDA took up a lot of works without realising the financial burden. CMDA has outstanding liabilities of around ₹3,500 crore and cannot take up new works in the present financial position," the source said.

Further, the Authority is exploring alternative funding options, including external borrowings for future projects. "Typically, planning authorities in cities such as Mumbai and Hyderabad receive government support. CMDA will also require similar support," the source said. Local bodies have other revenue generation modules such as ticketing few projects, municipal bonds etc., but that is not the same for CMDA, the source added.

Land pooling projects

The proposed land pooling schemes at Thirumazhisai and Madambakkam have also been delayed. According to the source, the Madambakkam scheme is pending owing to litigation challenging the Land Pooling Act, while the Thirumazhisai project is facing financial constraints.

Under the model, 60% of the developed land is returned to landowners, while CMDA retains 40% for roads, parks, open space reservation, water supply infrastructure, and commercial development, the source added.

Man with brain lymphoma recovers after cell therapy

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

A 49-year-old patient who was diagnosed with a rare life-threatening form of brain lymphoma was successfully treated using advanced and indigenous cell therapy at a private hospital in Chennai.

V. Arun Ramanan, Clinical Lead and Senior Consultant (Medical Oncology), Gleneagles Hospital Chennai, on Wednesday, said that before a few months, the patient Karnan Madhusudhanan was admitted to the hospital with complaints of persistent headache, giddiness, difficulties in walking and using his left arm. He was diagnosed with a life-threatening brain cancer called primary central nervous system lymphoma.

Treatment involved collecting the patient's immune cells and infusing these back into the body as CAR-T cells

The patient, despite being given chemotherapy and other first-line treatments, could not neutralise the lymphoma. The hospital proposed to treat him with NexCAR19 (talicabtagene autoleucel), an indigenous CAR-T cell therapy. This involved collecting the patient's immune cells through a specialised procedure called leukapheresis and infusing these back into the body as CAR-T cells. The procedure helped the cells to modify, recognise, and attack the cancer cells.

Following the treatment, the patient had developed several serious health complications associated with the CAR-T cell therapy, but the dedicated multidisciplinary team of medical specialists comprising medical oncology, haematology, infectious diseases, intensive care and the nursing team, helped in providing the necessary recovery to the patient.

Today, the patient from Andhra Pradesh has recovered fully and is set to lead a normal life, Dr. Arun said.

S. Niranjani, Chief Operating Officer and Hospital Head of Gleneagles Hospital and R.Y. Bharath Kanth Reddy, Chief Executive Officer, Chennai and Hyderabad clusters, also spoke on the occasion.

There is a need to build a national front against BJP: VCK chief

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) founder and Chidambaram MP Thol. Thirumavalavan has been facing severe criticism on social media for his comments that his party is yet to formalise an alliance with the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam and that it would continue to have a friendly relationship with the DMK, which many have observed as "contradictory and confusing".

On Wednesday, Mr. Thirumavalavan said that he was expressing his point of view from the perspective of the national politics and the need to form a national anti-BJP front.

The barrage of comments over his views resulted in the party publishing a clarification on its official page on X.

The clarification from the party said, "Mr. Thirumavalavan was referring to past events and past positions. However, as usual, certain media outlets have deliberately twisted his remarks and portrayed them as though they represent his current position."

"Just because DMK inducted an office-bearer of the VCK into their party, I didn't oppose them. There is a necessity to build a national anti-BJP front – both the TVK and DMK should be a part of it. This is my point of view...but many would say that I am confusing everyone. We will see if DMK can be a part of the INDIA bloc," Mr. Thirumavalavan said.

Vijay inspects hospital for women and children in city

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay, on Wednesday, paid a surprise visit to the Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (IOG) and Government Hospital for Women and Children at Egmore in the city.

At the century-old institute, Mr. Vijay visited the ward and the intensive care unit and enquired about the health of mothers undergoing treatment. He also sought feedback from them on the treatment being provided and the facilities available there. Mr. Vijay held a few newborns in his arms.

Accompanied by Minister for Health, Medical Education and Family Welfare K.G. Arunraj and Health Secretary Darez Ahamed, the Chief Minister enquired about the medical services being provided at the hospital.

Warmth and care: Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay holds a newborn at the Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Government Hospital for Women and Children at Egmore on Wednesday.

Speaking to reporters later, Dr. Arunraj said the Chief Minister had directed officials to chalk out a plan to develop the hospital into an integrated facility with all amenities. He acknowledged that complaints had been received about staff demanding bribes to show newborns to their families after delivery and said strict instructions had been issued to dismiss those found guilty of such acts. The public can lodge complaints through the 104 round-the-clock health helpline, he said.

Timings
CHENNAI

THURSDAY, JUL. 09			
RISE	05:49	SET	18:40
RISE	00:30	SET	13:28
FRIDAY, JUL. 10			
RISE	05:49	SET	18:40
RISE	01:18	SET	14:29
SATURDAY, JUL. 11			
RISE	05:50	SET	18:40
RISE	02:11	SET	15:35

Chennai Weather	max	min
Tiruvallur	36	25
Chennai Airport	39	30
Chennai City	39	30

Chennai Airport Today
39°C The weather will be mostly dry. Day will be hot and uneasy. Night also will be uneasy.

Chennai Airport Tomorrow
38°C Morning will be comfortable. Day will be slightly hot and uneasy. Night also will be uneasy. Mostly dry weather to prevail.

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THE HINDU
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Teachers' association demands relaxation of TET qualifying marks

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu Graduate Teachers Federation (TNGTF) has urged the School Education Department to relax qualification marks by another 5% in the special Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) exam.

Special marks

In a petition to the department, the federation said, "Special marks should be given in the examination according to the teachers' work experience and higher educational qualifications."

In September 2025, the Supreme Court ruled that all teachers, except those with less than five years of service, must clear TET to continue in their jobs, with no exceptions even for promotions. In May 2026, the apex court had extended the timeline for acquiring TET qualification by a year.

Change in pattern

Pointing out that over 60% of the questions were asked from Classes IX, X, XI, and XII syllabi in the recently held exam, the federation said that it had caused distress to the teachers. "In the future, the question paper design should be changed so that more questions are asked from the subject related to teachers," said P. Patrick Raymond, general secretary, TNGTF.

They also urged the government to follow Kerala's model, where teachers who have completed NET, SET, and M. Phil, have been exempted from the qualifying examination.

FMG wing raises concern over examination results as only 12.78% of candidates clear it

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu Medical Students Association - Foreign Medical Graduates (TNMSA FMG) wing has expressed serious concern over the outcome of the Foreign Medical Graduate Examination (FMGE) June 2026, in which only 12.78% of the candidates who appeared were declared successful.

In a statement issued, the wing's State secretary S. Vasanth Philip Abishak said the exam was, by all accounts of the candidates, an exceptionally difficult and mentally exhausting one. According to students who appeared for the test, Paper 1 was relatively balanced and manageable.

However, Paper 2 was significantly more challenging, with a large number of clinical scenario-based questions, image-based questions, and video-based questions introduced for the first time. This had a major impact on time management during the examination.

Tough ask: The wing's State secretary said that the examination was, by all accounts of the candidates, an exceptionally difficult and mentally exhausting one. REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE

The National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS) results, published on July 7, reflect the severity of this difficulty, he said. Out of 37,428 registered candidates, 36,280 appeared for the examination. Of these, only 4,635 candidates passed, while 31,645 did not qualify. This relates to a pass percentage of only 12.78%, meaning that only one in eight candidates who appeared for the examination managed to clear it.

One of the concerns is that a large number of candidates fell just short of the qualifying mark. The pass mark for FMGE is 150. As per the available statistics, 327 candidates scored exactly 149, missing qualification by one mark. A total of 1,022 candidates scored between 147 and 149, while 4,157 candidates scored between 140 and 149. In addition, 9,905 candidates scored between 130 and 149, he said.

When compared to previous sessions, the decline in performance is even more alarming. The FMGE pass percentage stood at 18.6% in June 2025 and 23.9% in December 2025, the association said.

In light of these developments, the TNMSA FMG wing placed certain demands to NBEMS and the National Medical Commission. It called for a comprehensive review of FMGE June 2026. NBEMS must conduct a transparent and detailed review of the exam, particularly examining whether the length of questions, clinical complexity, image/video-based format, and the time allotted were appropriate to fairly assess the actual medical knowledge and competence of candidates. It also called for reframing of the examination pattern.

Prior notice must be issued before introducing new examination formats, the association said. It also urged the bodies to consider reduction of the passing mark for FMGE June 2026 as a one-time exception, Dr. Abishak said.

Published by Nirmala Lakshman at Kasturi Buildings, 859-860, Anna Salai, Chennai 600002 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT.LTD. and Printed by Ra Babu Vijay at THG PUBLISHING PVT.LTD. Plot B-6 & B-7, CMDA Industrial Complex, Maraimalai Nagar, Chengalpattu Taluk, Chengalpattu Dist., Pin 603209. Editor: Suresh Nambath Chandrasekar (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act).
ISSN 0971 - 751X

From Page One

Tiruvallur gas leak: officials seal unit after removal of ammonia

All the supporting departments worked in tandem, she added.

The sealing was done by a team of officials led by Revenue Division Officer S. Ravichandran, who said that the gate of the unit would be locked on Thursday, after the compound was cleared of waste.

While eight workers were still undergoing treatment in hospitals, the district administration had sent 170 workers, who were not affected by the leak back to their homes in Odisha, Assam, and Jharkhand.

"As per the government's instructions, we booked tickets and sent them along with officials from their respective districts. The salaries of the workers up to June 18 have also been sent to their bank accounts. The workers have been connected with manpower agencies in case they want to return to work in the district," Mr. Ravichandran added.

620 tonnes of seafood seized

Meanwhile, Central Food Safety officials seized and moved around 620 tonnes of frozen cuttle fish, prawns, squid, and tuna to two private cold storage units last week.

They also lifted samples of the seafood. Around 80 tonnes of the seafood that were contaminated were moved to a private methane plant, where they were ground and converted to sustainable energy.

T.N. moves top court over BC status of converts to Islam

State challenges HC order declaring unconstitutional a G.O. that a convert to Islam from the BCs, MBCs, Denotified Communities or SCs should be treated as BC (Muslim) for reservation benefit

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Tamil Nadu government has appealed against a Madras High Court verdict that a convert to Islam cannot claim the status of Backward Class (BC) Muslim.

The High Court had declared unconstitutional a 2024 Government Order allowing converts to claim BC status.

The court was hearing the petition filed in 2022 by a man from Thoothukudi district, who had embraced Islam and changed his name. He was born to Hindu parents. The certificate issued by the Sunnath Jamath, Kayathar, in 2015 had stated that the petitioner had embraced Islam.

He had applied for a community certificate certifying him as 'Muslim Lebbai', a faith he claimed to follow. However, the Kayathar Tahsildar rejected his application. Challenging it, he had moved the court.

The special leave petition was filed by the Secretary to the State of Tamil Nadu in the Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, the 2024 G.O. notified that a convert to Islam from the Backward Classes, Most Backward Classes, Denotified Communities or Scheduled Castes ought to be treated as BC (Muslim) for obtaining the benefit of reservation. The High Court, however, held that a Hindu, on conversion to Islam, did not carry forward the benefits of the Hindu caste or sub-caste. The convert's status in Islam was not decided by the caste he was part of prior to the conversion, it said.

The court pointed out that Christian missionaries and Islamic preachers had maintained that their religions offered social equality, unlike Hinduism, which had a caste hierarchy.

"Having taken such a stand for effecting conversions, it is disingenuous to claim that there is hierarchy in Islam also. In our respectful view, categorising certain sects as Backward and the remaining as Forward is antithetical to Quranic injunctions. Islam seeks to establish an egalitarian society. Everyone is equal in the eye of God. There is no social hierarchy," the court had said.

The special leave petition was filed by the Secretary to the State of Tamil Nadu in the Supreme Court.

The appeal has arraigned the petitioner in the High Court, Sameer Ahamed N., the Collector, the Revenue Divisional Officer, and the Tahsildar as respondents, who had already filed caveats before the top court.

Panel seeks more time for consultations on anti-honour killing law

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Commission led by retired High Court judge K.N. Basha, which had been tasked by the State government with recommending legislation to prevent caste-based crimes committed in the name of honour, has sought more time to complete its consultations, Minister for Social Justice Vanni Arasu said on Wednesday.

Speaking to reporters at the Secretariat after participating in a review meeting of the Social Justice Department, chaired by Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay, the Minister said, "The Justice Basha Commission is still receiving petitions and representations from victims through social activists. It has also sought the views of political parties. So far, the VCK and the CPI(M) have submitted representations to the Commission. We have apprised the Chief Minister in this regard. As the consultative process is still going on, Justice Basha has sought more time," he said.

The Social Justice Department had sought an additional budgetary allocation from the Chief Minister. The allocation for the department would see a substantial increase in this year's Budget, he said, adding that the State government was taking measures to provide house-site *pattas* to every eligible SC/ST family, and that the Chief Minister would make an announcement in this regard soon.

Further, the Minister said Social Justice Hostels across the State would be upgraded with state-of-the-art facilities, including modern libraries. He said the number of seats under the Chief Minister's Overseas Scholarship Scheme for studying abroad would be increased, as the Chief Minister had given his approval for the move.

State government to take legal action over deemed university status for three private medical colleges

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

With three private medical colleges obtaining 'deemed to be university' status, Tamil Nadu will lose 461 medical seats from the State quota, Health Minister K.G. Arunraj said on Wednesday. He added that the State government was exploring legal action, and would file a writ petition soon.

Two days ago, the State government came to know from the website of the National Medical Commission that Dhanalakshmi Srinivasan Institute of Medical Sciences and Hospital, Srinivasan Medical College and Hospital, and St. Peter's Medical College had been granted deemed university status, he said.

As a result, the State will lose 461 seats from its pool, Dr. Arunraj said, adding: "These institutions will no longer be required to follow the reservation policy, 7.5% horizontal reservation for government school students, or adhere to the fee structure prescribed by the State government. Instead, they could fill MBBS and BDS seats independently." Additionally, 35 seats under the 7.5% quota would be lost, he said.

Health Minister K.G. Arunraj at the inauguration of the NalamAI WhatsApp chatbot service. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

The State government will also take up the issue with the Centre to make a no-objection certificate (NOC) from the State government mandatory for private medical colleges to obtain deemed university status, he said.

"Dhanalakshmi Srinivasan Medical College and Srinivasan Medical College are owned by DMK MLA Kathiravan. As they fall under the Tamil Nadu Private University category, they did not apply for NOC with the Tamil Nadu Dr. MGR Medical University, and applied directly to the University Grants Commission," he told reporters after inaugurating facilities at Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital.

The deemed university status had been granted to St. Peter's Medical College, Hosur, subject to an appeal filed by the Government of Tamil Nadu, he said. Karpaga Vinayaga Medical College had also applied for the status, he added.

Explaining the process, the Minister said private institutions seeking deemed university status must first obtain an NOC from their affiliated university. The affiliated university is required to issue the NOC within 60 days, failing which it shall be deemed to have been granted as per UGC rules.

In June 2023, the Karpaga Vinayaga institution, which has an engineering college and a medical college, had applied to Anna University and Tamil Nadu Dr. MGR Medical University for an NOC. However, no action was taken for 60 days. The NOC was issued in September 2023 during the previous regime, and the same was revoked two months later. The institution approached the High Court, and in April 2025, the court ruled that as the NOC was not issued within 60 days, it was deemed to have been issued as per UGC rules. No appeal was filed against the order by the previous government, he said.

The Minister also launched NalamAI, a WhatsApp chatbot service. The service, available on 96192 22999, has been introduced in 22 districts, where the public can generate the outpatient slips without having to wait in queues.

T.N. govt. asks State Election Commissioner to step down

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay-led government has asked State Election Commissioner B. Jothi Nirmalasamy, a retired IAS officer, to step down from her post.

Sources confirmed the development to *The Hindu*. The State Election Commission is a constitutional and autonomous body responsible for conducting free and fair elections to local self-governments.

Ms. Nirmalasamy, also the Chairperson of the Tamil Nadu Delimitation Commission, assumed office as the State Election Commissioner in March 2024 for a five-year term. Her tenure ends in May 2029.

The tenure of the rural local bodies in 28 districts ended on January 25, 2025, while that of the local bodies in nine other districts will end on October 19 this year. The tenure of urban local bodies in the State will end on March 1, 2027. The State Election Commission is taking steps to conduct elections to the local bodies after the completion of the ward delimitation exercise.

As the Chairperson of the Tamil Nadu Delimitation Commission, she has been overseeing the sanctioning and mapping of wards. She also oversaw the indirect byelections to several urban local bodies following the resignation of the Mayors of a few Corporations.

The development comes on the heels of the chairpersons and members of various statutory bodies and other agencies, who were appointed during the previous DMK regime, stepping down from their posts.

What the rules say

However, according to Article 243K of the Constitution, the State Election Commissioner is appointed by the Governor, and shall not be removed from office except in the like manner and on the like grounds as a Judge of a High Court. Further, the conditions of service shall not be varied to the State Election Commissioner's disadvantage after appointment, subject to the provisions of any law made by the State legislature.

Ms. Nirmalasamy is yet to decide on the matter.

HC grants anticipatory bail to Senthilbalaji, his brother in TVK MLA bribery case

Mohamed Imranullah S.
CHENNAI

The Madras High Court on Wednesday granted anticipatory bail to former DMK Minister V. Senthilbalaji and his brother R.V. Ashok Kumar in a case related to TVK MLA N. Elaiyaraja having reportedly been offered a bribe of ₹35 crore.

Justice G.K. Ilanthiraiyan granted the relief on the condition that both petitioners must appear before the investigating officer twice a day until further orders, and cooperate with the probe. The orders were passed after hearing senior counsel N.R. Elango and P. Kumaresan, appearing for the petitioners, and Government Counsel (criminal side) R. John Sathyan, appearing for the prosecution.

In his submissions, Mr. Elango alleged that the case had been filed with a political motive, and that the averments in the complaint regarding an attempt to topple the government were the perceptions of the TVK MLA, and nothing more. He said Assembly Speaker J.C.D. Prabhakar was elected unanimously,

V. Senthilbalaji

and there was no reason to bring any resolution against him as mentioned in the complaint.

It was also brought to the notice of the court that no monetary transaction had taken place, and that the complaint only mentions an offer of ₹35 crore having been made. Mr. Elango concluded his arguments by stating that the petitioners were willing to cooperate with the investigation and be available for questioning as and when the police summons them.

On the other hand, Mr. Sathyan told the court that it was a serious case of an attempt having been made "to destabilise the government". He said the investigation was at a nascent stage, but the probe conducted so far by the Greater Chennai police had revealed that the complainant was only one among the 10 TVK MLAs whom the accused had sought to "poach".

Both of them must appear before the investigating officer twice a day until further orders

He said some of the accused had stayed in a hotel at Guindy in Chennai to execute the crime, and their presence had been confirmed through network tower locations. He said the investigation had led the police team to Bengaluru, where some "startling revelations" had been made, and much more was to be unearthed. "It seems Hawala money is involved in this case," the Government Counsel said.

Opposing the grant of bail to the petitioners, he said the investigating team was collecting materials regarding other MLAs who had been lured, and said the middlemen appeared to have been offered a brokerage of ₹5 crore for executing the deal.

Commercial Taxes Dept. to launch virtual hearings for taxpayers

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Commercial Taxes Department will introduce virtual personal hearings for taxpayers at its 15 appellate offices from Thursday. It has also introduced a computer-based random allocation system for GST refund applications to improve transparency and speed up processing.

Minister for Commercial Taxes and Registration D. Logesh Tamilselvan on Wednesday chaired a review meeting with officials of the Commercial Taxes Department on Goods and Services Tax (GST) and non-GST collections, and the functioning of the intelligence, audit, and legal wings.

There are 338 assessment circles in the Commercial Taxes Department across the State, with 12.4 lakh registered traders under the GST Act. If any discrepancies are found in the GST returns filed by taxpayers, notices are issued to them after scrutiny, followed by a personal hearing notice.

Under the current system, taxpayers are required to appear in person before the jurisdictional assessing officer to provide an explanation. Notices and personal hearings have been issued in 58,000 cases so far. To simplify the process and safeguard the interests of traders, guidelines have been issued for conducting personal hearings virtually to ensure transparency and fairness, an official release said.

The virtual hearing facility will particularly benefit traders who are unable to appear in person, including those located in remote areas, by enabling them to participate in proceedings within the stipulated time. The virtual hearing system will be implemented in 15 appellate offices from July 9, the release said.

To ensure transparency and eliminate bottlenecks, guidelines have been issued to disburse GST refunds promptly. During the previous financial year, the department disbursed around ₹5,000 crore in refunds, the majority of which related to unutilised Input Tax Credit on exports. Such refund applications will now be allocated through a computer-based system to streamline the refund process, it added.

All private schools in T.N. must display fee structure on notice boards, websites: Madras HC

Mohamed Imranullah S.
CHENNAI

The Madras High Court on Wednesday invoked its extraordinary jurisdiction under Article 226 (power to issue writs) of the Constitution and ordered that all private schools in Tamil Nadu must display their fee structure on their notice boards and websites.

Justice M. Dhandapani ordered that the Director of Private Schools must ensure that the fee structure, fixed for individual schools by the government-appointed fee determination committee, is updated by the private schools periodically on their notice boards and websites.

The judge made it clear that all schools that fall under the Tamil Nadu Private Schools (Regulation) Act, 2019, must follow the directions and display not only the fees fixed by the committee, but also other fees approved by the competent authority.

The directions were issued while disposing of a writ petition filed by All India Private Educational Institutions Association, represented by its general

The court said the Director of Private Schools should ensure that the schools update their fee structure periodically.

secretary K. Palaniappan of Chennai, which had challenged a circular issued by the Director of Private Schools on June 1, 2026.

The circular mandating the display of the fee structure on school notice boards had been issued by the Director on the basis of an order passed by the Tamil Nadu State Information Commission (TNSIC) on May 25, 2026, while disposing of a plea under the Right to Information Act.

Assailing the TNSIC's order and the circular on various grounds, the association had contended that such directions had been issued without analysing whether the RTI Act would apply to private unaided educational institutions, and whether those institutions would fall under the definition of the term 'public authority'.

The judge agreed with the association that private educational institutions, which were neither substantially financed nor controlled by the State/Centre, would not fall under the ambit of 'public authority' and therefore, the direction issued by the TNSIC would not stand the test of legal scrutiny.

Nevertheless, pointing out that private schools fall within the regulatory mechanism of the law passed by the State legislature to govern them, the judge held that the schools were bound to make their fee structure public, and that the High Court could issue such a direction by exercising its extraordinary jurisdiction.

Parents looking for a good choice of school for their children must be able to know about the fee collected by individual schools so that they could make an informed choice, Justice Dhandapani added.

INBRIEF

Six missing A.P. fishermen feared dead; search called off

The six fishermen who went missing after their boat capsized off Visakhapatnam on Saturday are feared dead. The multi-agency search launched to trace them was called off on Wednesday. State Fisheries Minister Kollu Ravindra said that despite a four-day search, no trace of the crew or boat wreckage could be found. The Andhra Pradesh government has announced an ex gratia of ₹10 lakh each for the families (in photo) of the fishermen, says a *PTI* report.

Two arrested for raping woman in Secunderabad

Two persons have been taken into custody for allegedly raping a 40-year-old woman in Secunderabad on Tuesday. The woman had come to Hyderabad to attend a reality show, but could not locate the organisers' office. One of the accused approached her and offered to take her to the office. He then took her to a building in Secunderabad and raped her. Another man who arrived later also allegedly raped her. They fled after the woman raised an alarm, the police said.

Student dies in Bengaluru school, family blames teacher

A 12-year-old Class six student collapsed and died at a private residential school in north Bengaluru on Wednesday. The boy was studying at the Sterling English Residential School in Kadayarappanahalli. His uncle alleged the boy was beaten by a physical education teacher and made to jog three rounds on the ground. "In the last round, he collapsed and died. They are saying it was a cardiac arrest. The school staff are hiding something," he added.

Heavy rain hampers search for the missing in Wayanad

Five yet to be traced after the debris slip; Kerala CM announces ex gratia of ₹5 lakh to families of 3 killed; State to bear treatment cost of the injured; two of the injured are in a critical condition

The Hindu Bureau
KOZHIKODE

The search for five people missing after a debris slip at the under-construction Wayanad tunnel road project site at Kalladi, near Meppadi, continued for the second day on Wednesday, with no breakthrough till late in the evening.

The debris slip on Tuesday claimed three lives and left 10 injured.

Heavy rain and inclement weather hampered the rescue efforts, slowing the removal of debris and posing challenges to rescuers.

Speaking to reporters after a review meeting at Kalpetta, Chief Minister V.D. Satheesan said the government's priority was to trace the missing people.

"The search in Zone I and Zone II has been completed, but the missing people could not be located. The search operation has now been extended to Zone III and will continue through the night. It is expected to be completed by Thursday morning. If required, a search will also be carried out in the river on Thursday morning," he said.

Three discharged

The Chief Minister said that of the 10 injured, three had been admitted to the intensive care unit of a private hospital, with two in a serious condition. Four others are being treated at a hospital, while the remaining three have been discharged.

He announced an ex gratia of ₹5 lakh to the families of those killed in the tragedy. The government will bear the treatment cost of the injured.

Stating that the debris slip had affected only a limited area, he said people living in vulnerable locations had been shifted to safer places. More people would be evacuated, if necessary, he said.

The rescue operation, led by a 60-member National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) with support from the police, Fire and Rescue Services personnel, and volunteers, continued with the aid of heavy earthmoving machinery to clear the massive mound of debris. Cadaver dogs were also deployed to help locate those believed to be trapped under the debris.

Mr. Satheesan said the bodies of the three persons who died in the debris slip would be taken to their native places.

Officials said the body of Anmol, a native of Jharkhand, was flown to Ranchi on an IndiGo flight. They said the remaining bodies would also be transported to their native places, subject to the availability of flights.

Centre offers help

Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke to Mr. Satheesan on Wednesday and extended all support from the Centre for the rescue and rehabilitation efforts.

A statement issued by the office of the Chief Minister said Mr. Shah held a telephonic conversation with the Chief Minister.

Meanwhile, in view of the India Meteorological Department issuing a red alert for extremely heavy rainfall in Wayanad, Collector D.R. Meghashree has declared a holiday for all educational institutions in the district on Thursday.

However, the holiday will not apply to residential schools and residential colleges.

A search team at the site of the debris slip at the under-construction tunnel project near Meppadi in Wayanad district. PTI

Will conduct detailed probe, says Satheesan

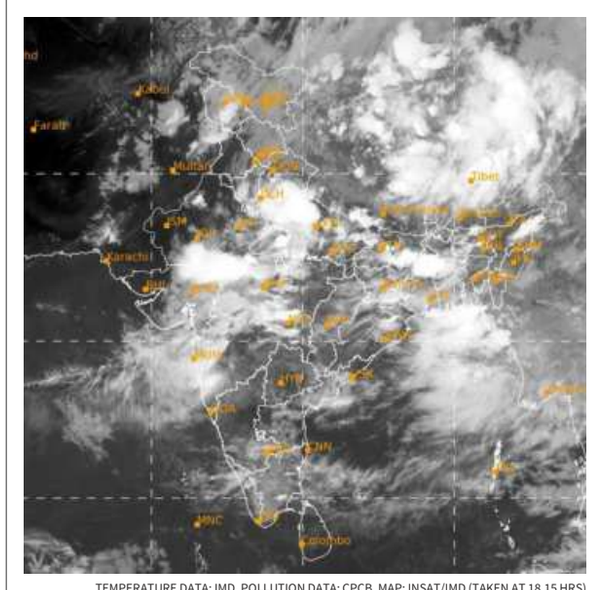
The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala Cabinet on Wednesday decided to conduct a detailed investigation into the reasons that led to the debris slip at the construction area of the Meppadi-Kallady tunnel in Wayanad.

Chief Minister V.D. Satheesan said, "The Union government had accorded environmental clearance after stipulating around 50 conditions regarding the construction activities. The probe will look into whether the company implementing the project has followed these. The work on the project will be restarted only after this."

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.15 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Gujarat, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Sikkim, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Konkan & Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala and Mahe

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	88.1	29.1	26.0	Kurnool	—	36.5	27.4
Ahmedabad	20.9	33.5	27.1	Lucknow	—	33.6	27.4
Aizawl	40	26.0	19.0	Madurai	—	38.5	26.5
Bengaluru	—	28.1	21.3	Mangaluru	—	30.3	23.7
Bhopal	34.6	30.4	24.2	Mumbai	125	29.3	24.0
Bhubaneswar	—	34.0	27.2	Mysuru	—	28.6	20.2
Chandigarh	0.4	32.0	25.6	New Delhi	14.2	30.8	25.4
Chennai	—	39.2	29.6	Patna	—	35.6	27.9
Coimbatore	—	28.8	22.5	Port Blair	—	31.0	26.4
Dehradun	9.2	28.8	24.2	Prayagraj	1.9	34.4	27.0
Gangtok	22.6	21.2	18.4	Puducherry	—	38.2	28.6
Goa	11	32.0	25.5	Pune	94.4	24.2	21.7
Guwahati	7.4	33.6	26.6	Raipur	—	32.0	25.8
Hubballi	—	27.0	22.0	Ranchi	—	29.1	23.0
Hyderabad	4.5	33.1	25.0	Shillong	11	23.0	17.5
Imphal	—	28.3	25.3	Shimla	—	24.1	21.0
Jaipur	0.4	33.1	26.4	Srinagar	—	33.2	19.6
Kochi	17	29.8	23.2	Thiruvananthapuram	0.7	33.0	24.5
Kohima	—	24.0	20.0	Tiruchirappalli	—	38.3	29.0
Kolkata	0.4	33.1	27.9	Vijayawada	—	37.6	27.0
Kozhikode	24.6	28.2	24.9	Visakhapatnam	—	32.0	27.7

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	27	34	56	106	110	
Bengaluru	11	30	63	—	104	
Chennai	6	14	31	50	82	
Delhi	15	37	46	77	92	
Hyderabad	11	17	31	43	56	
Kolkata	16	24	17	86	102	
Lucknow	9	21	51	36	44	
Mumbai	9	81	12	40	85	
Pune	—	42	47	26	32	
Visakhapatnam	16	52	10	49	130	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Arrah, Bihar recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 253 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Naharlagun, Arunachal Pradesh recorded a healthy AQI score of 14

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Hyderabad cybercrime police arrest 36 from five States, recover ₹49 lakh

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Thirty-six persons across five States were arrested by the cybercrimes wing of the Hyderabad police in connection with 14 cases during special operations carried out in June. A total of ₹48.98 lakh was recovered and refunded to victims.

According to the police, the arrests followed multiple investigations launched after complaints were received through the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (NCRP). The operations led to the registration of 52 FIRs in June.

Of the 36 accused, 22 were involved in investment fraud cases, five in social media-related offences, six in matrimonial fraud and three in job fraud. Twenty-six accused were apprehended from Telangana, four from Maharashtra, and two each from Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Delhi.

Phones seized

The police also seized eight mobile phones, six debit cards, three SIM cards, two chequebooks and a bank passbook used in the offences.

Officials said the ₹48.98 lakh refunded to victims pertained to 24 cyber fraud cases.

Trading fraud accounted for the highest number of cases, with eight complaints involving losses of ₹70.70 lakh, of which ₹10.56 lakh was recovered. Six OTP fraud cases saw complete recovery of the entire ₹15.88 lakh lost by victims.

Karnataka poll officer denies 'mass SIR' charge

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) V. Anbu Kumar on Wednesday rejected allegations by the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Janata Dal (Secular) that the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the State was being conducted through "mass SIR" exercises. He asserted that the exercise was being carried out transparently and strictly in accordance with the Election Commission (EC) guidelines and the law.

Addressing a press conference on the progress of the revision, Mr. Kumar said all District Election Officers (DEOs) had been instructed to ensure that booth-level officers (BLOs) visited every household and handed over enumeration forms directly.

Karnataka plans body to check creches

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Following the recent case of alleged abuse of children at a daycare centre on the premises of IT major Capgemini, the Karnataka government is planning to appoint a nodal agency to monitor such facilities.

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER
CPM /GSU/ NWR/Jodhpur on behalf of The President of India invites E -Tenders for the following work up to 15.00 Hrs. on the mentioned date. **Tender No. :** SNT-GSU-JU-2026-27-02R **Name of work :** S&T work in Connection with -"Proposed New Block Station along with development of Goods Shed at Manklav Station." **Approximate cost of work** : Rs. 4,71,25,807.08 **Bid Security :** Rs. 9,42,500.00 **Date & Time of closing E-Tender** : 31.07.2026 at 15.00 Hrs. **Date & Time of opening E-Tender** : 31.07.2026 at 15.30 Hrs. The details of above E-tender are available on website **www.ireps.gov.in** *974-DI/26*
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NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE
(Survey & Construction)
For and on behalf of the President of India, Chief Administrative Officer (Construction), North Western Railway, Head Quarter building, Jawahar Circle, Jaipur invites online Open E-tendering System (Two Packet) for the following work on prescribed electronic forms : - **Tender No. :** NWR-SC-HQ-JP-01-2026-2027 **Name of the Work :** "Rate contract for carrying out Final Location Survey (geotechnical studies, preparation of drawings) and other preliminary activities for preparation of DPR and EPC tender documents in connection with anticipated survey work for new lines, bypass lines, gauge conversion, doubling, etc. of all four divisions of North Western Railway". **Mode of Tender :** Open (Two Packet System) **Estimated Project Cost :** ₹ 322677346.74 (Thirty two crore twenty six lakh seventy seven thousand three hundred forty six rupees and seventy four paisa only.) **Bid Security :** ₹ 6453600.00 (Sixty four lakh fifty three thousand six hundred only.) **Completion Period** : 36 (Thirty Six) Months **Tender Closing Date and Time** : 29.07.2026 15:00 Hrs., **Website particulars where complete details of E-tender can be seen : www.ireps.gov.in Note:** No manual tender/s will be accepted. *976-DI/26*
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NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Open Tender through E-Tendering 2026-27
NIT No: LWS-TC-OPN-EC1600HP-2026R Date-07.07.2026
Name of work : Work of Engine major schedule overhauling/repair of 1600 HP DEMU DPC, Model QSK50L, Make-CIL, Quantity- 06 Nos. at Loco Workshop, N.W. Railway, Ajmer for 01 year **Estimated Cost of work :** Rs. 15,21,75,461/- **Address of the NIT issuing office :** Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer (Loco) Diesel Loco & Wagon Workshop Lal Phatak, Ajmer (Raj.)-305001 **Earnest money to be deposited :** Rs. 3043500/- (Only through net banking or payment gateway on IREPS portal) **Last Date and time for submission and opening of E-tender :** 28.07.2026 up to 15.00 E-Tender will be opened at 15.30 on same day. Due to indispensable reasons bid opening schedule may change. **Website particular where complete details of e-tender can be seen and participated : www.ireps.gov.in (Note-** This is E-tender so tenderer can participate through e-tendering process only on mentioned website within bidding period) For and on behalf of The President of India, Dy. CME/Loco Ajmer invites e-tender with following details, interested firms/tenderer may participate through IREPS portal in this e-tender. *975-DI/26*
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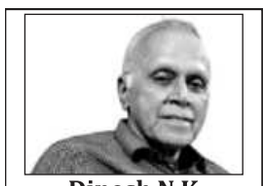
OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

Mr. J.V.S. SATHISH (50), Father of Mr. Advaith, Chennai- 600033, expired on 07.07.2026, Eyes donated to Rotary Rajan Eye Bank (Project of Rotary Club of Madras T.Nagar), Chennai- 17 (Ph: 28340500).

Mr. ANANDA NIRMAL .G (35), Son of Mr. Ganesan, Chennai- 600014, expired on 06.07.2026, Eyes donated to Rotary Rajan Eye Bank (Project of Rotary Club of Madras T.Nagar), Chennai- 17 (Ph: 28340500).



Dinesh N K
03/06/1948 - 06/07/2026
With profound grief we inform that our beloved father passed away on 6th **July 2026.**
He will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by all whose lives he touched.
Fondly remembered by:
His loving family Kishen, Ambika, Aanya and Lakshmi

OBITUARY

D.O.B 20.03.1949 D.O.D 07.07.2026
Dr. K.PANCHALAN
Age 77
Registrar - IIT, Madras (Retd.,)
Funeral Details
Besant Nagar Cremation
9th July 2026
3.00 PM to 4.00 PM
– Deeply Mourned by –
Family & Friends
+91 98411 87872

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

3rd Year
Remembrance

In Everlasting Memory of
SHRI A.P.KUNHIKANNAN
09.12.1927 - 09.07.2023
VISIONARY & FOUNDER OF MALAYALA KALAGRAMAM,
New Mahe, Kerala
You might not be with us, but you live with us always,
In our thoughts and forever in our hearts.
Your legacy of Love, Principles and Vision continue to guide us and inspire us in every sphere of Life.
Lovingly remembered by
Brothers, Sister and all Family Members of Akkul Poil House.

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

CELEBRATING VISION, CELEBRATING LEGACY
FOUNDER'S DAY
On this day, we honour the visionary who laid the foundation of excellence. Join us as we remember the founder's dream that built generation of leaders.

அறம்! ஆற்றல்!! அறிவு!!!
சிந்தனைக்கனி
திரு. **ஆலடி அருணா** M.A., B.L.,
Former Minister of Law & MP
ALADI ARUNA GROUP OF INSTITUTIONS
Einstein College of Engineering
Einstein College of Arts & Science
Einstein College of Nursing
Aladi Aruna Medical Hospital
Sir.C.V.Raman Nagar, Seethaparpanallur, Tirunelveli - 627012. Phone: 0462-2487111

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E Tender Notice No. J-SG-OT-16-2026-662346, Dated:07-07-2026.
The Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer, Southern Railway, Palghat - 678002 invites Open Tender through "online" tenders for the following works.

Name of work:	Augmentation of Block Working Arrangements by Provision of Solid State Block Instruments in lieu of Existing FM Block instruments in POY-CNV and VNB-NIL Single Line Block Sections of Palakkad Division, along with Associated EI Alterations and Other Signalling Works at POY and CNV Stations
App Cost of work	₹ 1,44,69,883.92
Bid Security	₹ 2,89,400
Cost of tender document	₹.0
Validity of offer	60 days
Completion period	12 months
Date & Time of opening	After 15.00 hrs of 24.07.2026

Detailed Tender notice alongwith Terms & Conditions can be viewed over the web site **http://www.ireps.gov.in**
Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer, S.Railway, Palghat-678002.
(For and on behalf of President of India)

Checkbox caste

An open-ended method of counting caste may not yield usable data

The rehearsal for the second phase of Census 2027, underway in 16 States and Union Territories since July 6, carries a key feature: an "open column" where respondents can state their caste, which the enumerator will record. Unlike the 2011 Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC), which also had this feature, this counting of caste in the Census itself has statutory backing. The pre-test ends on July 20, and the government says that it will then finalise the methodology for counting caste. The hope is that the pre-test findings will corroborate what is known: an open-ended response on caste yields only unwieldy data, as seen in the 2011 SECC, which eventually proved unusable. It is not difficult to understand why. The method led the 2011 SECC to return more than 46 lakh "caste names", against the 4,147 in the 1931 Census, the last to tabulate caste. Respondents entered surnames, sub-castes and clan names as if interchangeable, inflating the count into incoherence. The Centre told the Supreme Court in 2021 that the SECC figures were too error-ridden to be relied upon for reservation. The pre-test should instead point to a better method – using the digital Census's hand-held devices, pre-loaded with a curated list of castes and sub-castes, so that the enumerator selects the 'correct' entry after asking the respondent. Mistakes and mismatches will happen, but as the 2022-23 Bihar caste survey revealed, this method could return more usable data.

Unlike the other identities – linguistic, religious and gender – that the Census notes, caste is an abstract, irrational one that designates people not by biological, physical, or professed attributes, but by a perceived, primordial identity conferred at birth and arranged in a hierarchy. Even this hierarchy is not self-evident, with the perceptions of social status of different castes often contradicting one another. India's Constitution, committed to social justice, set itself against caste by abolishing untouchability, forbidding caste-based discrimination and holding out the promise of a republic where birth would not determine a citizen's standing. So why count caste when the very act of enumeration can ossify or reify this abstract identity? The only rationale is that self-perceived or imposed caste identity creates social inequities, and welfare and social justice measures that address caste-based injustice can, over time, be expected to delegitimise the casteism rather than entrench it. Through sharper targeting of welfare and affirmative action, empirical caste data can also inform questions of the creamy layer and the sub-categorisation of castes and classes already benefiting from reservation. In these, better data are indispensable. If caste is to be counted, it should be counted well. The open-ended way of registering it will not serve the intended purpose.

Prisoners of violence

Sri Lanka must do more to uphold order, prevent prison crowding

The killing of 28 people in sudden, apparently uncontrolled violence in an overcrowded prison outside Colombo, on Monday, speaks to a culture of mismanagement and official apathy. Reports of tensions inside the premises emerged on Sunday, with two inmates reported dead initially. Authorities deployed the military around the prison soon after, but the violence escalated on Monday, leaving more than two dozen dead and over 100 injured. Monday's riots followed a group of inmates tipping off officials on an alleged drug operation on the prison premises. Some inmates reportedly grabbed arms from the guards, while others assaulted rival gang members with clubs and stones, even as guards struggled to contain the violence; eight guards were among those dead. Authorities have transferred hundreds of remaining inmates to other prisons. The incident, one of the deadliest prison riots in Sri Lanka, foregrounds two key challenges facing the Anura Kumara Dissanayake administration – the narcotics menace that it has resolved to wipe out, and the chronic overcrowding in prisons, a concern that rights defenders have repeatedly highlighted for years.

In 2020, the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka found prison conditions to be dire, owing to overcrowding and under-resourcing. As of December 31, 2024, the country's prisons housed 28,278 inmates against an approved capacity of 10,395, operating at nearly thrice their capacity, according to the 2024 Auditor General's Report. Authorities have linked the immediate trigger for the riots to the drug underworld, which the Dissanayake administration has been trying to crack down on. Justice Minister Harshana Nanayakkara has rightly noted that regardless of the attackers' motivations or the crimes they are accused of, the death of people in state custody is "deeply shocking", and that the government accepts responsibility. The Cabinet has appointed a three-member committee headed by a retired Supreme Court judge to carry out a thorough investigation. The government's response and seeming willingness to probe the causes for the deadly incident, are welcome and necessary. It is the third after the 2012 Welikada prison riots, where 27 inmates were shot dead by police, and the 2020 riots in Mahara, near Colombo, which claimed 11 lives. The pace of the probe and the government's response will reveal its intent to address long-pending concerns around the country's prisons. It must work towards improving prison conditions, living standards, and security, to prevent further clashes. Meanwhile, authorities must persist with the efforts to disable drug networks that pose a grave threat to society, including within prisons.

Revolution to resurgence — Iran's strategic moment

Rajeev Agarwal

Senior Research Consultant at the CRF, Delhi, and the author of the book, 'Between Tehran and Tel Aviv – Gaza's Story of Unending War'

The gloves are off and the ceasefire is in trouble as the United States and Iran traded strikes, once again, on July 8, over the safe passage of commercial ships across the Strait of Hormuz.

However, looking beyond this flareup, the recent visuals coming out of Iran are extraordinary. After more than 40 days of sustained attacks by the combined military power of the U.S. and Israel, the country is projecting an image of pride, defiance, and resilience. The funeral of its slain Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, drew millions of mourners and high-level representatives from Russia, China, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Türkiye, Egypt, Iraq, Pakistan, Armenia, and several other countries. Even the Taliban government in Afghanistan was represented. Notably absent were the entire Western bloc, much of Africa, and some regional countries such as the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Kuwait, which bore the brunt of Iran's retaliation during the war.

Did the scenes witnessed reflect the image of a nation defeated? Did the millions of people on the streets, eager to catch a final glimpse of their assassinated leader, appear coerced or forced to mourn? Did the visuals coming out of Tehran and other parts of Iran reflect a nation that is economically bankrupt? The answer to all these questions is a bold 'no'. What was on display was a nation eager to use this opportunity to tell the world that it is still standing on its own – and may be more powerful, confident and resilient than ever before.

The regime has not only survived the war but has emerged stronger than before, with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) in full control. Its nuclear programme still remains off the table and there is no mention of its ballistic missile programme in the 14-point Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. The windfall gains from removal of sanctions, sale of crude oil and natural gas, a defreezing of its money and assets and the monetisation of the Strait of Hormuz promise an economic revival for Iran, although some of it may now be under question after the rapidly escalating situation. This resurrection of Iran almost feels like a revolution, and is a reminder of how a new nation, the 'Islamic Republic of Iran' emerged from the Iranian Revolution of 1979, overcoming the threats and challenges from a monarchy supported and abetted by the West.

The first revolution

The 1979 revolution was the culmination of a year-long protests against the Iranian regime, ignited by multiple factors, mainly political repression and economic hardships. There was also a strong undercurrent to reclaim Iran's cultural and religious legacy which had been suppressed by the pro-western Shah regime. The combined effect created an unprecedented popular movement led by Ayatollah Khomeini, the exiled cleric and former philosophy professor from Qom, who had been banished in 1964 for opposing the Shah's reform programme. The movement ultimately overthrew Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

The Shah and his family fled Iran in January 1979 and Ayatollah Khomeini returned on February 1 to a jubilant welcome. 10 days later, Iran's armed forces declared their neutrality, effectively ending the Shah's rule. On April 1, following a successful referendum, Khomeini proclaimed Iran as the Islamic Republic. The new republic drew its legitimacy from three pillars: restoring Iran's national pride, establishing theological discourse and Islamic governance, and promising economic progress and social justice. However, the 1979 hostage crisis, the eight-year Iran-Iraq war, prolonged nuclear programme-related sanctions, and support for regional militia proxies severely tested the country's economic and political resilience.

Revolution 2.0

Why is the current post-war situation akin to a second revolution? Like in 1979, this war too has led to the emergence of a stronger and a nationalist regime. However, unlike 1979, when an earlier regime had to be overthrown, this time, the regime, despite being hit badly and its Supreme Leader assassinated, has emerged stronger as it has survived. Once again, key issues such as national pride, dignity, strength and unity are being made the central pillars. And the millions of people on the street now mirror the visuals of millions on the streets of Iran in February 1979 when they welcomed Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini after his return from exile. And, like in 1979, this revolution too promises to bring in long-lasting changes in Iran and the region.

The most prominent change is obviously the security architecture. Soon after the 1979 revolution, the nations in the Gulf had formed the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in 1981, to forge a common platform to fight the threat from a revolutionary Iran. The region turned to the U.S. which then carried out its most extensive and permanent military deployment after the Second World War – it stationed thousands of troops and hundreds of military assets across multiple bases, promising a security umbrella against Iran (and Iraq).

Well, this war has shattered this myth with the punishment and huge losses that American bases and the countries in the region had to suffer from Iranian strikes. Countries in the region are not only frustrated with the failed U.S. security assurances but are looking at alternatives to secure themselves in the future, including maybe, making peace with Iran.

The second issue is the regime's survival which had been at its weakest in the past few years due to economic sanctions and growing frustration within over its enforcement of Islamic laws, especially against women. The most recent protests in December 2025, ignited over severe inflation and job losses and massive devaluation of its national currency Rial (1.54 million Rials traded for one U.S. dollar) posed one of the most severe threats to the regime, one which the U.S. too attempted to support and ignite. However, it failed as it was suppressed by a brutal crackdown by the regime. Even the slain Supreme Leader's advanced age and declining health had raised questions about the regime's ability to retain control after his death. However, those doubts have now been consigned to history, with the regime emerging stronger and more firmly in control.

The third important factor is identity. If the first revolution gave the nation a 'Religion First" ideological identity, this war has brought national pride to the fore and made it the primary agent of resilience and defiance. Iran's ability to absorb the punishment of military strikes, endure the pain and then strike back effectively, have brought people and nation together.

The fourth factor has to relate to the economy. A nation which has survived and sustained under severe economic sanctions for almost three decades, now faces a pleasant possibility of huge influx of money into its coffers thanks to a possible easing of sanctions, defreezing of assets and sale of petroleum products. The monetisation of the Strait of Hormuz is obviously a bonus and now a powerful negotiating instrument with Iran.

A balancing act for India

India clearly has a decision to make. The war marked India's definite and noticeable tilt toward the Israel-U.S.-United Arab Emirates bloc, with several decisions that many analysts have found difficult to explain or defend. By sending a Minister-led delegation to the funeral, India may have walked a diplomatic tightrope. Going forward, however, it will have to make a strategic choice on how to balance its ties with Iran and the wider Gulf region, which itself appears deeply divided after the war.

Iran is resurgent and is unlikely to let go of the opportunity that this war has provided it. The scale of the irreversible changes unfolding in Iran and the region may become clearer over time. However, one thing is certain – the security and economic landscape of the region has changed forever. How Iran uses this opportunity, and how the region responds, will shape the destiny of its people and the region for decades to come.

A resurgent Iran signals a dramatic shift in West Asian geopolitics

The Indian diaspora as Australia's identity, its future

Teesta Prakash

Research Fellow at the Australia India Institute, University of Melbourne

Hiya Harinandini

Research Fellow at the Australia India Institute, University of Melbourne

The Indian diaspora is now officially Australia's largest overseas-born community, overtaking the England-born population for the first time. This is not a small demographic footnote. Australia's population has, for two centuries, been anchored by a British-derived majority. An Indian-origin community now outnumbering it marks a genuine inflection point in how the country understands itself. It is against this backdrop that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Australia – his third visit Down Under – will be a trip in which the diaspora is expected to command the spotlight.

The Australia-India relationship has come a long way, from being defined by the simplistic 'three Cs' – Cricket, Curry and Commonwealth – to a more meaningful 'four Ds': Democracy, Defence, Diaspora and *Dosti*. This shift reflects a decade of institution-building, including India's participation alongside Australia, the United States and Japan in the Quad, the informal security grouping that has become the backbone of the Indo-Pacific strategy of India and Australia. Mr. Modi's visit will touch on all four pillars, but it is the diaspora event – a large public gathering billed as 'Melbourne Meets Modi' – that is drawing the most attention, precisely because of what this community has come to represent for both nations.

A new migration era

The settlement trajectory of the Australian-Indian community is very different from its counterparts in the U.S. or the United Kingdom. The first significant wave of Indian professional migration to Australia dates only to the 1960s and 1970s, climbing after the dismantling of the White Australia Policy – an explicitly racist immigration regime that excluded all but European migrants.

By diaspora standards, this makes the Australian-Indian community still young. A large share of recent arrivals left India during the 'New India' years since 2014, a period of rapid outward migration driven by a mix of economic ambition and, for some, disillusionment with the state of democratic institutions at home. Whatever the reasons for leaving, this cohort tends to be more recently and more tightly bound to India – through family, business, remittances and a resurgent nationalist identity. That is what makes Australia's Indian community distinct beyond just numbers.

The rise of political backlash

As the anti-immigration wave rises across the globe, in Australia this wave has found a specific target in the Indian community. Nationalist street rallies under banners such as 'March for Australia' have gathered pace over the past year, and the right-wing populist One Nation party is emerging as the main opponent to the left-of-centre Labor party currently in power. Mr. Modi's high-visibility diaspora event lands squarely within this tense landscape. By showcasing the scale, accomplishments and mobilisation of the Indian community, it will reiterate the statement – increasingly co-opted by conservative movements – that this community has grown too large, too fast, and too visible.

For Australia, the Indian diaspora is an economic asset and a force multiplier for the country's multicultural fabric. But a fracturing domestic political landscape means that this asset can just as easily be recast as a liability in public discourse. Mr. Modi's visit should be a reminder to policymakers that failing to invest in better understanding this growing and dynamic community carries real stakes for the future of this strategic partnership.

Beyond numbers and narratives

For India, the diaspora has long been framed as a source of pride and a connecting tissue of cultural links to Australia as a strategic partner. But pride and sentiment are not the same as understanding. What is missing – on both sides of the relationship – is a serious, evidence-based picture of how this diaspora actually lives, trusts and participates in Australian civic life, beyond the headline statistics on income, education and trade that has long been the mainstay of government discourse. If both countries are serious about treating the diaspora as a genuine pillar of their partnership rather than a talking point, that requires concerted efforts to capture their experiences of settlement which are far from monolithic.

Australia's demographic transformation is not a passing trend. It will permanently reshape its national identity from an antipodean one to one that is far more entangled with India and the wider Indo-Pacific. That means sustained research, stronger engagement with civil society, and policies that build social cohesion rather than taking it for granted. If democracy, defence, diaspora and *dosti* are to remain the four pillars of the partnership, then the diaspora must be treated not merely as a symbol of the relationship, but as a constituency whose experiences and trust deserve to be understood.

The diaspora must be valued not merely as a symbol of partnership, but as a community whose voices matter

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mud deluge in Wayanad

The Kerala government's line, that is to blame only the contractor for the tragedy at the Wayanad tunnel-road project, reflects the familiar politico-bureaucratic tendency to evade responsibility. The government's role is not merely to issue directives but also to ensure that they are implemented on time. Identifying the officials responsible for each task — and those who failed in their duties — is not difficult. It is now for the government and, if necessary, the judiciary to ensure that those responsible are held accountable.

P.R.V. Raja,
Pandalam, Kerala

As a science paper, "A global perspective on a bioengineering approach to landslide mitigation using bamboo diversity" (2024), highlights, bamboo is an effective natural solution for slope stabilisation and landslide mitigation due to its extensive root and rhizome systems, which bind soil and improve slope stability. Species such as *Melocanna baccifera*, *Bambusa bambos*, *Dendrocalamus hamiltonii*, and *Schizostachyum dullooa* have been widely used in bioengineering and ecological restoration, particularly in high-rainfall, landslide-prone regions. Their rapid growth, adaptability, and proven success in countries such as India and Nepal make bamboo a sustainable and cost-effective option for erosion control, riverbank protection, and disaster risk reduction.

V. Subramaniam,
Chennai

EV use, road safety

Since there is no clear requirement for a driving licence for battery-operated two-wheelers, children are riding them without hesitation. The risk of accidents has increased. The government should set the minimum age for riding battery-operated two-wheelers at 18. Additionally, road safety should be taught in schools.

Rajesh P. Kariya,
Akola, Maharashtra

FIFA match

The 2026 FIFA World Cup has now entered a crucial stage. Amid the excitement, a talking point is the controversial round of 16 clash between Argentina and Egypt. Disputed decisions have reignited allegations of Argentina being favoured — an issue that gained prominence during the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. One hopes that the rest of the tournament will be free from controversies

C.K. Subramaniam,
Navi Mumbai

The timeless parable of David and Goliath unfolded once again on football's grandest stage as Argentina confronted an indomitable Egypt. For much of the contest, Egypt dictated not merely the tempo but also the psychology of the game. As the clock drifted towards an Egyptian masterpiece, Lionel Messi compressed an eternity into a fleeting moment of genius, reminding the world that legends possess the rare gift of rescuing history when it appears ready to choose another author.

Vijay Singh Adhikari,
Nainital, Uttarakhand

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

How India withstood the crisis in West Asia

Sachin Kumar Sharma

Director General, RIS, New Delhi. Views expressed are personal

Historically, sharp increases in oil prices have been among the biggest sources of macroeconomic instability for India. It was therefore unsurprising that when tensions in West Asia escalated, many thought that India would once again face an energy and economic crisis, derailing its growth path. It revived memories of the 1973 oil shock and the 1991 balance-of-payments crisis, with concerns over soaring fuel prices, imported inflation, and pressure on the external account. After all, India imports almost 90% of its crude oil and remains heavily dependent on the Gulf for oil, gas and fertilizers.

This time around, however, when the Strait of Hormuz was the epicentre of global anxiety, India proved not only the sceptics at home and abroad wrong, but also seems to have emerged stronger in managing its energy needs. Was this resilience of India a matter of luck, or was it the outcome of deliberate policy choices, institutional learning, and strategic preparation?

Defying the odds

Few major economies were as vulnerable to the disruption in the Strait of Hormuz as India, the world's third-largest oil importer. Heavy dependence on imported crude and LPG, combined with rising freight costs and maritime risks, created conditions for a severe external shock. Within weeks, the Indian crude basket crossed $120 per barrel; the import-linked cost of a domestic LPG cylinder rose above ₹1,600; and war-risk premiums escalated sharply. By conventional measures, India appeared particularly vulnerable. However, the real challenge was not merely managing higher energy costs but preventing a global supply disruption from translating into inflation and shortages at home.

Against all expectations, one of the world's most energy import-dependent economies turned out to be among the most price-resilient; India contained fuel and cooking gas inflation better than many advanced and emerging peers.

The numbers tell an extraordinary story. Petrol prices in India rose by just 7.5% during the crisis, compared with nearly 14% in Germany, 19% in the U.K., 45% in the U.S., over 50% in Pakistan and the Philippines, and almost 90% in Myanmar. The contrast was even starker in diesel prices. While the UAE saw prices surge by about 85%, India limited the increase to just 8%.

One saw a similar story in the kitchen. Even though India imports nearly 60% of its LPG requirements, a domestic cylinder continued to cost ₹942, or ₹642 for Ujjwala beneficiaries, which was cheaper than what it cost in Pakistan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, and dramatically lower than in the U.S., Australia and Canada.

However, the cushion came at a cost, as state-run Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) incurred ₹74,781 crore in losses on petrol, diesel, and LPG sales up to June 30 as global crude prices surged during the West Asia crisis. But that cost shows you the big picture. Instead of passing the full shock to consumers, the government and public-sector OMCs absorbed it, protecting household budgets and keeping fuel and cooking gas affordable throughout the crisis.

Weathering the storm

While several factors contributed to India's resilience during the West Asia crisis, four stand out. The first lesson of the crisis is that strategic relationships are themselves a form of energy security. In times of crisis, relationships matter as much as reserves. Decades of engagement with Iran and key Gulf partners ensured that channels of communication remained open even when tensions were at their highest. Iran's decision to facilitate the movement of Indian ships and the willingness of Gulf producers to continue supplying energy underscored a simple reality: foreign policy can be as important to energy security as oil fields.

Second, India had quietly built an insurance policy against geopolitical shocks by diversifying its supplier base. Energy partnerships stretching from Russia and the U.S. to Africa and Latin America gave India the flexibility to withstand disruptions far better than in previous crises. In geopolitics, putting all your energy eggs in one basket is no longer an option.

Third, the crisis vindicated a decade of energy planning. India had quietly built multiple layers of resilience such as higher ethanol blending, a rapidly expanding renewable energy base, larger strategic reserves and stronger refining capacity. These investments did not prevent the crisis, but they made the economy better equipped to absorb it.

Fourth, the crisis reflected the value of a whole-of-government approach, reinforcing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's emphasis on breaking down ministerial silos and strengthening institutional coordination. The Ministries of External Affairs, Petroleum and Natural Gas, Ports, Shipping and Waterways, the Indian Navy, and the National Security Council Secretariat worked in close coordination to monitor risks, manage logistics, and protect energy supplies.

The result was a coordinated national response that turned potential disruption into an exercise in resilience.

The way ahead

The recent crisis shows us that the foundations of resilience are laid in years of preparation, and not in moments of panic. India's response reflected the dividends of strategic foresight, diplomatic outreach and whole-of-government coordination. As global uncertainties deepen, this resilience could become a defining pillar of 'Viksit Bharat'.

> India had quietly built an insurance policy against geopolitical shocks by diversifying its supplier base

A crisis on wheels in Kerala

The free bus ride scheme for women is turning out to be financially unviable

STATE OF PLAY

K.S. Sudhi

The Priyadarshini free bus ride scheme for women in State-owned buses, launched by the Congress-led Kerala government hardly a month ago, has been criticised for leading to social unrest, the latest being a call to strike by private bus operators. The scheme, a poll promise of the State government, had raised concerns about its sustainability even during the days of election campaigning.

One of the criticisms was about its financial viability; many feared that the scheme would push the ailing State public transport entity, the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC), into a debt trap beyond redemption.

The current financial woes of the Corporation include its huge accumulated loss and the delay in payment of salaries and pensions which has forced employees as well as pensioners to drag the KSRTC to court. Some even resorted to the extreme step of ending their lives as the Corporation could not ensure the uninterrupted payment of their monthly pensions.

The austerity measures introduced by successive governments were found grossly inadequate to salvage the sinking public company. At some point in time, petroleum companies even threatened to stop the supply of fuel as the unpaid fuel bills kept mounting. Additionally, many vehicles had to be condemned following the scarcity of spare parts.

With each passing day, the debt-ridden KSRTC is incurring a huge additional loss on account of the new programme. While it was initially estimated that the scheme would cost the KSRTC ₹2 crore a day, it is expected to go up in the coming days, thus exacerbating the crisis for the public transport firm.

The State government, which came under pressure to honour its pre-poll commitment to roll out the scheme, is planning to evaluate the viability of the scheme after 100 days of its launch, something it should have done before including the proposal in the party's poll manifesto.

Collateral damage

Private bus operators have decided to go on an indefinite agitation as the scheme has led women to desert private buses in favour of KSRTC-operated ones. Women constitute a major segment of the passenger population of the State. Many private buses have either stopped operating altogether or have cut short their operations on a large number of routes citing low passenger patronage, thus aggravating the crisis for the travelling public.

Currently, the government, it appears, has no compensation or support package to offer private bus operators. All that the State Transport Minister C. P. John could offer them was a piece of advice to explore other business options to make their services feasible, which was not well-received by the stakeholders.

Besides bus operators, auto rickshaw drivers too have been reportedly hit by the scheme as women are increasingly relying on KSRTC buses for their commute, thus depriving them of their livelihood options.

Thus, the Priyadarshini scheme which was offered to improve the mobility of women has led to an economic crisis for both the government and private operators as well as autorickshaw drivers. While the free travel initiative is expected to significantly benefit and support the mobility of women, the government should have assessed the feasibility of the scheme before its launch and devised a successful revenue model to sustain the programme.

For example, the free travel scheme need not be extended to all but restricted to eligible segments among women passengers, especially students and unemployed youth and those from the socially and economically weaker segments, namely, women workers engaged in the unorganised sectors.

Those willing to pay or can afford to pay for their travel expenses should pay.

Many people have started comparing the scheme to the arrack ban in 1996, which the then Chief Minister of Kerala A. K. Antony announced on the eve of an Assembly election with an eye on wooing women voters. While the scheme failed to attain its objective of dissuading the use of alcohol, it also failed to wield any influence among women. The ban, besides failing to achieve its objective, also failed to win votes for the Congress in the Assembly polls.

There are lessons for everyone to learn from history.

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States contribute disproportionately more to welfare schemes

As revenues accrue to the Union, fiscally constrained States are carrying a growing share of welfare spending

DATA POINT

Revati Mathai
Rajendran Narayanan

Government expenditure on welfare schemes, or social spending, remains intensely debated. While some critics call it a fiscal 'burden', others call it a fiscal 'commitment'. In line with the constitutional imagination, several welfare schemes were turned into laws in the 2000s, creating a 'rights-based' welfare regime. Over the last decade, however, the emphasis has shifted away from rights towards cash transfers. A recent handbook of welfare in India called *Realising Rights* by the Centre for the Study of the Indian Economy, Azim Premji University, traces the history and budgetary implications of key central welfare programmes.

Chart 1 shows Union and State government allocations for welfare schemes in the financial year 2025-26. Union allocations are drawn from the Expenditure Budget 2025-26, except for the Maternity Entitlements scheme (PMMVY), which is taken from the Parliamentary Standing Committee Report No. 377. State-level allocations across schemes are not available in one source; the 2025-26 figures have therefore been collated from multiple sources.

For ease of presentation, social justice and empowerment, tribal affairs and minority affairs are grouped together, as are Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), the PMMVY and the Public Distribution System (PDS). State allocations for social justice and tribal affairs are drawn from the RBI database, while those for minority affairs are unavailable and therefore excluded. The PMMVY and the ICDS are centrally sponsored schemes, with the Centre bearing 60% of the cost and States 40%. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was funded in a 90:10 ratio; its replacement with the VB-GRAM G Act will add much more to States' contribution.

States' share of school education spending is estimated at 75.2% using the latest Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure on Education. Health expenditure is based on Statement 37 of RBI State Finances, while State food subsidy spending is drawn from the 16th Finance Commission reports.

Table 1 shows Union spending on PM Kisan, the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), Finance Commission grants to local bodies, and State spending on cash transfers. According to the 16th Finance Commission Report, States spent ₹4.14 lakh crore on unconditional cash transfers.

Table 2 summarises total Union and State expenditure on the schemes and sectors covered in **Chart 1** and **Table 1**. Combined allocations for these selected welfare schemes in 2025-26 amounted to ₹24.20 lakh crore, or 6.77% of GDP, with the Union government's contribution accounting for just 1.89% of GDP. While real expenditure on social services has increased over time, the Union government's share has remained largely stagnant **(Chart 2)**, with the overall rise driven by States. Although India's tax to GDP ratio is comparable to middle-income countries, it lags behind on social security as a share of its GDP.

While tax revenues favour the Union government, the onus of funding falls disproportionately on States who already face budget constraints. Putting forth a strong macroeconomic case for increased social sector spending, a recent paper in the *Economic and Political Weekly* by Bose and Banerjee argues that human development and growth are a 'mutually reinforcing cycle of causation with success in one tending to promote success in the other'. The Union government must increase its fiscal commitment to the social sector to ensure that the welfare regime aligns with constitutional precepts.

States shoulder welfare

Data for the charts were sourced from Union Expenditure Budget 2025-26, 377th Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee*, RBI database, Ministry of Education's Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure on Education, and 16th Finance Commission reports

TABLE 1: Centre and State expenses on cash transfers in FY 2025-26 (in ₹ lakh crore)

Scheme/Sector	Expenditure (₹ lakh crore)
(Centre) National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)	0.1
(Centre) PM KISAN	0.64
(Centre) Finance Commission Grants to local bodies (Urban and Rural)	0.75
State Cash Transfers	3.87

CHART 1: Allocations by Union government and States for select sectors (In ₹ lakh crore)

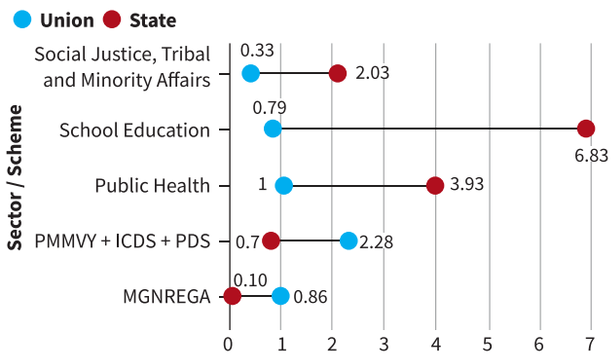
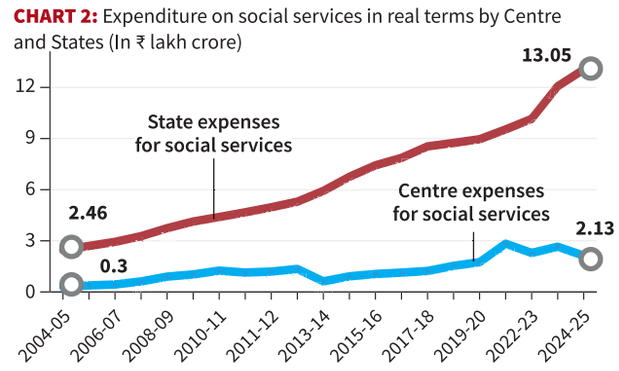


CHART 2: Expenditure on social services in real terms by Centre and States (In ₹ lakh crore)



Note: RBI Handbook of Statistics on Indian Economy; State figures for 2023-24 are revised estimates and for 2024-25 are budget estimates, while Centre figures for 2024-25 are revised estimates. Real-term values are calculated using the GDP deflator from the RBI database, with 2011-12 as the base year

TABLE 2: Estimates of budgetary allocations by Union and State Governments for the schemes/sectors (Values in the first row are in ₹ lakh crore)

Category	Union Budget Allocations 2025-26	State Budget	Union + State Budget	% of GDP
Sum of allocations on selected schemes	6.73	17.46	24.2	6.77
Share of selected schemes as a % of total government expenditure	13.29	28.16	21.47	-
Share of selected schemes as a % of GDP	1.89	4.89	6.77	-

Revati Mathai and Rajendran Narayanan are affiliated with the Centre for the Study of the Indian Economy, Azim Premji University. Views expressed are personal. *The report was released in March by the committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 9, 1976

72 p.c. of school children have dental diseases

New Delhi, July 7: Based on the findings of a survey conducted by it, the Consumer Council of India, has claimed that most of the toothpastes manufactured and marketed by multinational corporations in the country are only tooth-cleaners without containing any ingredient to prevent diseases of the gums.

The consumer Council has said that in spite of using toothpastes 90 per cent of the people suffer from gum trouble and this clearly shows that ingredients useful for toning up of gums are missing in the toothpastes now being marketed.

What adds weight to these findings is that dental specialists were associated in the survey. Dr. O.P. Bhalla, Registrar of Dental Council of India led the survey in which were associated Dr. S. D. Ratra, member, Dental Council and Dr. B.K. Kohli, President-elect of Indian Dental Association.

The survey has revealed that 72 per cent of school-going children are suffering from orthodontia disease that is deterioration of teeth due to lack of mastication. Besides, 70 per cent of school-going children were found to be suffering from caries (dental decay). In rural areas, however, 20 per cent of the people were suffering from caries and 50 per cent from peri-dental diseases. This is attributed to the practice among villagers of cleaning their teeth with datoons or herbs. In regard to prices, the survey report says the actual cost of manufacture including all expenditure should not exceed Rs 3.50 for a giant sized toothpaste.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 9, 1926

Indian capital for Dunlop Rubber co.

London, July 8: The Dunlop Rubber Company has arranged to sell its Indian business to a new company which is being formed in India for that purpose. Indian capital will be introduced, the parent company guaranteeing a dividend of 6 per cent on the preference shares of the new company, which will be offered for subscription in India. This will involve a maximum contingent liability of £13.50 annually, but the whole of the ordinary share capital of the Indian company will be retained by the Dunlop Company.

From Page One

Trump declares end to truce, talks to continue

At the core of the escalation lies the question of who controls the Strait of Hormuz.

The MoU calls for the safe passage of tankers through the strait. Iran has opened a route along its coast and asked vessels to use a "designated route" along its coast in coordination with local authorities. Over the weekend, three ships passing through an alternative route along the Omani coast – Marshall Islands-flagged *M/T Al Rekayyat*, Saudi Arabia-flagged *M/T Wedyan*, and Liberian-flagged *M/T Cyprus Prosperity* – were attacked.

Following attack on the three tankers, the U.S. revoked a sanctions waiver it had issued after the MoU was signed that had allowed the sale of Iranian oil. The air strikes followed.

In retaliation, Iran's IRGC said it had struck "85 U.S. military targets in Bahrain and Kuwait with missiles and drones". Port Salman, the U.S. Fifth Fleet's area in Bahrain, and Ali Al-Salem Air Base in Kuwait were among the sites targeted, according to an IRGC statement. The Guards also claimed to have downed an American MQ-9 drone over the southern province of Bushehr.

India expresses concern

India on Wednesday voiced deep concern over the fresh targeting of commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz and called upon all parties to exercise restraint. "We urge the parties to return to dialogue and diplomacy to achieve a peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement.

(With PTI inputs)

Russian oil share in India's imports rises

India's total oil imports stood at 21.82 million tonnes in May 2026, the highest since January and about 12% higher than what it imported in April. This was, however, about 2.6% lower than what it imported in May last year.

Despite this, the higher oil prices meant that India's oil import bill still rose significantly in May 2026 – by 23.5% compared to April, and by a sizable 66% over May of last year. This is because the price of oil that India imported stood at $106 per barrel in May 2026 as compared to $64 a barrel in May 2025, according to data from the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

This price effect is visible in India's oil imports from Russia as well. While the value of oil imports from Russia grew 83% in May 2026 over its level in May last year, the actual volume of oil imported from Russia fell by 2% over this period.

That said, the share of Russian oil in India's total oil imports stood at 40.5% in terms of volume and 42.6% in terms of value in May 2026.

A simple calculation based on the volume and value of oil imports from Russia shows that the total price paid by Indian importers stood at $916 per tonne of Russian oil in May 2026, as compared to the average price of $870 per tonne that India paid for all its oil imports. This works out to a premium of about $46 per tonne.

The Commerce Ministry data also shows that India has been sourcing some of its oil from countries that were previously restricted from selling their oil. Notably, the data shows that India imported $430.5 million worth of oil from Iran in April 2026, which fell to $277 million in May.

Bishnoi, Brar ordered killing of Nijjar: U.S. DoJ

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police is conducting a parallel investigation into South Asian organised crime, the DoJ said. The U.S. indictment identified Nijjar as "H.S.N." and the DoJ referred to him as a "prominent Indian political and religious figure". India had designated Nijjar a terrorist in 2020. DoJ said the killing was carried out by gunmen outside a gurdwara.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has declared a $50,000 reward on Brar's arrest and extradition. Bishnoi, currently at Sabarmati jail in Ahmedabad, and others have been charged for racketeering, targeted killings, shootings, extortion, trafficking of narcotics across international borders, and other crimes around the world whose impact is especially felt in the Indian diaspora. The DoJ said 24 defendants, connected to the three India-based transnational organised crime groups charged with a litany of criminal acts, have been arrested in the U.S., Canada, and Spain. Law enforcement is looking for 10 fugitives - seven in the U.S., two in India, and one in Europe, they said. As part of this investigation, law enforcement has seized approximately 1,000 kilograms of cocaine and one kilogram of heroin along with $40,000 in cash and a dozen firearms.

Key accused in rape of minor in Bengal killed

The mother of the accused refused to claim the body. "I don't have any disappointment over what happened today. He got the punishment for what he did. He also didn't understand the pain of a girl. What happened with him is absolutely right," Sandhya Mondal, mother of Prabhas Mondal, said.

Mamata targets BJP over violence at Trinamool rally

41 injured as Trinamool supporters clash with BJP workers during protest, says party statement; former CM claims police failed to prevent attacks; rally was held to protest Baruipur rape-murder

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

Violence erupted at a Trinamool Congress procession in Kolkata on Wednesday, as Trinamool supporters clashed with BJP workers. Denouncing the chaos, party chief and former Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said that lawlessness has prevailed in the State since the Bharatiya Janata Party came to power two months ago.

In all, 41 Trinamool workers and supporters were injured and were admitted to the SSKM Hospital after they were subjected to physical assault and brutality unleashed by BJP goons, according to a Trinamool statement on Wednesday evening.

"They are keeping a watch on us. But when a girl is raped, there the police are not available... Both men and women have been manhandled and physically abused by goons they [the BJP] have hired. Is this the '*paribartan*' (change) that the people of Bengal had desired?" Ms. Banerjee asked, addressing a protest outside her house.

Police officials at the site after a clash broke out between BJP and Trinamool workers at a protest rally in Kolkata on Wednesday. PTI

The Trinamool rally was organised to protest the brutal rape and murder of a 12-year-old girl in Baruipur, which has led to high tensions across the State. The procession was set to move from Hazra Crossing to Ballygunge Phari, but clashes between Trinamool and BJP workers broke out in the Hazra area and continued in pockets across the rally in multiple places.

Ms. Banerjee had not joined the rally in person because the number of participants was capped by the High Court. When violence broke out, however, she came out of her home to address protesters. She alleged that party workers are not being allowed to go anywhere and have practically been put "under house arrest". She also alleged that their hand-held microphones had been taken away despite the High Court's permission to use them.

'Lawlessness in Bengal'

"The ones who steal from the donations of Ram used slogans in the name of Ram in our rallies trying to disrupt our protests," Ms. Banerjee added. She blamed the police for "allowing" the disruptions to Trinamool rallies and failing to take action against miscreants who attacked the party workers, claiming that lawlessness in Bengal is now worse than in Uttar Pradesh.

BJP State president Samik Bhattacharya responded by saying it is a free and democratic State, adding that Ms. Banerjee could walk in as many rallies as she wanted.

ED freezes ₹440 cr. in Trinamool's bank accounts amid row

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has frozen three bank accounts of the Trinamool Congress with deposits worth ₹440 crore.

A press statement by the ED stated that the Central agency had conducted search operations at five premises in and around Kolkata under the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, belonging to Carewell Group of companies operating in the aviation sector.

"During searches, balances amounting to ₹440.42 crore lying in three HDFC bank accounts of AITC have been frozen under Section 17(1A) of PMLA, 2002," the press statement added.

The agency said that searches were conducted in connection with an investigation under PMLA, 2002 based on an FIR lodged by the Cyber Police, Bidhannagar, West Bengal in the matter of alleged dishonest financial dealings, unlawful collection of money, and routing of suspected funds through certain bank accounts of Trinamool Congress.

Factions lay claim

Both factions of the Trinamool Congress, one led by former Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and another led by Leader of the Opposition Ritabrata Banerjee, have claimed ownership over the accounts. The Kolkata Police have asked the banks to freeze the three accounts. The Calcutta High Court, which is hearing the matter, had raised questions on what was the tearing hurry in freezing the bank accounts.

The ED said that investigation revealed that around ₹160 crore was transferred from Trinamool Congress bank accounts to M/s Carewell Aviation India Pvt. Ltd. and its related entity, between April 2023 to June 2026. The firm routed ₹82.96 crore for purchasing an aircraft and a helicopter.

LeT militant killed in anti-terror operation in Kashmir's Shopian

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR

A joint operation was launched based on intelligence input from the J&K Police, the Army says

Security forces on Wednesday spotted the body of a Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorist at an encounter site in south Kashmir's Shopian, where an anti-militancy operation was on for the past five days.

'Eliminated in firefight'

"One LeT terrorist, identified as Zakir Ganai, has been eliminated in the firefight. Arms, ammunition and other war-like stores were recovered. The operation is in progress," said an Army spokesman.

The Army said a joint operation was launched based on specific intelligence input from the Jammu and Kashmir Police in Shopian's Chanapora area. "During the search operation, an exchange of fire took place between the security forces and the terrorist," the Army said.

Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir Police, in a post on X, said: "You can run but you can't hide!"

A gunfight between terrorists and security forces erupted on July 4 in Shopian. At least two terrorists were spotted in the area. Since then, the security forces continued the operation in the area.

India and Indonesia launch joint restoration project at iconic Prambanan Temple

Press Trust of India
JAKARTA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, along with Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto, on Wednesday visited the centuries-old iconic Prambanan Temple complex in Yogyakarta, marking the inauguration of a joint conservation project for this UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Mr. Modi described the initiative as a "shining example of the enduring civilisational bonds" between India and Indonesia, rooted in a shared heritage that has connected the people of the two countries for centuries.

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) will be the lead agency from the Indian side for the joint restoration project.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and devotees visiting the Prambanan Temple in Indonesia on Wednesday. AFP/PIB

Later in the day, Mr. Modi reached Australia on the second leg of his three-nation tour during which he will hold talks with his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese. "Landed in Melbourne, Australia. This visit will add vigour to the India-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership," Mr. Modi said in a post on X.

Calcutta HC seeks affidavit on midday meal contract

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

The Calcutta High Court on Wednesday directed the West Bengal government to file an affidavit after the State said that no decision had yet been taken on entrusting the PM-POSHAN (midday meal) scheme in Kolkata schools to ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness).

The direction was passed by a Division Bench of Acting Chief Justice Tapabrata Chakraborty and Justice Partha Sarathi Chatterjee while hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by advocate Sirsanya Bandopadhyay challenging the proposal to hand over the responsibility of food preparation to ISKCON.

NCW seeks report on rape of minor in Rajasthan

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Commission for Women (NCW) has taken "serious" cognisance of the alleged gang-rape and trafficking of a minor girl in Sri Ganganagar in Rajasthan and directed the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police of the district to submit a comprehensive action-taken report within 15 days.

The commission said that such an incident reflects administrative lapses, policing gaps, and inadequate monitoring mechanisms that allowed such criminal activities to continue and sought a crackdown against illegal hotels.

According to the FIR by the local police, a 13-year-old girl was allegedly held captive and gang-raped by more than 30 men. The brutal ordeal took place across several local hotels in the district.

The commission also took serious note of the delay in presenting the victim before the Child Welfare Committee.

Tihar to respond to U.S. national's plea for 'American-style diet'

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

The Tihar prison authorities submitted before a Delhi court on Wednesday that they will file a response to a plea by U.S. national Matthew Aaron VanDyke, an accused in a terror conspiracy case being investigated by the National Investigation Agency (NIA), seeking permission to receive "American-style diet' while in judicial custody.

Special Judge Prashant Sharma of Patiala House Court posted the matter for July 21, before which the prison authorities are expected to respond.

In his plea filed through advocates Rohit Dandriyal and Rohit Gour, Mr. VanDyke submitted before the court that he had been on an apparent hunger strike for nearly 50 days and had survived largely on liquids, including soy milk, because of his inability to eat the food available in prison.

"He has lost 13 kg weight in the duration of his hunger strike," advocate Dandriyal told *The Hindu*.

Matthew VanDyke. GETTY IMAGES

In his petition, it has been contended that the prolonged nutritional deficiency has adversely affected the accused's health, including a decline in his eyesight, which is attributed to the lack of an adequate and suitable nutritional diet during his continued incarceration.

Emphasising that the request is made purely on humanitarian considerations and is intended solely to safeguard the health of their client while in judicial custody, counsel has submitted that Mr. VanDyke's family is willing to bear the entire cost of the proposed dietary arrangement and all related expenses.

NIA conducts nationwide searches in terror case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday carried out nationwide searches in a case related to online terror radicalisation.

The radicalisation was "aimed at establishing an Islamic state in India through violent jihad against the democratically elected government by promoting the ideology of ISIS and AQIS (Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent) terrorist organisations", the agency said.

The NIA searched 20 locations in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Delhi, as part of the ongoing investigation in the case.

"Today's searches led to the seizure of several digital devices, which will be forensically examined for further clues...," the NIA said. Eleven accused have been arrested and one juvenile apprehended in the case so far.

Shah orders audit to reduce passenger delays at airports

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has directed the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) to independently commission third-party studies during the peak travel season to identify and reduce passenger delays across all touch points at major airports.

The direction came during a review meeting with Union Civil Aviation Minister K. Rammohan Naidu on passenger facilities, security arrangements and the immigration system at major airports. The meeting was attended by the Union Home Secretary, Director of the Intelligence Bureau, Secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Director-General of the CISF, Chairman of the Airports Authority of India and other senior officials.

To improve passenger processing, Mr. Shah directed the phased installation of an automatic tray retrieval system (ATRS) at airports across the country, to ease the congestion at security checkpoints and reduce manpower requirements.

Amit Shah. ANI

He also asked the Ministry of Civil Aviation to prescribe norms for the number of aerobridges at airports based on passenger and aircraft traffic. In addition, the baggage drop facility, currently available at 16 major airports, will be expanded to other international airports handling high passenger volumes.

To speed up immigration clearance, Mr. Shah also called for greater adoption of the Centre's Fast Track Immigration-Trusted Travellers' Programme (FTI-TTP).

AAP faces heat after U.S. names inspector in an 'extortion plot'

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

The political atmosphere in Punjab charged up on Wednesday after the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) named Punjab Police inspector Gurinderjit Singh Nagra in an alleged international extortion plot.

The Opposition parties cornered the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), terming the episode a reflection of complete breakdown of law and order in the State.

Congress leader Vijay Inder Singla said the revelations from the FBI's "Operation Hard Ball" exposed a state-gangster nexus thriving right under the nose of the AAP government. "The FBI has charged Gurinderjit Singh Nagra, Station House Officer of the Tanda police station, in a $400,000 extortion case for allegedly working hand-in-glove with the Lawrence Bishnoi and Jaggu Bhagwanpuria syndicates to terrorise innocent families," he said.

Mr. Singla added that while global law enforcement was aggressively hunting down these criminals, the law and order apparatus had completely collapsed in Punjab.

Former Minister and Shiromani Akali Dal leader Bikram Singh Majithia said that "...If the FBI takes this inspector to the United States, the alleged AAP, gangster, and Punjab Police nexus will be exposed before the world, something many have been demanding."

> If the FBI takes this inspector to the U.S. , the alleged AAP, gangster, and Punjab Police nexus will be exposed before the world
>
> **BIKRAM SINGH MAJITHIA**
> SAD leader

'Failed to deliver'

BJP Punjab unit president Kewal Singh Dhillon said the people of Punjab were demanding answers from a government that promised "change" but failed to deliver. "Countless families have been devastated by drugs, gun violence and murders, yet the government continues to remain indifferent," he alleged in a statement.

Mr. Dhillon said Punjab could only be rescued from the present crisis through stringent laws and a zero-tolerance policy against criminals, without which lasting peace could not be restored.

Bishnoi, aides used WhatsApp from jail to threaten victims: U.S.

U.S. DoJ echoes NIA's 2022 chargesheet; it says Bishnoi's 'enterprise routinely targeted prominent religious, social, political leaders with violence'; his lawyer says 'authorities should give supporting evidence' of gangster using messaging apps

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The U.S. Department of Justice (DoJ) said on Wednesday that Lawrence Bishnoi, a Punjab-born gangster currently lodged in a high-security prison in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, used WhatsApp and other encrypted messaging applications as recently as December 2025 and January 2026 to allegedly extort and attempt to extort $5 million from victims in Los Angeles and Thousand Oaks in the U.S.

The DoJ has accused him and his associate Satinderjeet Singh, alias Goldy Brar, of ordering the assassination of pro-Khalistani activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar. It said the "enterprise routinely targeted prominent religious, social, and political leaders with violence, and used these high-profile acts to terrorise and extort members of the community".

For instance, in November 2023, Bishnoi claimed responsibility for a shooting that occurred at the Vancouver, Canada, residence of a prominent Indian actor and singer, and warned in a Facebook post written in Punjabi that "no one can save you from us".

Serious charges: Lawrence Bishnoi is currently lodged at Sabarmati jail in Ahmedabad. FILE PHOTO

According to his lawyer Rajni Khatri, Bishnoi is lodged at Sabarmati jail since 2023 in solitary confinement and is under 24/7 CCTV surveillance. The Union Home Ministry has invoked Section 303 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, which prohibits his movement outside the jail, and he participates in court hearings through videoconference. If police from outside the State have to interrogate him, they come to the prison.

According to a chargesheet filed by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in 2022 against Bishnoi and others, he has 84 cases registered against him in Delhi, Chandigarh, Rajasthan, and Punjab with the first case dating back to 2010.

Ms. Khatri said that Bishnoi has been discharged or acquitted in 40 other cases. "If he was using WhatsApp to carry out the extortion activities from jail, then authorities should give supporting evidence. He is under 24/7 surveillance in the prison. He only meets his legal team," she said. Before Sabarmati, Bishnoi was lodged for a year in a Punjab jail and in Delhi's Tihar jail prior to that.

There was no response from State or Union government officials on the allegations made by the U.S. authorities.

NIA chargesheet

The NIA's chargehseet echoed the allegations made by the U.S. DoJ about Bishnoi running his racket from the prison. The DoJ said that by "using contraband cellphones and other voice-over Internet protocol devices smuggled into his jail cell, Bishnoi personally directed political assassinations, murders, shootings, extortions, kidnappings, drug trafficking, human smuggling, and other crimes committed by members and associates of the Bishnoi enterprise worldwide".

In 2022, the NIA had said that Bishnoi "runs the entire operations of the gang from within the jail". "He is so adept in operating from inside the jail that he has not applied bail in any case since last many years," it had said.

But Ms. Khatri said Bishnoi did not apply for bail in the recent years as there are several cases registered against him and no one will come forward to secure a bail-bond for him.

For instance, the NIA chargesheet cited the conspiracy to murder Sidhu Moosewala. It stated that during the planning and execution of the killing, key accused persons were lodged in different prisons, including Bishnoi and Jaggu Bhagwanpuria in Tihar, Manpreet in Ferozepur jail, Saraj Singh Mantoo in Bathinda jail and Manmohan Singh in Mansa jail. Despite being incarcerated, they allegedly remained in communication with Brar, who coordinated with the jailed associates, and eventually tasked the shooters with carrying out the killing after Moosewala's security cover was reduced, the NIA had said.

The NIA had said that a considerable part of money generated through extortion activities is sent to Canada, the U.S., Dubai, Thailand, and Australia for the use of their foreign-based associates and family members, and also for funding the activities of "pro-Khalistan extremists".

The NIA had said that assisted by associates including Goldy Brar, Bishnoi allegedly expanded his network into a large criminal organisation.

Congress appoints new in-charge for Tamil Nadu, West Bengal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday appointed new All India Congress Committee (AICC) in-charge for Tamil Nadu and West Bengal as part of the party's ongoing organisational reshuffle.

A statement from AICC general secretary (organisation) K. C. Venugopal said Ghulam Ahmed Mir is the new AICC general secretary in-charge of Tamil Nadu in place of Girish Chodankar.

Mr. Mir was earlier the in-charge of West Bengal. Now, Prakash Joshi has been appointed in his place for the State.

On June 26, the party appointed new AICC in-charge for Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, and Haryana. While Sanjay Dutt replaced B. K. Hariprasad as the new Haryana in-charge, Mr. Hariprasad was appointed the new Karnataka Congress in-charge.

Lalji Desai became the new AICC in-charge for Odisha, replacing Ajay Kumar Lallu.

Rajendra Pal Gautam, who heads the Scheduled Caste department of the party, was named the new in-charge for Uttar Pradesh.

BJP govt. has lost credibility on all fronts, says SP chief

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

Opposition leaders in Uttar Pradesh hit out at the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party on Wednesday, claiming that the State government has completely lost its religious, cultural, political, and economic credibility in the wake of the allegations about embezzlement of donations at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav claimed that the disrepute affects Hindu devotees around the world and is leading to a withdrawal of funds by global investors.

"This incident has enraged the Sanatan community worldwide, as not only the religion but also the country is suffering disrepute due to the BJP's unrighteousness," Mr. Yadav said in a post on X..

Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee president Ajay Rai wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, demanding accountability over the embezzlement issue.

Cong. seeks Champat Rai's arrest, asks PM to apologise over temple donation row

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Wednesday demanded the immediate arrest of former Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust general secretary Champat Rai and sought an apology from Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his "mistake" in selecting Trust members.

As part of the principal Opposition party's continued focus on the issue of alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, senior Congress leader Shaktisinh Gohil addressed a press conference here. Mr. Gohil reiterated the party's demand for a Supreme Court-monitored investigation into the alleged irregularities and called for the immediate dissolution of the Trust.

"The Trust should be immediately dissolved and replaced by a new Trust. The composition of this new Trust should be decided collectively by the Shankaracharyas, a retired Supreme Court judge, representatives of the Nirmohi Akhara, and various seers and saints," the Congress leader said.

Shaktisinh Gohil

Mr. Modi ought to apologise to the country for his "mistake" in inducting people such as Mr. Rai into the Trust, instead of seers and saints, Mr. Gohil said.

'Diversion of funds'

The pattern of donations at the temple had raised serious questions about the possible diversion of funds, the Congress leader also alleged.

"Before the issue of theft of donations from the Ram Temple came to light, daily collections amounted to ₹16 lakh to ₹18 lakh. After the matter became public, this figure rose to ₹24 lakh to ₹26 lakh per day," Mr. Gohil claimed, adding that this gave rise to the suspicion that around ₹10 lakh a day may have been misappropriated earlier.

Describing the temple as a matter of faith for crores of people, Mr. Gohil said any alleged financial irregularity linked to it could not be tolerated.

Later, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh sharpened the party's political attack on the Prime Minister, saying Mr. Modi had been at the forefront in taking credit for the Ram Temple but was now "shying away" from taking responsibility for the alleged theft of donations.

"The Congress demands: dissolve the Trust, arrest the real culprits, conduct an investigation under Supreme Court supervision, form a new Trust and apologise to the nation. Modi *ji*, break your silence," he said on X.

Donation racket alleged at temple in Madhya Pradesh; probe ordered

Mehul Malpani
BHOPAL

The Madhya Pradesh authorities have formed an investigation committee to probe an alleged "parallel donation" racket, fraud, and financial irregularities that have come to light at the famous Maa Baglamukhi Temple in Nalkheda in Agar Malwa district, officials said.

The temple is managed by a government committee. It is alleged that a parallel, "unauthorised committee" was operating on the temple premises, accepting donations made in cash and valuable ornaments, by issuing fake receipts.

District Collector Preeti Yadav on Tuesday formed a three-member committee. The report is to be submitted within seven days. According to Ms. Yadav's order, complaints have been received of financial irregularities by a non-governmental committee, which was allegedly collecting donations separately from the official committee, and using private bank accounts.

It has been tasked with probing the amount of cash and jewellery received, and whether any employee or official of the temple administration was involved in the alleged fraud. The amount of fraud is yet to be calculated, the authorities said. "It could be a significant amount since it looks like an organised racket with receipts and counters," a district administration official told *The Hindu*.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER,
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, SUNABEDA.
email : serwsbd2003@yahoo.com
Letter No.: 3199 Date:07/07/2026

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1. Name of the Work : Construction of Road Works - 6 Nos.
2. Class of Contractor : "B" Class & "A" Class of (Odisha PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authority.
3. Estimated Cost : Various from Rs.104.86 Lakhs to Rs.443.38 Lakhs (Approximately)
4. Details of projects : As per Annexure attached.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender online for bidding		Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of opening of tender	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bids
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sunabeda	CCERWCSBD - Online - 27/2026-27	10.07.2026 at 11.00 A.M.	28.07.2026 up to 05.00 P.M.	27.07.2026 up to 2.00 P.M.	29.07.2026 at 11.00 A.M.	To be intimated separately

5. The details of works can be seen from the web site : https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in
6. Any Corrigendum / Addendum will be displayed in the above e-tender web site.

Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sunabeda.
25001/681/2627
OIPR-25001/25182/1/26-27/0053

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No change in Punjab Congress leadership, Warring will continue as unit chief: Baghel

Vikas Vasudeva
CHANDIGARH

Amid the ongoing power tussle in the Punjab Congress, the party's State in-charge, Bhupesh Baghel, on Wednesday ruled out the possibility of leadership change, asserting that Amarinder Singh Raja Warring would continue as the Punjab Congress president, even as party leaders were making efforts to resolve the ongoing issues through dialogue.

Mr. Baghel's remark came at a time when internal strife surrounding power control within the Punjab Congress has been intensifying ahead of the 2027 Assembly polls.

Bhupesh Baghel

"When the [party] high command takes a decision, it is not changed," said Mr. Baghel, responding to presspersons on the possibility of a change in the State leadership. Asserting that repeatedly changing the decision surrounding the leadership was not a child's play, he said Mr. Warring would continue as Punjab Pradesh Congress president.

Unit revamped

On July 1, the All India Congress Committee revamped the Punjab unit. While Mr. Warring was retained as the PPCC chief, former Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi was appointed to lead the campaign committee ahead of the Assembly elections. Mr. Channi, a Lok Sabha member, is believed to be upset with the revamp. He, along with a faction of his supporters, reportedly had been pressing for a meeting with the party's central leadership. Mr. Baghel said he would soon meet Mr. Channi.

Meanwhile, Congress MP Gurjeet Singh Aujla met Mr. Channi and pointed out that senior party leaders were making efforts to resolve the ongoing issues through dialogue.

Improved rain will boost kharif sowing: Agriculture Minister

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

After a high-level meeting here on Wednesday to review the El Niño conditions, Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said the monsoon situation in the country had improved.

The overall rainfall deficit, after recording a 33% deficit in June, had reduced to 24% in July. He said the Centre was closely monitoring the situation.

He exuded confidence that rainfall would gain further momentum during July, leading to an acceleration in kharif sowing. Kharif sowing had so far been completed on 350.85 lakh hectares, approximately 91.95 lakh hectares lower than in the corresponding period last year, he said.

INBRIEF

DRDO conducts successful flight test of Pinaka rocket

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on Wednesday successfully conducted a flight test of the Pinaka long range guided rocket from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur, validating its user-defined minimum strike range of 60 km. The rocket executed all planned in-flight manoeuvres and hit the designated target with high precision, following the predicted trajectory, the Defence Ministry said. Range instrumentation deployed during the trial tracked the rocket throughout its flight. The rocket was launched from an in-service Pinaka launcher, demonstrating the system's ability to fire different variants of the Pinaka rocket family with varying ranges from the same launcher, enhancing operational flexibility.

SC seeks govt., CBSE response to plea by overseas students

The Supreme Court on Wednesday sought responses from the Union government and the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on a petition challenging the Board's March 27 assessment scheme for regular overseas Class 12 students in West Asian countries whose Board examinations were cancelled owing to the conflict in West Asia earlier this year. Appearing for nearly 30 regular students from the Gulf region, counsel submitted before a Bench comprising Justices K. V. Viswanathan and Alok Aradhe that the students were aggrieved by the assessment scheme.

Over 90,000 hit as rain wreaks havoc in Arunachal Pradesh

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

More than 94,200 people in Arunachal Pradesh across 333 villages in 26 districts have been affected by fresh spells of heavy rainfall triggering floods and landslides.

The monsoonal fury has damaged infrastructure and crops across these districts, the State Emergency Operation Centre said in its latest report. Upper Siang is the worst-hit district, followed by Siang and Kra-Daadi. During the past 24 hours, flooding, landslides, and rockslides were reported from Changlang, Upper Subansiri, and East Kameng districts.

The rain-induced disasters have claimed four lives in the State so far, officials said. Two women remain missing in Keyi Panyor.

The Army and the Air Force have deployed helicopters to rescue stranded people or provide relief materials, the officials also said. Teams from the National Disaster Response Force, State Disaster Response Force, and the armed forces have been conducting relief and rescue operations. Crops on 334.2 hectares of farmland have been damaged

7 rescued, 11 trapped as building collapses at Pune waste plant

Building collapsed after a huge mound of accumulated waste loosened by rain crashed onto it, says chief of Pimpri-Chinchwad corporation

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

An under-construction section of a building at a waste-to-energy plant in Moshi in Pune district of Maharashtra collapsed on Wednesday afternoon, trapping 18 workers.

Seven of them have been rescued and efforts are on to bring out another 11 workers.

The structure, being developed by the Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation under a public-private partnership model, collapsed after a huge mound of accumulated waste piled on the premises came loose during heavy rain and hit the building, said the corporation's commissioner, Vijay Suryawanshi.

Emergency responders, including disaster management units and local police, and senior municipal officers reached the accident site. Ambulances were pressed into service.

A municipal spokesperson said rescue teams used equipment to lift concrete slabs and steel girders even as family members of the workers gathered at the site.

Maharashtra Minister Girish Mahajan, who visited the site in the evening, said contact could be established with three of those trapped. "But the rubble has fallen on their legs and efforts are underway to remove it and bring them out. All agencies are working in coordination, and we are hopeful of completing the rescue operation by Thursday morning," Mr. Mahajan said.

(With inputs from PTI)

Search and rescue operations under way after a waste mound crashed onto a building in Pune on Wednesday. ANI

One killed, five trapped in Delhi building collapse

NEW DELHI
One person died and three were rescued after a three-story under-construction building collapsed in the Rohini area of Delhi on Wednesday. Around five people are still feared to be trapped under the debris, according to the police.
The collapse occurred at 4.20 p.m. near an MCD school in Sector 16 of Rohini as heavy rain lashed several parts of the national capital.

Lonavala, parts of Maharashtra report 'exceptional' rain

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

The Western Ghats saw exceptional rainfall, with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) reporting that Lonavala, a popular tourist destination, recorded 1,300 mm of rainfall from Sunday to Wednesday morning. On Tuesday alone, 525 mm of rainfall was recorded. In the IMD's scheme of categorisation, rainfall over 200 mm is considered "extremely high" rainfall.

Palghar station in coastal Maharashtra reported 304 mm on Tuesday, against a normal of mere 26.7 mm – a 1,000% rise. Raigad saw 115 mm against a normal of 33 mm.

Mahabaleshwar in Satara district received 513 mm of rainfall on Monday, which, according to the IMD's historical records, is the highest 24-hour rainfall ever recorded in the area. The hill station recorded nearly one-tenth of its average annual rainfall (5,710 mm) in a single day.

The rain comes on the back of a "depression", a pre-cyclonic collection of clouds that originated in the Bay of Bengal and monsoon winds from the Arabian Sea. The heavy rain has so far wiped out the monsoon deficits of several coastal regions in Maharashtra and triggered landslides, tunnel collapse, and disruptions.

Officials at a site after multiple landslides occurred at Lonavala in Pune district.

This is an El Niño year, meaning that rainfall over India is expected to be "below normal", according to the IMD's forecasts. However, experts say that pockets and periods of heavy rain can occur even during rain-deficient years. "The current monsoon activity we are witnessing is expected to last until July 10. After this, no other significant 'low-pressure' systems [pre-cyclonic storms] are expected to form on the near horizon," said O.P. Sreejith, senior meteorologist at the IMD in Pune. "The outlook for rain in July overall is expected to be 'below normal,'" he added.

PF interest to be credited by July 15, says Minister

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The annual interest on Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) deposits will be credited to subscribers' accounts by July 15, Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Wednesday.

Talking to presspersons on the Centralised IT Enabled Services (CITES) project for updating the database of the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), the Minister said interest amounting to over ₹1.44 lakh crore would be credited to accounts of 34 crore members. The Union Finance Ministry had recently approved the recommendation of the EPFO's Central Board of Trustees to provide interest at the rate of 8.25%.

Over 42% rise in female enrolment in higher education since 2014: report

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

India's higher education sector has recorded significant growth over the past decade, with total student enrolment rising to 4.5 crore in the 2023-24 academic year.

According to the latest reports of the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) for 2022-23 and 2023-24, released by the Education Ministry, this marks a 31.5% rise from 3.42 crore recorded in 2014-15. The multi-year survey data reflect an institutional participation rate of over 90%, drawing metrics from 59,533 higher education institutions across the country to outline major strides in inclusivity, female participation, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) adoption.

Steady progress

Women, STEM learners and marginalised communities drive sustained growth in higher education

	2014-2015	2022-2023	2023-2024	Growth since 2014-15
Total enrolment	3.42 cr.	4.46 cr.	4.50 cr.	↑ 31.5%
Female enrolment	1.57 cr.	2.18 cr.	2.24 cr.	↑ 42.2%
Overall GER	23.7	29.5	30.0	—
Female GER	22.9	30.2	31.2	—
STEM enrolment	91.5 lakh	—	1.02 cr.	↑ 11.4%

The data are self-reported voluntarily by registered institutions via a web-based portal utilising a data capture format. While the Education Ministry executes built-in validations and scrutiny checks, primary data quality remains the responsibility of the respective institutions.

The enrolment of female students in higher educational institutions rose from 1.57 crore in 2014-15 to 2.18 crore in 2022-23 and 2.24 crore in 2023-24, marking a 42.2% increase since 2014-15.

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) stands at 1.08 for 2023-24, remaining consistently above 1.0 for seven consecutive years. This underlines a trend where female participation systematically outpaces male participation.

Also, India's gross enrolment ratio (calculated for the 18-23 age bracket) reached 30 in 2023-24. Notably, the female GER scaled to 31.2, distinctly higher than the national baseline. For the Scheduled Castes, the enrolment jumped 51.4% since 2014-15, reaching 69.72 lakh. The GER for SC students grew from 18.9 to 27.8. For the Scheduled Tribes, enrolment witnessed a 75.7% rise, climbing to 28.83 lakh, with the GER up from 13.5 to 22.8. With regard to the Other Backward Classes, student numbers grew 60.2%, from 1.13 crore to 1.80 crore over 10 years.

Enrolment in STEM fields climbed to 1.02 crore in 2023-24. "Mirroring the overall demographic shift, the female share in STEM programmes climbed steadily to 44%, up from 38.4% a decade ago," the report said.

WHO flags growing inequities in access to cancer treatment

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

With an estimated 20.6 million new cases and close to 10 million deaths annually, cancer remains the second leading cause of death globally after cardiovascular disease, the World Health Organization's (WHO) first ever survey of people affected by cancer, released on Wednesday, said.

Beyond its impact on health, cancer remains one of the most financially and socially devastating challenges a household can face, the report said. The WHO survey found that at least 45% of affected people experience financial hardship, more than half report mental health challenges, and nearly all caregivers report strain, including unpaid services and social isolation.

The Global Status Report on Cancer, 2026, released by the WHO and the International Agency for Research on Cancer, warns that, without action, annual cases of cancer are projected to rise to nearly 35 million by 2050.

The report also indicates persistent and widening inequities in access to prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and supportive care, leaving millions of people without the services they need. Its analysis shows that while 87% of women with breast cancer survive at five years after their diagnosis in high-income countries, only about 42% do so in low-income countries. Fewer than one in three countries currently include cancer care in their universal health coverage packages.

"Cancer is a deeply personal disease that touches nearly all of us. But whether a person survives cancer should never depend on where they were born or what they earn," WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said, adding, "The inequities documented in this report are not inevitable; they are the consequence of choices, and they can be reversed through stronger and unified action."

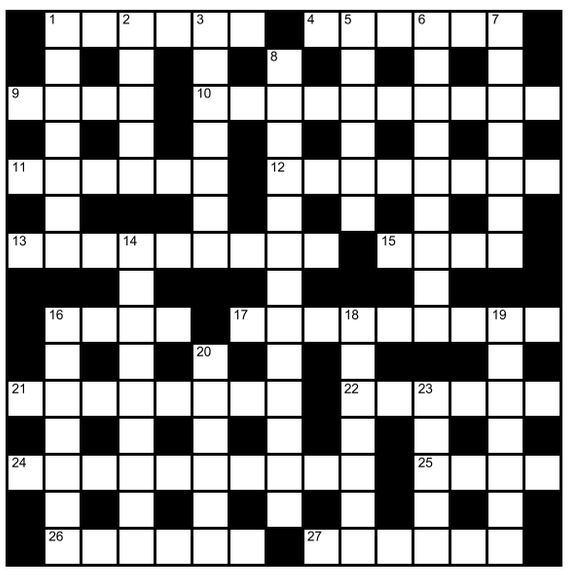
The burden of cancer varies across regions. In 2024, Asia accounted for the largest share, with more than half of all cancer cases (50.7%) and deaths (56.5%) reflecting its large population. Europe carried a disproportionately high burden, contributing 21% of global cases and 20% of deaths despite having only about 9% of the world's population. In contrast, many countries in Africa and parts of Asia experience lower incidence but disproportionately high mortality.

TH CROSSWORD + 14841

(set by Vidwan)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Drop 'breather' into sports period (6)
4 Setting one inside 1760 yards to run naked (6)
9 Good service! Unending determination! (4)
10 Feature shaped inch by inch, possibly? (6,4)
11 Miner tailed shepherd dog (6)
12 Most open taunt! King shows reserve beyond normal limit! (8)
13 Church official reportedly gives media a short speech? (9)
15 Flabbergast, unnerve a bit (4)
16 Following experienced founder (4)
17 India field after playing spin like role models (9)
21 Ace American coach, one promoted for a European (8)
22 Metal most of our country bums internally (6)
24 Maharaja in Baroda, rejected recipe for special cake ingredient (6,4)
25 Pile of woody in poppy resort (4)
26 Smart doctor gets sloppy, loses face (6)
27 Build-up about hot, new mark (6)

Down

1 Standard large court, out of bounds establishment (7)
2 Before some transeunt illegality (5)
3 Wander to find your head fixated on devices (7)
5 Substitute Scot could be licentious (2,4)
6 Popular Caribbean state hill where culture can be developed (9)
7 Set symbol of purity possibly for centurions (7)
8 A continental organisation's feud internally on expansion (8,5)
14 Very high style gem, essentially (9)
16 Bad, kind of rad fabric (7)
18 Toilet embodying a cold isolation (7)
19 Brain cell charged by source of the atomic particle (7)
20 Nothing breaks grave like methane from manure (6)
23 Intensity of passing advanced, overwhelmed by quiet (5)

SUDOKU

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

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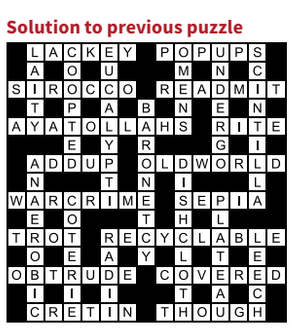
DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Efficacy of Thayar *kumkum*

When one is tested by the vagaries of life, one instinctively turns to the Supreme Being with a prayer on one's lips. When one is in the unenviable position of watching a dear one suffer from illness of one kind or the other, one automatically turns to Thayar, the Divine Mother, praying to Her for the alleviation of the loved one's suffering. Often, friends and relatives join in such prayers, with many going the extra mile and procuring *kumkum* from a Thayar or Ambal temple in the vicinity and applying it on the forehead of the afflicted. The *kumkum* from Senkamalavalli Thayar sannidhi in Mannargudi Rajagopala Swami temple in particular is considered highly efficacious, said P. Swaminathan.

Many of the Vaishnavite preceptors have composed songs on the deities, Rajagopala Swami and Senkamalavalli Thayar, and the temple itself is referred to as *abhimana stalam* (temple to be proud of). Like the Azhwars, many devotees are drawn to this temple. Kanchi Maha Periyava, the 68th Pontiff of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam, has also drawn attention to Senkamalavalli Thayar. He said it is enough if a devotee receives *kumkum* from Senkamalavalli Thayar sannidhi and smears it on his forehead, even severe illnesses would get cured. As She resides in the heart of Perumal, Her *kumkum* has the quality to nourish, uplift and purify a devotee's heart and mind.

Thayar or Mahalakshmi is the goddess of fortune who not only grants boons but also ensures that only good things come the way of Her devotees. It is not very easy to gain the grace of Perumal but with Thayar by one's side, one can even attain one's ultimate goal.

INBRIEF

MSIL starts Battery Energy Storage System at Kharkhoda

Maruti Suzuki India Ltd. (MSIL) has announced the commissioning of a 1 MWh Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at its Kharkhoda manufacturing facility. In 2025, the company had installed a 20 MWp solar power project at this facility. The BESS will help in storing excess electricity generated during low-demand periods or facility holidays and make it available for use when required, MSIL said. In addition, it would help improve grid stability. As a pilot initiative, BESS has been integrated into the Kharkhoda facility's internal electricity distribution network.

PGIM MF pauses subscription to three international funds

PGIM Mutual Fund (MF) said it had suspended subscription to three of its international funds temporarily in order to comply with SEBI's cap on overseas investment. Announcements that fresh subscriptions into PGIM India Global Equity Opportunities Fund of Fund, PGIM India Emerging Markets Equity Fund of Fund, and PGIM India Global Select Real Estate Securities Fund of Fund (FoF) were already made earlier in March and June 2026. Accordingly, the subscriptions for SIPs into those schemes will not be available beginning July 9, the Asset Management Company (AMC) said in a notice.

AI company UST ropes in Anthropic to adopt Claude

UST, an AI and technology transformation solutions company, on Wednesday, entered into a strategic alliance with Anthropic, an AI safety and research company that developed the Claude family of models. According to a UST communique, the partnership is focused on helping Global 1,000 enterprises become AI-native. UST will embed Claude into the engineering environments and operational workflows it designs, builds, and runs for clients, helping organisations move from isolated AI pilots to trusted, enterprise-scale AI embedded in the systems that drive their business. UST is making a significant investment in AI by training and certifying 20,000 associates worldwide.

Indices dip 2% amid renewed U.S.-Iran tension in West Asia

U.S. withdraws from the ceasefire; Brent crude futures spike by 7.4% in two sessions, trading at more than $77.3 a barrel; Rupee tanks 52 paise to settle at 95.48 against the U.S. dollar

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

Benchmark Nifty and Sensex dipped over 2% to 23,882.05 and 76,503.60 points respectively after renewed Iran-U.S. clashes sent global oil prices soaring on Wednesday.

The indices opened about 0.6% down from the previous close and declined slowly until 2 p.m., after which both tumbled to the day's close.

Brent crude futures spiked by 7.4% in two sessions, trading at more than $77.3 a barrel on Wednesday, as compared with $72 a barrel on Monday. This, however, is nowhere close to the levels between March and April, when the war escalated almost everyday. "I think it's over. I don't want to deal with them any more, they're scum," U.S. President Trump said when asked if the ceasefire with Iran was over, at the NATO summit at Turkey on Wednesday.

Crash course: The indices opened about 0.6% down from the previous close and tumbled to the day's close. PAUL NORONHA

News reports on the U.S. President's remarks sent global markets crashing.

"Elevated crude oil prices bear negatively on India, the world's third-largest importer and consumer of oil, as they inflate the import bill, stoke inflationary pressures, and weigh on the trajectory of economic growth," said Nandish Shah, deputy vice president, HDFC Securities. The rupee tanked 52 paise to settle at 95.48 against the U.S. dollar on Wednesday.

"Geopolitical concerns have lifted the risk premium amid heightened volatility. In the near term, USD-INR is expected to face resistance at 95.80 and support at 94.95, with the bias now favouring dollar bulls," said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities.

India added 52.5 mtpa regasification capacity in 2025: IGU World LNG Report

Santosh V. Perumal
CHENNAI

India added 52.5 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) of regasification capacity across eight terminals, as it surpassed Spain to become the fourth largest market for regasification capacity in 2025, according to the International Gas Union's (IGU) World LNG Report.

Rising demand for fertilizer, city gas and utilities as well as the government's push for enhanced share of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the energy mix was seen helping the country

Among operational LNG regasification terminals in India, Dahej LNG (17.5 mtpa) stands out as the only ultra-large facility and ranks as the sixth largest globally.

Large-scale category

The remaining seven terminals fall into the large-scale category, each with a regasification capacity of 5 mtpa.

In 2025, India commissioned two LNG regasification projects, including one new onshore terminal, Chhara LNG, with a regasification capacity of 5 mtpa, and one expansion project at the Dabhol LNG terminal through the completion of its breakwater infrastructure.

The project has effectively enhanced the terminal's operational efficiency and has increased its capacity to 5 mtpa from 2.9 mtpa. Previously idle during the monsoon season, the Dabhol LNG terminal now enables uninterrupted, year-round operations after commissioning of the breakwater.

India currently has four LNG projects under construction, including one new terminal and three expansion projects at existing facilities, including the expansion of India's largest terminal, Dahej LNG.

Dahej LNG terminal ranks as the sixth largest globally.

Once commissioned, these projects are expected to add a combined 11.3 mtpa of regasification capacity by 2028.

According to the International Energy Agency, India's natural gas consumption is forecast to increase by nearly 60% by 2030, driven by robust growth in city gas distribution, industrial demand, and power generation.

India's LNG regasification utilisation fell to about 47% in 2025, down from 58% in 2024, reflecting a combination of weaker LNG imports during the summer months and an increase in regasification capacity following recent infrastructure additions.

Asia led the global LNG regasification capacity additions in 2025, with all new capacity coming from China and India, contributing 15.1 mtpa and 7.1 mtpa, representing 24% and 11.3% of global additions, respectively.

Although the Asia Pacific remained the largest LNG-importing region, IGU found imports into Asia fell by 9.2 MT to 108.7 MT, driven mainly by lower intake in China and India.

MRPL said to cancel West Asia vessel charter

Reuters
NEW DELHI

Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals has cancelled a vessel charter it had booked for loading crude oil from Iraq, two sources with knowledge of the matter said.

One of them said MRPL has cited "technical reasons" for not going ahead with the chartering of the Aframax tanker Jasmin Joy.

It was not clear whether the chartering failed due to heightened tension in the Strait of Hormuz, the sources said, after attacks on some ships in the key waterway prompted maritime authorities to raise the threat risk for transiting vessels to "severe".

Tata Motors PV eyes 20% market share by 2031, says Chairman

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Having grown from the sixth position in the Indian passenger vehicles segment to the number two player in 2026 in six years, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd. is now aiming for a 20% market share and an annual sales volume of over 1.2 million vehicles in five years, said Chairman N. Chandrasekaran.

"Looking at this decade of transformation from FY20 to FY31: we will grow the business by 10x. Our ambition is to scale to over 1.2 million annual sales, achieve 20% market share and double-digit EBITDA margin," said Mr. Chandrasekaran on Wednesday addressing shareholders at the company's AGM.

Over the past six years the domestic PV business had grown nearly five times in volumes

He said the company would strengthen its portfolio with the launch of six new nameplates and over 20 product refreshes and make electric vehicles (EV) contribute more than 30% of its sales volumes.

The Chairman said over the past six years (FY20-26) the domestic passenger vehicle business had grown nearly five times in volumes and close to six times in revenue.

SEBI amends registration fee rule for FPIs

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Markets regulator SEBI has replaced the existing U.S. dollar-denominated registration fee for Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) with a rupee-based fee structure and has amended the rules governing FPIs.

SEBI has revised the registration fee for Category-I FPIs from $2,500 to ₹2.3 lakh. Similarly, registration fee for FPIs belonging to Category II has been revised from $250 to ₹23,000. Application fee for general relaxations or exemptions from strict enforcement of regulations is revised from $1,000 to ₹90,000 in eligible foreign exchange equivalent.

'TRAI's attempt to regulate Truecaller makes 'no sense'

Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

Truecaller hit out against the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) for reportedly trying to bring the caller ID firm under regulation. The move comes months into TRAI's mandate that promotional and banking calls respectively use 140- and 160-series numbers and apps such as Truecaller whitelist these numbers from spam warnings.

While Truecaller was doubtful of TRAI's authority to order apps – as opposed to telcos – to whitelist such numbers, it deferred to the instructions. Now, the firm says, the whitelisting has led to a "significant" increase in spam calls. Truecaller CEO Rishit Jhunjhunwala wrote on X, formerly Twitter, that "[o]ver 51 million calls from both series go unanswered every single day," and "[t]his happened in front of our eyes and we are mandated not to tell users those calls are spam."

As the number of such calls blocked by Truecaller users mounted to over one lakh a day, Mr. Jhunjhunwala said, "We said enough is enough," and "built the 'Frequently Blocked' badge," which was displayed even on whitelisted numbers. Banks have been using the series, sanctioned by TRAI earlier this month, to reach out to customers with loan, credit and other offers.

Rishit Jhunjhunwala

Mr. Jhunjhunwala's riposte on X came a day after a financial daily reported TRAI took exception to the labelling of calls from this series and wrote to the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) seeking the authority to regulate caller ID apps. MeitY, whose remit includes regulation of online services, did not respond to a request for comment. Neither did TRAI.

App regulation

Multiple Ministries within the government have gradually asserted themselves into private platforms' platform design over the last few months. Last year, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), which regulates telecom operators and Internet service providers, issued directions to WhatsApp that would require the messaging app to only work if the registered SIM card was currently inside the phone of a user.

MeitY, on the other hand, has also taken up the issue with WhatsApp's username feature, which would allow people to contact others and be contacted without disclosing their phone numbers, and has asked the firm to pause the feature. TRAI's discussions with Truecaller preceded both moves, in which it told the firms to whitelist 140- and 160-series calls.

The regulator made a provision for the two series last year with the Telecom Commercial Communications Customer Preference (Second Amendment) Regulations, 2025, last February. Those amendments, TRAI said, were aimed at "tightening the threshold norms for action against [unsolicited commercial communications], bringing in higher accountability of senders and telemarketers, curbing the misuse of 10-digit numbers for telemarketing, implementing stricter measures against unregistered telemarketers."

TRAI's attempt to regulate apps like Truecaller "makes absolutely no sense," Mr. Jhunjhunwala said. "We are the good actors who are helping hundreds of millions of Indians every day, including the vulnerable elderly, to have a trusted communication experience. Instead, they want to enable bad actors and give them an open playground to spam and scam us by censoring community information."

West Asia conflict fuels 78% jump in BMW India's EV demand

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

The conflict in West Asia triggered a 78% surge in demand for electric vehicles (EVs) at BMW India, helping the luxury carmaker post its strongest first-half performance with sales up 17% year-on-year.

Between January and June this year, BMW Group India sold 9,075 cars, including 2,359 electric vehicles. The company also retained a 69% share of India's luxury EV market.

"The conflict in West Asia prompted many customers who were considering internal combustion engine models to switch to EVs. Since we locally assemble both our petrol and electric models, we had the flexibility to quickly shift output and inventory from petrol to EVs in line with demand," said Hardeep Singh Brar, president & CEO, BMW Group India.

EVs now account for 26% of BMW India's sales.

On E20, he said BMW's petrol models were E25-compliant and "our cars are faring quite well". However, any transition to higher ethanol blends should be backed by clear policy timelines. He also called for a closer scrutiny of concerns over fuel adulteration amid social media complaints about vehicle performance.

KALYAN SINGH SUPER SPECIALTY CANCER INSTITUTE
C.G. City, Sultanpur Road, Lucknow-226002
Website: https://cancerinstitute.edu.in, Email: jdmm.sscih@gmail.com
TENDER NOTICE
Offers are invited through GeM bidding from Original Equipment Manufacture/Direct Importers/Authorized Distributors (declared by principal firm only) for the supply & installation of **various Medical Equipment/Items for the various departments of the Institute.**
The Vendors are required to submit their offers on GeM portal only in two bids system i.e. Technical and Financial bid as per norms of GeM Portal.
For more detailed information you may please visit the GeM portal **www.gem.gov.in**. The list of the equipment will also be available on our website **https:// cancerinstitute.edu.in** for reference only. The offer will be accepted only on GeM portal with terms and conditions as mentioned against bidding documents.
The Director reserves the right to accept or reject any tender in part or full without assigning any reason thereof.
Advt No. KSSSCI/Tender-08/2026-27 **Joint DIRECTOR (MM)**

U.T. OF LAKSHADWEEP
LAKSHADWEEP DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
(A GOVT. OF INDIA UNDERTAKING)
Ph: 04842323448/458 E-mail: amindivi@asianetindia.com
F.No: LDCL/WO/2026-2 Dt : 27.06.2026
TENDER NOTICE
E-tenders are hereby invited from eligible contractors empanelled under the existing Rate Contract for the work of removal and sale of waste oil generated onboard twenty-two (22) vessels of the Union Territory of Lakshadweep Administration (UTLA), operated by Lakshadweep Development Corporation Limited (LDCL), in accordance with the terms and conditions stipulated in the tender document.
Tender Reference No.: LDCL/WO/2026-2
Last Date & Time for Submission: 15.07.2026 at 03:00 PM
The detailed tender documents, including scope of work, eligibility criteria, and terms and conditions, are available on the official e-procurement portal at **https://tendersutl.gov.in**
For any assistance related to the e-tendering process, bidders may contact the Help Desk at 0120-4001002, 0120-4001005, or 0120-6277787.
Sd/- MD (LDCL)

SRI KARAN NARENDRA AGRICULTURE UNIVERSITY
No. :- F. ( )/RKVY/SABI/2026/36 Date :- 03/07/2026
ADVERTISEMENT
Programme for Financial Assistance for Agri Startups in the form of Grant-in-aid from Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, GoI
Applications are invited from Startups, Students and Individuals for COHORT-12 for the F.Y. 2026-27
S-ABI, Jobner, an agri-business incubator funded by PM-RKVY, is organizing incubation programme with the following key features under COHORT 12:

SOP (Student Orientation Programme)	ABHYUDAY (For Pre Seed Stage / Ideation Stage)	KALPVRIKSH (For Seed Stage Startups)
• Expert Assistance • 1 Month Training (Residential/Online as per the Government directives) • Grant-in-Aid upto Rs. 4 Lakhs	• Expert Assistance • 1 Month Training (Residential/Online as per the Government directives) • Grant-in-Aid upto Rs. 5 Lakhs	• I.T. Equipped Lab • Expert Assistance • 1 Month Training (Residential/Online as per the Government directives) • Grant-in-Aid upto Rs. 25 Lakhs

For more details please visit our website **https://www.sknau.ac.in/sabi.** Last date to receive online applications is tentatively 31st July 2026.
Raj.Samwad/C/26/6378 **P.I. (S-ABI), SKNAU, Jobner**

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY
RE- E-TENDER NOTICE
Re-Tender No. 03/2026-27/SE/PPD/KCH
Construction of 5 MLD Capacity STP with Co treatment units at Elamkulam for Kochi Corporation under AMRUT 2.0. [Design, Construction and Commissioning of 5 MLD capacity STP with Co treatment based on MBBR Technology inclusive of all Mechanical and Electrical components followed by Operation and maintenance (O&M) for 5 years] Cost of Tender form:Rs. 19,518/- (inclusive of GST); EMD:Rs. 500,000/- ; Date and time of Opening Tender: 03/08/2026 3.30 pm ; Last date of receipt of tender: 01/08/2026 3.00 pm; Phone:8547638502 ; E-mail- seppdregionkochi@gmail.com
Sd/-, Superintending Engineer, PPDIU & Sewerage Circle, KWA, Kochi - 11

PUNJAB STATE WAREHOUSING CORPORATION
SCO 74-75, BANK SQUARE, SECTOR-17B CHANDIGARH
PBX: 0172-5197847, 5197846
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
PSWC invites online tenders through GeM Portal for creation of 1.75 LMT godown capacities at 06 locations in the State of Punjab for guaranteed lease of 10 years on Build, Own and Operate/Lease basis for storage requirements of FCI under two bid system 'Technical Bid' and 'Financial Bid'.
NIT (alongwith GeM Bid IDs) is available on Department's website i.e. **https://pswc.in**
PSWC reserves the right to scrap the tender at any stage without assigning any reason and PSWC will not be held liable for any costs and consequences incurred by the intending bidders.
Note: Any corrigendum(s)/Notification(s) to this Notice Inviting E-Tender shall be published Department's website & GeM Portal.
1004/12/2026-27/13074 **Managing Director, PSWC**

BENGALURU SOUTH CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Padmanabhanagara Division, Opp. to Sagar Hospitals,
Kumaraswamy Layout, Bengaluru-560 111.
No: EE(PN)/TEND/04/2026-27 Date: 08.07.2026
TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through GOK KPPP only) (Two Cover System)
website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in
The Executive Engineer. Padmanabhanagara Division, BSCC, Bengaluru invites tenders from eligible contractors registered in Greater Bengaluru Authority (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) or equivalent registration with CPWD / KPWD / Railways / MES or any State Government Organizations for the constructions of work detailed in the table below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1.	Resurfacing / Providing Concrete to existing roads, Improvements to drains and footpath in Ward No-180 Banashankari Temple Ward. (2nd Call) **Approximate Amount put to Tender (₹ in Lakhs) 200.00, EMD Amount in ₹: 3,00,000/-.**

Calendar of Events: (1) Date of down loading of tender documents: **09.07.2026. (2)** Last date for submission queries of **17.07.2026 within 3:00 p.m. (3)** Pre bid meeting will be held on **17.07.2026 at 4:00 p.m.** in the Office of the Chief Engineer, Jayanagar Zone (Zone-1), BSCC, 9th Main, 9th Cross, Jayangara 2nd Block, Bengaluru-560 011. **(4)** Last Date & Time for receipt of tenders: **23.07.2026 up to 4:00 p.m. (5)** Date & Time for Opening Technical bid: **24-07-2026 at 4:05 p.m. (6)** Date & Time for Opening Financial bid: **After the approval of Technical Bid.**
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Padmanabhanagara Division, BSCC.

JERUSALEM

Trump's Board of Peace planning pilot 'humanitarian zone' in Gaza

AFP

U.S. President Donald Trump's Board of Peace is planning a pilot "humanitarian zone" in southern Gaza which would aim to accommodate tens of thousands of vetted Palestinian civilians, a board official said. The pilot zone would be secured by multinational troops from the International Stabilisation Force. AFP

NAJAF

Funeral processions begin in Najaf for Iran's Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

AP

Funeral processions for Iran's late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei began on Wednesday in the Iraqi city of Najaf with thousands of mourners present. Muhammad Taqi al-Hakim, a senior scholar at the Najaf seminary, led the funeral prayers at the Shrine of Imam Ali, the Prophet Muhammad's son-in-law. AP

CAIRO

Drone strikes on civilian vehicles kill 20 in Sudan, say rights groups

REUTERS

Drone strikes on civilian vehicles headed to social gatherings in Sudan have killed over 20 people in recent day, according to rights groups, as the use of unmanned aircraft becomes increasingly common in the north eastern African country's war. The Sudan Doctors Network blamed Tuesday's attack on the RSF. AP

ANKARA

'U.S. will give Ukraine licence to produce Patriot defence systems'

AFP

U.S. President Donald Trump said at a NATO summit on Wednesday in Turkiye that the U.S. will give Ukraine a licence to make Patriot air defence systems to counter missile attacks from Russia in their more than four-year war, a huge coup for Kyiv which has long requested the technology. AP

Ukraine says its drones hit 3 refineries and tankers

Reuters
MOSCOW

Ukrainian drones struck three Russian oil refineries, Russian tankers on the Sea of Azov, and pipeline pumping stations, Ukrainian and Russian officials said on Wednesday, in a major night of strikes ranging from the Ukrainian border to the Urals mountains.

Russia has been suffering from acute fuel shortages in some regions as Ukraine wages a drone campaign against its oil refineries and energy infrastructure, with Kyiv hitting targets ever further from its own territory.

Kyiv on Monday hit the Omsk refinery, Russia's largest, deep inside Siberia, around 2,700 km from Ukrainian-held territory.

In separate statements, Ukraine's general staff and special forces said drones had hit the TANECO and TAIF-NK oil refineries in Tatarstan's Nizhnekamsk, the Saratov oil refinery, and the Borisoglebsk military airbase in Voronezh region.

Ukraine also said it had struck a petroleum products pumping station in Russia's Bashkortostan.

Indian national among inmates killed in Sri Lanka's prison riots

The deceased has been identified as Unnikrishnan S..; the death toll in the riots rises to 28, with one more prison officer dying of injuries; over 100 people have been injured; riots were triggered by a clash between rival gangs, say authorities

Meera Srinivasan
COLOMBO

An Indian national was among the inmates killed in Sri Lanka's prison riots on Monday, Colombo-based official sources told *The Hindu*, identifying the victim as Unnikrishnan S., aged 73 years. On Wednesday, the death toll from the riots, one of the most gruesome episodes of prison violence in the island's history, rose to 28, with one more prison officer – seven were already reported dead – succumbing to serious injuries sustained from the incident. Over 100 people were injured in the riots.

The High Commission of India has not yet issued an official statement on the death of the Indian national. Official sources in Colombo, however, confirmed that a note verbale on the incident was sent from the Indian mission to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Further, Indian nationals who were lodged at Negombo prison, about 35 km north of Colombo and around 10 km from Bandaranaike International Airport, were transferred to other prisons, the sources said.

Security personnel pay tribute as they stand next to coffins of seven guards killed during Negombo prison riot in Colombo. AFP

The Hindu contacted Sri Lanka's Department of Prisons and the High Commission of India for further information, including on the charges the deceased Indian national was facing and the number of Indian prisoners who were transferred from the Negombo facility, and is yet to receive a response.

Following the riots that began on Sunday and spiralled out of control on Monday, nearly 1,200 prisoners from the Negombo prison were transferred to other prisons across the island for their safety.

Torture of prisoners

Meanwhile, the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka said it was informed that several inmates had been transferred to other prison facilities at Angunakolapelessa, Boosa, Batticaloa, Dumbara, Jaffna, and Welikada, to separate them from other inmates and to ensure their protection. Further, it received information on Tuesday evening "that several inmates who had been transferred to the above mentioned facilities had been subject to torture and other forms of ill-treatment", and on the "death of an inmate in the custody of Welikada prison officials", it said.

Earlier, the Committee for Protecting the Rights of Prisoners, an activists' network advocating for humane treatment of inmates, flagged reports of "assault' and "severe physical torture". The government is yet to respond to the allegations, but a senior official who requested anonymity told *The Hindu*: "We are receiving multiple reports, there are some rumours circulating as well. We are taking these concerns very seriously and looking into the matter." The official did not confirm or deny the allegations.

Sri Lankan authorities have maintained that Monday's riots were triggered by a clash between rival gangs, after some inmates tipped off prison authorities about a drug operation inside the facility. Addressing Parliament on Tuesday, Justice Minister Harshana Nanayakkara said Sri Lanka's prison system has faced "longstanding problems". He urged everyone to "work together, in the name of humanity to ensure that such tragedies never happen again".

Sri Lanka's prisons, which have been grappling with challenges of chronic overcrowding and lack of resources, last witnessed a deadly riot in 2020 at Mahara, north of Colombo, where 11 inmates died. A decade earlier, in 2012, a riot at Colombo's Welikada prison ended with police fatally shooting 27 inmates.

The Bar Association of Sri Lanka, a professional body of lawyers, said the recent tragedy must not be viewed as an isolated incident. "Rather, it is symptomatic of longstanding structural deficiencies within Sri Lanka's prison system and the broader administration of criminal justice," it said in a statement.

Trump blasts NATO for rejecting efforts to claim Greenland

Associated Press
ANKARA

U.S. President Donald Trump took aim at his NATO partners at a summit in Turkiye on Wednesday, saying he was unhappy with the alliance for pushing back against his efforts to take control of Greenland and for not supporting his war in Iran.

NATO's European members plus Canada have scrambled to meet the increased defence spending targets Mr. Trump has demanded, as the U.S. draws down the number of troops it has in Europe and insists that the continent take more responsibility for its own security.

But Mr. Trump reopened old wounds as he arrived at the meeting of 32 NATO leaders by insisting again that the United States should control Greenland, a semi-autonomous Danish territory. He blasted some European countries for refusing to participate in the Iran war, singling out Spain as "a terrible partner in NATO" and renewing his threats to cut off trade.

Ahead of the summit, Mr. Trump said Greenland "is very important" for the U.S. but not for Denmark, declaring, "We need it for protection of the world, not just the United States."

Donald Trump

'Defend every inch'

But Denmark's Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said her country is "ready to defend every inch of NATO including our own territory" in the event of an attack, and would rely on NATO allies to honour their commitment to defend each other.

Ahead of the summit, NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte praised Mr. Trump for the series of U.S. strikes on Iran overnight, after Tehran struck three merchant ships in the Strait of Hormuz.

"I think what you did last night was absolutely necessary," Mr. Rutte said to Mr. Trump.

Is the U.S.-Iran ceasefire agreement falling apart?

NEWS ANALYSIS

Stanly Johny

U.S. President Donald Trump, who is in Ankara to attend a NATO summit, said on Wednesday that the ceasefire with Iran was "over". His remarks came after tit-for-tat overnight strikes by the U.S. and Iran amid a dispute over who controls the Strait of Hormuz.

The U.S. launched dozens of strikes on Iran in retaliation for what it said were Iranian attacks on commercial vessels in the Strait of Hormuz, and reimposed sanctions on the trade of Iranian oil. In response, Iran targeted multiple U.S. bases and military assets in Bahrain and Kuwait. It also claimed to have shot down an American MQ-9 drone.

Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf, Iran's Parliament Speaker and top negotiator, accused the U.S. of violating the memorandum of understanding (MoU). "The era of bullying and extortion is over... we don't fold," he wrote in a social post. The current crisis has become the biggest stress test for the MoU, signed by the U.S. and Iran on June 17.

When the MoU was reached, it was seen as a preliminary agreement that paved the way for serious negotiations between the U.S. and Iran on outstanding issues such as Iran's nuclear programme and western sanctions on the country.

In the MoU, Iran promised to allow safe passage of tankers through the Strait of Hormuz and never to make a nuclear bomb, while the U.S. agreed to lift its maritime blockade, ease sanctions and allow Iran to access some of its frozen funds. But there had been two major hurdles in the implementation of the MoU from the start. One was Israel's war in Lebanon and the other was the status of the Strait of Hormuz.

Vessels identified by U.S. Central Command as IRGC boats before they were struck in a new wave of U.S. military strikes on Tuesday. REUTERS

The war in Lebanon

Article 1 of the MoU clearly states the ceasefire covers Lebanon, where Israel has been carrying out a bombing campaign in the name of fighting Hezbollah. Israel has also carved up Lebanese territory in the south, calling it a "security zone". The MoU also calls for respecting Lebanon's "sovereignty and territorial integrity"– an indirect call for Israeli troops to withdraw from Lebanon. But Israel has ruled out withdrawal. Hezbollah, an Iran-affiliated Shia militia, says it would continue to fight Israeli troops as long as they stay in Lebanon. And Israel is continuing its bombing campaign, despite several ceasefire announcements, citing Hezbollah attacks.

From Iran's point of view, the first clause of the MoU is being violated from the very beginning as there is no ceasefire in Lebanon. On June 26, the U.S., Israel and the Lebanese government announced a trilateral framework linking Israeli withdrawal to the disarmament of Hezbollah. Iran again saw this as a joint U.S.-Israeli attempt to undermine the MoU. Though talks between the U.S. and Iran based on the MoU framework began in Geneva, there was no breakthrough. Mr. Trump's occasional threats against Iran further deteriorated the already tense situation.

Iran's fear was that the U.S. was using the MoU to replenish global oil markets, as Vice-President J.D. Vance once mentioned in an interview, and take away Tehran's leverage over the Strait of Hormuz. This probably prompted Iran to take a firmer line towards the strait.

Under Article 5 of the MoU, Iran promised to "make arrangements" for the "safe passage of commercial vessels, with no charge for 60 days only from the Persian Gulf to the Sea of Oman and vice versa". It also says that Iran will conduct talks with Oman "to define the future administration and maritime services in the Strait of Hormuz, in discussions with other Persian Gulf littoral states".

The agreement doesn't say passage would be free of charges forever. Iran opened a new route, along its coast, for tankers to enter and exit the Persian Gulf through the Strait. Another route has been opened along Oman's coast, a move Iran fears would take away its leverage over the waterway.

Designated route

While Iran insists that tankers take its designated route out of the strait, the U.S. and some Gulf countries encourage them to take the Oman route. Over the weekend, three ships passing through the Omani route were attacked. Iran, which is currently holding funeral ceremonies for Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader who was assassinated by the U.S. and Israel on February 28, did not officially claim responsibility. But the U.S. blamed Iran and launched strikes on the country.

When Iran attacked tankers taking the Omani route last month, the U.S. had carried out a similar strike and Iran had retaliated. But after two rounds of tit-for-tat strikes, Mr. Trump halted further attacks and announced that talks would continue. But Iran has not held direct talks with the U.S. ever since. This time, the U.S. took another step to punish Iran by revoking the sanctions waiver it announced after the MoU was signed. It seeks to mount both economic and military pressure on Tehran.

New normal

At this point, Iran seems determined not to give up its control of the strait, no matter how much military and economic pressure the U.S. applies. By striking U.S. military assets across two Gulf countries, Iran sent a clear message to the U.S.: it is ready for escalation rather than retreat.

This leaves Mr. Trump in a difficult position. Controlled military pressure is failing to persuade Iran to restore the status quo ante in the strait. If he returns to full-scale war, the diplomatic process would be undermined. If the diplomatic process is undermined, Iran's nuclear programme would remain unresolved. And there is no guarantee that another full-scale air campaign would destroy the nuclear programme. Mr. Trump tried this path twice–in June 2025 and in February 2026.

The second option he has is to stay engaged in talks, not letting the current skirmishes undermine the MoU. But then, Mr. Trump will have to accept the new status quo in the Strait of Hormuz.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
ANANDPUR BARRAGE PROJECT, SALAPADA. DIST :- KEONJHAR, ODISHA, PIN: 758020
E-Mail:cceabp@gmail.com

E-procurement Notice No. CCEABP- 06 of 2026-27 (Bid Id No. ABP-Soro-01/06 of 2026-27)

DETAILED NOTICE INVITING TENDER ON EPC CONTRACT

Name of Work	Class/EMD/Tender Fee/Period of Completion
Construction of Distribution system for 5765.34 Ha. of CCA including Command Area Development (CAD) of Salandi Left Main Canal from RD 71.505 km to 73.003 km through Under Ground Pipe Line Irrigation system (Gravity Flow) of Anandapur Barrage Project in Balasore District of Odisha on EPC-Turn Key Basis including operation and maintenance of the commissioned project.	(1) Class of Contractor - Super Class or Equivalent Grade Bidders (2) EMD : Rs.181.00 lakh. (3) Tender Fee : Rs.10,000.00. (4) Period of completion:- 24 (Twenty-four) calendar months including rainy seasons.

A. Period of Availability of Bid Document in the Portal : From 10.00 AM of 14.07.2026 to 10.08.2026 up to 5.00 PM
B. Date & time For Pre-Bid Conference : 28.07.2026 at 11.30 AM
C. Last Date and Time for Receipt of Bid : 10.08.2026 up to 5.00 PM.
D. Place of Sale & Receipt of Bid : On-Line through e-Procurement.
E. Time and Date of Opening of Technical Bid : 11.08.2026 at 11.30 AM.
F. Place of Opening of Bid : O/o the Chief Construction Engineer, Anandapur Barrage Project, Salapada.
G. Further details can be seen from E-Procurement Portal "https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in"

Chief Construction Engineer,
Anandpur Barrage Project, Salapada

32001/509/2627
OIPR-32001/32180/1/26-27/0007

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
DEPARTMENT OF HANDLOOMS

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders with two cover system are invited from the eligible bidders for the Purchase of Cotton Cone Yarn, Polycot Cone Yarn and Polyester Texturised Yarn varieties for Distribution of Sarees and Dhoties Scheme, Pongal 2027.

Tender Sl. No.	Variety of yarn	Required Quantity in MT	Required Earnest Money Deposit in (Rs.)	Date and Time of Availability of Bid Document in the Web Portal	Last Date and Time for Receipt of Online Submission of Filled Bid Documents	Date and Time of Online Opening of Bids: Technical Bids	Date and Time of Online Opening of Bids: Financial Bids	Supply Period
1.	60° Combed Compact Dyed Cotton Cone Weft Yarn	3233.00	10,00,000/-	09.07.2026 to 23.07.2026 Upto 02.00 p.m.	09.07.2026 to 23.07.2026 Upto 02.00 p.m.	23.07.2026 at 03.00 p.m.	Will be intimated later	60 days
2	60° Polycot (80:20) Grey Cone Warp Yarn	3340.00						60 days
3	40° Polycot (65:35) Grey Cone Warp Yarn	500.00						60 days
4	40° Polycot (65:35) Grey Cone Weft Yarn	500.00						60 days
5	155/34D 250 TPM Dyed Polyester Texturised Yarn	107.00	10,00,000/-	09.07.2026 to 23.07.2026 Upto 02.30 p.m.	09.07.2026 to 23.07.2026 Upto 02.30 p.m.	23.07.2026 at 03.30 p.m.	Will be intimated later	60 days
6	130/34D 250 TPM Polyester Silver / Copper Colour Zari Yarn	427.00						60 days

Eligibility of the Tenderer and other conditions are stipulated in the Bid Document.
1.Complete E-Tender Documents can be viewed and downloaded **free of cost** from Government e-tender website **https://tntenders.gov.in**
2.**E-Tender Documents :**
(i) Tender Schedule - I - Purchase of Cotton Cone Yarn and Polycot Cone Yarn (Sl.No: DSDS–2027/COT&PC/001)
(ii) Tender Schedule – II – Purchase of Polyester Texturised Yarn Varieties (Sl.No: DSDS–2027/PTY/002)
3.The Bidders have to participate through online bidding only with Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of Class III.
Pre Bid Meeting: There will be a pre-bid meeting on 15.07.2026 at 3.00 p.m at the Conference Hall of the Directorate of Handlooms, Chennai-104.
Contact: Joint Director (Uniforms)
Telephone: 044-25358715
E-mail: tenderwing2024@gmail.com

Joint Director (Uniforms) / Tender Inviting Authority

DIPR/2243/TENDER/2026

CAREER HIGHLIGHT

Fernandez labels Argentina's winner his most important goal

AP

It is the most important goal of my career. It is first, and the second is the Mexico one. I have been longing for this goal for about three years, ever since the World Cup in Qatar. We have a phenomenal group that never gives up and has tremendous quality — Enzo Fernandez after scoring Argentina's winner against Egypt.

UNHAPPY

Egypt files complaint against referee after controversial exit

AP

Hany Aburida, president of Egyptian Football Federation, filed a complaint with FIFA, demanding an investigation into referee Francois Letexier "after the serious mistakes committed by the team of referees and double standards", which caused Egypt to lose the match and leave the World Cup.

WHAT IT MEANS

The victory over Egypt was a relief: Messi on why he shed tears

AFP

Lionel Messi said that his tears after Argentina's 3-2 World Cup last-16 win over Egypt were "a release" in what could have been his final international appearance. "I think that it was a release, a relief for everyone. It was an ugly moment when we were 0-2," the 39-year-old said. "Turning a match around like that was not easy".

A BLOW

Belgium midfielder Onana ruled out of tournament with ACL injury

REUTERS

Belgium's Amadou Onana will miss the remainder of the World Cup after suffering a torn ACL in his right knee. The 24-year-old midfielder was forced off early in Belgium's win over USA. The federation statement added that Onana would remain in North America with his teammates until at least the Spain quarterfinals.

Flying goalie: Kobel blocks Hernandez's effort in the shootout to hand Switzerland the advantage. AP

Switzerland edges Colombia on penalties

FIFA WORLD CUP

Agence France-Presse
VANCOUVER

Switzerland beat Colombia 4-3 on penalties after a goalless draw on Tuesday to set up a quarterfinal with defending champion Argentina. Both teams missed spot-kicks before Switzerland goalkeeper Gregor Kobel brilliantly saved Cucho Hernandez's effort and Ruben Vargas scored the decisive penalty.

Colombia had conceded just once in its four games before Tuesday's match and the Swiss had also proved difficult to break down. The first action of note came in the 21st minute when Kobel was forced into a flying save to keep out Gustavo Puerta's curling effort from the edge of the penalty area.

But the match was goalless at half-time, with two well-matched teams struggling for inspiration.

Ndoye flashed a shot across goal in stoppage time but nobody was able to get on the end of it and the match was 0-0 at the end of normal time.

The game belatedly burst into life in the first period of extra time.

Jaminton Campaz missed a glorious chance to win the game with five minutes of time left on the clock. With nothing to separate the teams, the game went to penalties.

Will Argentina or Morocco buck the European push?

As the quarterfinals beckon, Europe has six teams in the fray ready to add to the continent's World Cup tally and standing in their way are Messi's current champion and the AFCON titlist

On the prowl: The quarterfinals should once again enable the tournament's leading scorers — Messi, Mbappe, Kane and Haaland — to unleash their powers and torment defenders. AP, GETTY IMAGES

Ayon Sengupta
BOSTON

The World Cup began as a sprawl – 48 teams, three host nations, heat, distance, noise and the promise that football's centre of gravity might tilt somewhere unexpected.

Two knockout rounds later, Europe has placed six teams in the quarterfinals, with Argentina and Morocco the only survivors from outside the continent.

European nations – Spain in 2010 and Germany in Brazil four years later – have won the trophy only twice outside Europe, but with France, Spain, England, Belgium, Norway and Switzerland making up three-quarters of the last eight, the chances of the continent adding to that list now feel high.

This is the most European quarterfinal line-up outside Europe since 1994. The round of 16 also ended in tears for Cristiano Ronaldo and Neymar, while the three host nations disappeared one by one.

The eight teams, though, have taken very different paths to get here. Some arrived through control, some through chaos, and others through sheer stubbornness.

Argentina's route has been the least serene and perhaps, for that reason, the most revealing.

The defending champion had to keep answering uncomfortable questions. Cape Verde dragged it deep in their round of 32 clash and Egypt then had it staring at elimination before Lionel Messi and company overturned a two-goal deficit.

It has not always looked orderly, but Argentina has looked resilient. Messi's goals continue to shape the campaign, but for Lionel Scaloni, the greater comfort will come from the fact that his team has already lived through the sort of disorder that often ends World Cups.

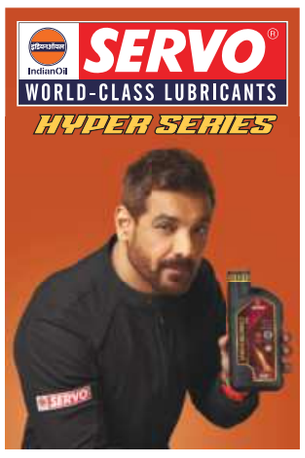
France, too, has been left with bruises. It swatted Sweden aside in the round of 32, but Paraguay turned the last-16 tie into a scrap, defending deep, slowing the game and forcing Didier Deschamps' side to settle for a narrow win through Kylian Mbappe's late penalty.

Yet France still looks the deepest squad left in the competition, with Mbappe's seven goals giving it the tournament's sharpest edge and Ousmane Dembele, Bradley Barcola and Michael Olise all growing in stature.

England's quarterfinal place was earned in the most difficult setting of the lot. It's 3-2 win over Mexico at the Azteca was a test of altitude, noise and a wall of home hostility. England was reduced to 10 men and still survived.

Norway, its next opponent, authored one of the shocks of the tournament by knocking Brazil out, with Erling Haaland scoring twice in a 2-1 win. Under Stale Solbakken, Norway can hurt teams both in transition and with the ball.

Belgium and Switzerland have reached the last eight by mastering pressure in very different ways. Belgium was too calm and too clinical for the United States, winning 4-1 despite the noise around Folarin Balogun's controversial reinstatement and the weight of a home crowd.



THE RESULT

Round of 16: Switzerland 0 drew with Colombia 0 (aet, Switzerland won 4-3 on penalties).

Switzerland, meanwhile, held its nerve better than Colombia in a goalless last-16 tie before prevailing on penalties to reach a first World Cup quarterfinal in 72 years.

Spain, meanwhile, still has not conceded a goal and removed Portugal with a cold efficiency that looks ominous.

The quarterfinal line-up now offers four very different tests. France against Morocco pits the tournament's deepest squad against its most defiant underdog. Spain against Belgium feels like a contest between a side that monopolises the ball and one that can cut through space quickly.

England's match against Norway may hinge on whether England can contain Haaland while still imposing its own rhythm. Argentina against Switzerland offers Messi another knockout maze against a side that rarely loses its shape or its calm.

What began as a sprawling global carnival has tightened into a bracket dominated by Europe, with Argentina and Morocco left to resist the pull.

Strong statement: Hassan accused referee Letexier of being biased towards Argentina. AFP

Egypt coach calls out 'unfair' refereeing

Ayon Sengupta
ATLANTA

Egypt coach Hossam Hassan emerged from one of the World Cup's wildest games furious with the refereeing, convinced his side had been denied a famous result and openly suggesting that the defending champion had been carried by favourable treatment.

Egypt, he said, had gone toe-to-toe with the world champion despite being assembled from far humbler means.

"We were challenging the most expensive players, and we were better in everything than the defending champion," Hassan said, before accusing Argentina of needing "pressure from one side on the referee" to secure the result.

Egypt had complained about the appointment of the referee beforehand, he revealed, and by full-time he was in no mood to hide his anger.

He insisted Egypt should have had a penalty and was equally adamant that what would have been Egypt's second goal should not have been ruled out. "We deserved to earn this win, but we are leaving with pride because there was no fair play, no respect," he said.

"There was no fair play in this match and I'm not happy with it. We have suffered injustice. FIFA raises the slogan 'Fair Play', but we don't see it on the field... were it not for the errors, the result would have been different."

The frustration was not reserved only for the officials. Hassan also tore into FIFA over the noon kick-off in Atlanta, arguing that the scheduling had disrespected the basic physical demands of the sport. "You don't play at 12 at that time," he said. "When will the players eat if they play at 12? Those who are doing this schedule don't know football."

The Egyptian coach confronted referee Francois Letexier after the game. "What I told the referee was 'this is unfair. I said maybe he is carrying a scar or has something to hide. If somebody is trying to hide something, they often fail to hide it," Hassan said about the incident.

"Anyway, when I am finished, I am not going to watch another game of this tournament".

Morocco looks to exact revenge on France

Ayon Sengupta
BOSTON

In Boston, a city built by successive waves of migration and layered loyalties, France's quarterfinal against Morocco will be more than a meeting of two sides. It is a rematch, a footballing test and a reunion of friends, of shared histories and of players whose lives have been shaped by both sides of the Mediterranean.

Four years ago in Qatar, France ended Morocco's remarkable run in the semifinals. Thursday's meeting at the Boston Stadium carries the memory of that night, but Morocco arrives with a different status now.

It is no longer merely the tournament's surprise package or the first African side to reach the last four, as it has grown into its own ambition of giving the continent its first World Cup crown.

The tie is also threaded with deep personal and cultural overlap. Six members of Morocco's squad were born in France, and five play their club football there, while 21 players of *Les Bleus* are of African or mixed heritage origin.

The most visible expression of that intimacy may come in the duel between Kylian Mbappe and Achraf Hakimi. The pair grew close at Paris Saint-Germain between 2021 and 2024. For France, the match may also prove its first complete football examination of the tournament. Didier Deschamps' side has reached the last eight with a blend of control and attacking force, but its 1-0 win over Paraguay in the round of 16 was an uncomfortable one.

Mohamed Ouahbi's Morocco can defend with discipline, but it is not built only to suffer. It has enough technical quality to keep the ball, enough pace to break with force and enough belief to treat this as a winnable tie rather than a grand occasion.

France still has one of the tournament's most dangerous attacking lines in Mbappe, Ousmane Dembele and Michael Olise, with the likes of Bradley Barcola in the bench.

The quarterfinal might reveal more about France's structure than stardust.

Morocco is organised enough to close spaces, athletic enough to press and brave enough to believe that this tie can be played on its own terms.

For France, a place in a third consecutive World Cup semifinal is at stake, while Morocco will try to turn a match shaped by friendship and shared heritage into the result that rewrites an old World Cup wound.

Friday's match

QUARTERFINAL

France vs. Morocco

1.30 A.M.

THE DAY AND TIME PERTAIN TO INDIA

Messi — the one who keeps delivering

K.B. Sri Krish

Lionel Messi once again found a way to redefine greatness. He added another chapter in his FIFA World Cup folklore by registering his ninth assist in the tournament during Argentina's dramatic 3-2 comeback victory over Egypt in the round of 16.

One better

The milestone saw the Argentine captain surpass the record of eight assists he had shared with Diego Maradona, making him the all-time standalone assist leader while enjoying one of the greatest careers the sport has ever witnessed.

The historic moment arrived when Argentina needed inspiration the most. Two goals down and at the brink of elimination. Messi produced a perfectly weighted pass to ignite Argentina's revival, laying the foundation for a spirited fightback.

For nearly two decades, Messi has dazzled the world with breathtaking goals, but this record celebrates a different dimension of his genius.

The artist

It honours the artist behind the masterpiece, the playmaker whose awareness and precision have unlocked defences on football's grandest stage time and again.

Messi overtook Maradona's tally of eight assists. FILE PHOTO

From lifting the trophy in Qatar in 2022 to becoming the tournament's all-time appearance leader, Messi has repeatedly rewritten record books, including matches played, highest goal contributions, and most goals from outside the box.

Now, with nine World Cup assists, he stands alone as the competition's greatest creator.

Going strong

At 39, when most careers fade into history, Messi continues to shape it – his influence remains undiminished, his football intelligence unmatched and his appetite for defining moments as strong as ever.

As Argentina seeks to attain World Cup glory yet again, Messi yet again proves that greatness is defined as much by creating as by scoring.

'We would've been out if we hadn't fought'

Ayon Sengupta
ATLANTA

Lionel Scaloni had barely sat down before he admitted the obvious.

Argentina had put its supporters through unnecessary "suffering".

Yet the manager was in no mood to apologise for the chaos. What he had witnessed, he felt, was something larger than a comeback win over Egypt, larger even than qualification. It was proof of the sort of team Argentina is, a side which never gives up.

"We made our people suffer even though we didn't play a bad game," Scaloni said after the 3-2 victory. "I am a coach for moments like this. The calibre of what we saw goes beyond just going through (to the quarterfinals). We would have been out if we hadn't fought."

Scaloni insisted that Argentina had not been as poor as the scoreline at one stage suggested. Egypt, he acknowledged, was "an excellent team" that converted its openings well. "We had three or four clear chances, and if we had scored, nobody would talk about it. We had to dig in".

Quarterfinal schedule

Date	Teams	Time
July 10	France vs. Morocco	1.30 a.m.
July 11	Spain vs. Belgium	00.30 a.m.
July 12	Norway vs. England	2.30 a.m.
July 12	Argentina vs. Switzerland	6.30 a.m.

** The dates and times pertain to India*

Ruthless Kostyuk packs off Paolini, sets up last-four clash with Noskova

Second seed Zverev makes short work of Fritz; wildcard Fery continues dream run; Arnav enters boys' quarterfinal

WIMBLEDON

N. Sudarshan
LONDON

Centre Court at Wimbledon barely sleeps.

Less than 15 hours after Novak Djokovic and Felix Auger-Aliassime put on a five-hour, 15-minute classic, Marta Kostyuk and Jasmine Paolini were out there for their women's quarterfinal.

Wednesday's fixture, much to the disappointment of the fans, didn't live up to being a worthy follow-up, as Kostyuk thrashed Paolini 6-3, 6-2 in one hour and nine minutes.

But it is a result that will suit the 12th seed just fine, for she will have to return on Thursday for her last-four clash versus the ninth seed from Czechia Linda Noskova, who beat Belgium's Elise Mertens 6-3, 7-5.

Ahead of her second straight Major semifinal, Kostyuk might also be secretly happy that she spent 40 minutes less than Noskova on court. During the unrelenting summer, every little edge matters.

Among advantages, the 24-year-old can also count her quality of tennis. The Ukrainian was ruthless against her Italian opponent, winning 90% of her first-serve points, 67% of the seconds, and did not allow a single chance to break.

Serving it up: Kostyuk never gave Paolini an opportunity to break. AP

In the opening set, Kostyuk broke in the fifth and ninth games. In the second set, she moved swiftly towards shutting down the contest by going up 3-1.

Paolini, finalist in 2024, loosened up a tad and swung a couple of shots freely. But at 30-30, Kostyuk served a bullet down the T to which the 13th seed had no answer.

Kostyuk soon led 5-2 to leave Paolini on the brink. And such was her tearing hurry that she didn't even wait for the opportunity to serve it out. Two excellent backhand winners in the eighth game showed her resolve, and a third from the same wing breached Paolini's defence on match-point.

"Hello Centre Court!," said Kostyuk in her victory speech. "It is my first time here and dream come true. My coach made me walk here and I was flabbergasted by everything inside.

"I sat beside [the honour board] and took a moment to soak it all in. I am soaking it all in again now after the win," she added. Just like the women's section, the two men's last-eight matches also finished in straight-sets.

Second seed and Roland-Garros champion Alexander Zverev got past Taylor Fritz 6-4, 6-4, 6-2 to enter his maiden Wimbledon semifinal. He will meet British wildcard Arthur Fery, who overcame Flavio Cobolli 6-4, 7-6(4), 6-0.

Fritz, the sixth seed, later said that he was troubled by tendinitis in his right knee three games into the tie but also credited Zverev for playing superlative tennis. Cobolli, the 2026 French Open finalist, hinted at having underestimated Fery.

In boys' singles, India's Arnav Vijay Paparkar brushed aside Japan's Ryo Tabata 6-2, 6-1 to enter the quarterfinals. Tabata started with a strapping on his left knee, and called for the physio before serving at 2-3. Arnav, 18, capitalised by breaking Tabata twice to win the first set.

In the second, Tabata's movement was severely compromised and the reverse in 52 minutes was barely a surprise. However, Arnav and his Thai partner Kunanan Pantaratorn fell to an agonising 6-3, 5-7, [16-18] second round defeat in doubles to Brazil's Luis Guto Miguel and Croatia's Ziga Sesko.

QUARTERFINAL RESULTS

Men: 2-Zverev (Ger) bt 6-Fritz (USA) 6-4, 6-4, 6-2; Fery (GBr) bt 9-Cobolli (Ita) 6-4, 7-6(4), 6-0; 7-Djokovic (Srb) bt 3-Auger-Aliassime (Can) 7-6(10), 3-6, 6-3, 6-7(4), 7-6 [10-4].
Women: 9-Noskova (Cze) bt 25-Mertens (Bel) 6-3, 7-5; 12-Kostyuk (Ukr) bt 13-Paolini (Ita) 6-3, 6-2.

Djokovic, all of 39, keeps redefining his career graph

N. Sudarshan
LONDON

In tennis parlance, 39 years is when your career is in its autumn. But for Novak Djokovic, it is proving to be a glorious second summer.

History-making and record-setting are like second nature to him. Yet, his performance on Tuesday, under the dazzling white lights of Centre Court and against an opponent nearly 14 years his junior, was astonishing to say the least.

The Serbian great finished on the right side of a five-hour, 15-minute slugfest to oust third seed Felix Auger-Aliassime 7-6(10), 3-6, 6-3, 6-7(4), 7-6 [10-4] and set up a much-anticipated last-four meeting with World No. 1 and defending champion Jannik Sinner. Djokovic has now reached eight straight singles semifinals at Wimbledon. It is also his 15th overall at the All England Club, equalling Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal's single-Slam records at the Australian Open and French Open respectively.

In a fantastic co-incidence, Djokovic was early in the first-set tie-break when fellow 39-year-old Lionel Messi was fashioning a thrilling 3-2 World Cup win for Argentina over Egypt in Atlanta.

Supreme fitness: Djokovic displayed tenacity during a marathon.

Asked about it in the post-match press conference, the seven-time Wimbledon titlist quipped: "It would be nice to play 90 minutes like him."

That Djokovic was on the court for three hours and 45 minutes more - albeit in a less explosive and non-contact sport - was testament to his incredible fitness and supreme conditioning.

Djokovic's ship did not always sail smoothly. He experienced discomfort in his left leg as early as the ninth game and called for a medical time-out. There were multiple occasions when he grimaced between points. He also seemed out of breath after many a long-drawn rally. But he made it look enjoyable, letting out a wry smile from time to time.

It was an evening of undulating fortunes; Auger-Aliassime had set-points in the first stanza but did not capitalise; Djokovic was up a break in the fourth and yet allowed the match to drift into a decider.

But the 24-time Major winner was flawless when it was most required - in the 10-point match-tie-break where he barely missed a shot.

It was a textbook example of how elites quarantine themselves and elevate their play. As Djokovic later mentioned, it was all about "management of nerves and the extreme tension".

"These are the moments I still play tennis for," Djokovic said, after the longest Wimbledon quarterfinal. "I wish it was the final so that I didn't have to worry about how the body will feel.

"I was telling the kids to go to sleep after the fourth set but they didn't listen. I am glad they stayed because it was one of my best matches on this court".

Time to regroup: India will be hoping to bounce back from the T20 World Cup disappointment. X@BCCIWOMEN

Test cricket is exciting and brings different challenges: Muzumdar

INDIA IN ENGLAND

P.K. Ajith Kumar
LONDON

Amol Muzumdar was playing in Yorkshire when Mohammad Azharuddin's Indian team toured England in 1996. He travelled from up north to watch the second Test, in which two young batters made their debut: Sourav Ganguly and Rahul Dravid.

Ganguly made 131 and Dravid 95. Muzumdar still remembers watching that sublime hundred by Ganguly from the Compton Stand.

Come Friday, Muzumdar will get a better view of a Lord's Test. And he is not just going to be a spectator. He is the coach of the Indian team that is playing the first-ever Women's Test at Lord's.

He said the team was excited about the occasion. "It just boggles my mind that it is the first Women's Test match here at Lord's. It is a great occasion, and we are looking forward to it."

India is playing the Test after the disappointment at the T20 World Cup, which concluded last Sunday. India had bowed out of the competition at the group stage after losing to Australia.

"We didn't have the best of World Cups," Muzumdar said. "We were disappointed for sure. I guess we have managed to do that. We had five really good days of preparation, a few days at Wormsley Cricket Club. It is a beautiful ground, just the perfect setting for the preparation."

He said traditionally India did well in Test matches and expressed confidence that the players could handle the transition well, though there were few Tests for women.

"But we are playing more Test matches now than we did a few years back," he said.

"And red-ball cricket is just about adjustment. If you are a professional cricketer, there is not much of a difference. Test cricket is exciting and it brings different challenges. You have got to bowl 100 overs, mind you. It is a four-day game, and you have to bowl 100 overs in a day. So, I guess, different challenges, different excitement."

Priya replaces Pratika

During the press conference, Muzumdar confirmed that Pratika Rawal had been ruled out of the Test and replaced by Priya Punia.

"Pratika suffered an injury in the India-A match. She has got a cut on her knee which required some stitches".

SNAPSHOTS

Ganguly inducted into ICC's Hall of Fame

NEW DELHI: Sourav Ganguly became the latest Indian to be inducted into the ICC's Hall of Fame. Ganguly's induction takes the number of Indians in the Hall of Fame to 12.

Ganguly. PTI

Beleagured India has its task cut out

BRISTOL: Faced with selection dilemmas and struggling to adapt in hostile conditions, the Shreyas Iyer-led Indian team has its task cut out when it takes on England in the fourth T20I on Thursday. The match starts at 10 p.m. IST.

Kooij wins fifth stage; Traeen keeps yellow

PAU: Dutch debutant Olav Kooij won the fifth stage of the Tour de France in a chaotic sprint finish after a crash just over 5km from the line. Norway's Torstein Traeen kept the race leader's yellow jersey.

A rare series victory for West Indies

NORTH SOUND: West Indies drew the second Test with Sri Lanka on Tuesday to claim its first series victory in three years in the red ball format.

The scores: Sri Lanka 549/9 decl. & 251/9 decl. in 49 overs (Chandimal 71) drew with West Indies 499 & 109/0 in 40 overs (John Campbell 51 n.o. Brandon King 51 n.o.). **PoM & PoS**: Justin Greaves.

Indian women's compound team in final

MADRID: The Indian compound women's team ensured a medal by reaching the final at the Archery World Cup Stage-4 in Madrid on Wednesday. The team comprising Prithika Pradeep, Chikitha Taniparthi, V. Jyothi Surekha defeated Korea (Kang, Park and Park) 231-228 in the semifinals to set up a title clash with Colombia. The Indian men's team lost to Germany in bronze match.

LIVE TELECAST

Zimbabwe vs Bangladesh: Second ODI, FanCode, 1 p.m.
Wimbledon: Star Sports 1, 2, SS Select 1, 2 & JioHotstar, 6 p.m.
England vs India: Fourth T20I, Sony Sports Ten 1 & JioHotstar, 10 p.m.
FIFA World Cup: Unite8 Sports 1, 2 & Z5 App, 1.30 a.m. (Friday)

Title-holder U Mumba to take on Dempo Goa in opening tie

UTT

K. Keerthivasan
PANAJI

The first six editions of Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) made for an eventful, and at times chequered, journey: one marked by world-class competition and the sport's growing international visibility.

At the same time, the league has had to contend with franchise instability, a modest spectator following, and unavailability of world's top paddlers, among other challenges.

However, the arrival of Butterfly as title sponsor for five years (2026-30) – despite the reduction in the number of teams from eight to seven – has been a major boost.

The partnership is a strong endorsement of UTT's long-term potential.

It should provide the league with greater financial stability, help sustain its growth and, hopefully, enable it to address some of the problems that have accompanied its journey so far.

Holding the league in Goa for the first time presents an opportunity to engage with a new fan base.

All set: Players from different franchises pose with the ultimate prize. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The organisers will be hoping for strong local support and a vibrant atmosphere at the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium on Thursday, when two-time champion Dempo Goa Challengers takes on defending champion U Mumba TT in the opening tie.

Young squad

Goa has assembled one of the youngest squads, with four players aged between 16 and 21 and in contrast to the more experienced title-holder. Yet, Romania's Bernadette Szocs, the tournament's highest-ranked women's player at World No. 25, believes the side has what it takes to challenge for the crown.

"It will not be easy because our team has many young players without much experience. But Alvaro (Robles) and I can help build the team and try to win the title," she said.

Diya Chitale, who will represent PBG Pune Jaguars, summed up the appeal of the league. " UTT is always a very fun and amazing tournament. I just try to enjoy the atmosphere and do my best."

Review system

The seventh edition will also use the Table Tennis Review (TTR) system where incidents like service height, service angle, table edge contact, etc. can be checked. Teams will have a maximum of three unsuccessful reviews per tie.

Lord's Test will be Beaumont's last

P.K. Ajith Kumar
LONDON

Tammy Beaumont, only the second woman to score a hundred in all three formats, is retiring from international cricket. Her last game for England will be the first-ever women's Test at Lord's, against India, starting on Friday.

Beaumont has so far scored 7325 runs and 14 centuries in international cricket.

An emotional Beaumont said it had been a long time coming. "When I was left out of the 20-over World Cup, it was a bit of a blow. I thought it was the right time to move on," she said. "Telling the girls about my decision was the hardest bit."

Beaumont. GETTY IMAGES

She regretted that she could play very few Tests. The historic Lord's game would only be her 12th, though she had made her international debut in 2009.

Beaumont was glad to see women's cricket evolve so much in her time. "I made my debut in front of five people besides the groundsmen... now we will be playing a Test in front of 20,000 potentially."

Aswath becomes India's 98th Grandmaster

CHESS

C. Shyam Sundar
CHENNAI

Aswath S. needed to win his last three games to achieve the Grandmaster title, and he did so by winning them on demand at the Pune International Round-Robin chess tournament. With an awesome finish in Pune, the 17-year-old Aswath became India's 98th GM after beating Kannan Vaidyanathan (USA) with black pieces in the final round on Wednesday.

Admitting that he felt some pressure going into the final stretch, he told *The Hindu:* "I did not think about anything else. I just played the game."

Sealing it: Aswath claimed the GM title after an impressive performance in the Pune International event. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The tournament was Aswath's return to classical chess after a break for his Std. X exams. His previous classical event was in December 2025, when he earned his second GM norm at the First Saturday GM Round-Robin in Budapest, winning the event with 7/9.

The first GM norm came earlier in 2025 at the Grenke Open in Germany, where he produced a standout performance to triumph in a strong field.

His chess journey began at home when he was three. His father, A.C. Shiva, was his first coach. Aswath began playing district-level events at the age of four and said his early success was in an under-7 State event in 2015, where he scored nine wins in as many rounds.

He trains under GM M. Shyam Sundar at Chess Thulir Academy in Chennai now and said "(Shyam) sir is a great help and we plan ahead of each game."

His immediate focus is to improve his Elo rating to 2600 (currently 2517) and overall improvement.

Speaking from Serbia, coach Shyam elaborated: "Aswath is a hardworking, disciplined, motivated and determined player. He doesn't have any social media distractions. He is fully focused. I think he will continue to grow".

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, JOSEPH Loyed s/o Maria Joseph Selvam born on 08–11–1984 residing at 47, Thamarai street Poomphuzlai Nagar Avadi Chennai 62, have changed my name to Joseph Lloyd M vide affidavit dated 04–07–2026 at Chennai.

OLD AGE HOME

PALLIATIVE CARE at your home Trained Nurses, 24/7, Dr., Physio visits, Lab tests 1800–313–1883 tikotra.com/seniors

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

On behalf of my client Nihar Mohan P, a citizen of USA, I am issuing the following public notice. Be it known that my client Nihar Mohan P is the absolute owner of the land and building constructed in the year 1986 at Poes Garden, Teynampet, Mylapore, Chennai, Tamilnadu. The said property is an ancestral property of my client with house Nos. 91/40/1, 2 and 3, RS number 1567 in the Poes Garden layout admeasuring 5,364 sqft. The three floor structure is of approximately 8,500 sqft. Town survey number of the said property is 1567/90, Mylapore.

I am the GPA holder and custodian of the above property since 2013 and all relevant papers in original are in my possession.

My client has come to know that some vested interests are going around claiming to be GPA holders and that the original documents were lost. This is purely being done out of malafide intention to cheat. My client hereby notifies that he will not be held liable for any thing that the victims face and that those documents including GPAs and any document purportedly given by me are all fabricated ones.

My client has come to know of one specific individual bearing the name of Dodla Sandeep showing Aadhaar number 373766869363 claiming to be holder of GPA. He has also come to know of few other individuals attempting to register as holders of GPA. My client shall not be liable for any losses in any format by those registering or entering into any transaction involving the said property.

K. JITHENDRA BABU
Advocate High Court
Off: Plot No. 2A, Nirmala Residency, Bharathi Nagar Colony, Vijayawada NTR Dist. Andhra Pradesh – 520007.
Ph: 9848882600

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that my client intends to purchase the agricultural property described below from the owner named herein.

Property Details :
·Survey No.: 310/5, 312/2A, 312/2B, 312/3A
·Extent (Total): 14.4350acres
·Village: Kariyamangalam
·Taluk: Chengam
·District: Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu

Vendor:
Mr. M.R. Rajkumar Reddy

Any person, bank, financial institution, legal heir, or any other person claiming any right, title, interest, share, lien, charge, mortgage, lease, encumbrance, court attachment, or any other claim whatsoever over the above property is requested to notify the undersigned in writing, along with documentary proof, within **7 days** from the date of publication of this notice.

If no objection or claim is received within the stipulated period, it will be presumed that no such claim exists, and my client will proceed with the purchase of the property. Any claim received thereafter shall not be binding on my client.

Date : 9-July-2026
Place : Tiruvannamalai

Sri.B.Sivakumar, M.A.B.L.,
Advocate& Notary
Rajamani Nivas, 1st Floor No.9,
Binny Compound Main Street
(Kumaran Road), Park Road,
Tirupur- 641601
Email: bsktpr@gmail.com
cc to: bskoffice26@gmail.com
Mobile : 94430 38259,
WhatsApp : 90800 01000

TICEL BIO PARK LTD

(TIDCO Centre for Life Science)
CIN: U45309TN2001PLC047979
No.5, CSIR Road, Taramani, Chennai - 600 113.
Ph: +91 44 2254 2060, Email: md@ticelbiopark.com

Date: 09.07.2026

TICEL invites e-Tender for the following works at TICEL Bio Park - I & II, Chennai.

Sl. No.	e-Tender No.	Name of the Tender	Tender Closing Date & Time
1.	e-TENDER No. TICEL/HK/2026-27/05	E-TENDER for "Providing Housekeeping, Plumbing and Garden Maintenance" for TICEL Bio Park - I & II, CSIR Road, Taramani, Chennai - 600 113.	10.08.2026 before 11.00 A.M.

For more details and participation in the above e-tender, please visit the website **https:/www.tntenders.gov.in/**. Last date for online submission of duly filled tender documents is 10.08.2026 on or before 11.00 am. TICEL Bio Park Ltd reserves the right to accept / reject any one / all tenders without assigning any reason.

DIPR/2247/Tender/2026 **Managing Director**

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TENDERS

Maharashtra Transmission Communication Infrastructure Ltd (MTCIL)
113, 12th Floor, Building B,247 Park HCC Bus Stop, LBS Road, Gandhi Nagar Vikhroli west, Mumbai. Maharashtra 400079
Email : chirag.makwana@sterlite.com , Contact : +91 9922002328
(CIN – U64201MH2012PLC234316)

TENDER NOTICE

Tender Doc no: MTCIL/TENDER/ SUPPLY-OPGW/002

MTCIL is a Joint Venture Company between Sterlite Electric Ltd. (SEL) & Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Company Limited (MSETCL). It has been formed with the objective of establishing OPGW cable-based Communication Network in Maharashtra on existing EHV transmission lines of MSETCL and will exploit the same commercially as a Telecom Infrastructure Provider.

Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Company Limited (MTCIL) is inviting requests for proposals from interested bidders for Supply of 96F & 144F OPGW Cable for 132kV to 400kV Transmission.

Interested bidders may obtain the bid documents in person/ by courier / post by sending request letter at above mentioned address and a Bid document fee of Rs 10,000/- through DD/online Mode in favor of "Maharashtra Transmission Communication Infrastructure Ltd "payable at Mumbai on or before **20th July 2026, 16.00 Hrs.**

Scope of Work,	Qty. in Nos	Date of Pre-bid Conference	Last date of seeking clarifications	Last date of Bid Submission
Supply of 96F&144F OPGW Cable includes (Planning, Design, Engineering, Utility drum schedule approval, Manufacturing, Supply, Handling, Inspection, testing at manufacturer's works, Type testing, Factory acceptance testing, Documentation of entire OPGW Packing, Handling, Loading, Transportation Insurance, Unloading, Delivery & demonstration for acceptance (after delivery of goods at stores).	514	24th July 2026 16.00 Hrs.	27th July 2026 18.00 Hrs.	30th July 2026 15.00 Hrs.

Mumbai
09th July 2026 **SCM Head**

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER

Tender Notice No. : SHM-C-QWS-DT-080726. Open tender is invited by Sr. CDO, Santragachi, S.E.Railway, Kharagpur Division acting through the President of India through e-tendering in **www.ireps. gov.in** website as per details mentioned below. Eligible tenderers are requested to apply for the same through online only in **www.ireps.gov.in** website as per details mentioned below. No offline tender will be accepted. Please read the tender document uploaded in the document section for details. **Name of the work :** Shalimar : Setting-up of Quick Coach watering system at Shalimar Railway station. **Tender Value:** ₹ 5,30,82,496.34 only. (including all charges). **EMD:** ₹ 10,61,700/- only. **Cost of Tender document:** ₹ 0/- (Zero). **Closing date of tender:** 31.07.2026 at 11.30 hrs. **(PR-438)**

CENTRAL RAILWAY

SIGNALING WORK

OPEN TENDER NOTICE

Divisional Railway Manager (S&T), 1st Floor, Parcel Office Building, above P.F.No.14 & 15, Central Railway, Mumbai CST 400 001, for and on behalf of the President of India Invites tenders from the reputed contractors. **S.N.:- 1., Name of work:-** Signaling work in connection with fencing work in DIWA - PANVEL - ROHA & CSMT -PNVL, TNA (excl.) - Vashi (incl.) Harbour line of Mumbai division **TENDER NOTICE NO.CR/BB/SNT/East/2026/69, Approximate Cost:-** Rs.3.29/- CRORE., **EMD:-** Rs. 659800/-, **Date of Opening:-** 03.08.2026, **Validity:-** 60 days, **Completion Period:-** 18 Months, This tender complies with Public Procurement Policy (Make in India) Order 2017, dated 15/06/2017 Complete details of tenders are available at Central Railway. Official website **www.ireps.gov.in** the complete tender documents can be downloaded from the website. The complete details of tenders are also available in the **"Notice Board"** of the Divisional Railway Manager (S&T)'s Office, Mumbai CST. **337**

Unauthorized crossing of railway line is a punishable offense

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE FOR ENGINEERING WORKS

Sr. No. 1: Tender No.: SECR-HQ-Engg-BL-26-27-11.
Work: Supply, replacement & fixing of HSFG Bolts at various Bridges, through/patch painting, greasing, replacement of cracked/ corroded members & epoxy grouting under the jurisdiction of SSE/Bridge/Shahdol in Bilaspur Division. **Tender Value:** ₹ 1,13,99,978.29. **Earnest Money Deposit:** ₹ 2,28,000/-.

Sr. No. 2: Tender No.: SECR-HQ-Engg-BL-26-27-12.
Work: Annual maintenance work of scour monitoring system at Bridge no. 182 DN (9x45.70 M OWG), 86 DN (9x30.50 USG+2x12.20 M Arch) and 404 (18x30,5 M PSC girder) in SEC. Railway/Bilaspur. **Tender Value:** ₹ 10,24,200.00. **Earnest Money Deposit:** ₹ 20,500/-.

Bidding Start Date: 09.07.2026. Tender Closing Date & Time: 16.30 hours on 23.07.2026.

For further details for the above work, please contact office of the Dy. CE/Bridge/Bilaspur or website: **www.ireps.gov.in**

Dy. CE/Bridge/ Bilaspur.
CPR/10/PH/260
South East Central Railway @secrail

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE FOR ENGINEERING WORKS

Sr. No. (1) E-Tender No.: DRM-ENGG-BSP-T-134-26-27, Date: 03.07.2026.
Work: Cutting and widening of high banks in the approaches of major and minor Bridges, Improvement of Cess, Trolley Refuge and other protection work under the jurisdiction of Assistant Divisional Engineer Umaria of Bilaspur Division. **Tender Value:** ₹ 5,13,31,095/-. **Earnest Money Deposit:** ₹ 10,26,600/-. **Completion Period:** 12 Months.

Sr. No. (2) E-Tender No.: DRM-ENGG-BSP-T-135-26-27, Date: 03.07.2026.
Work: Cutting and widening of high banks in the approaches of major and minor Bridges, Improvement of Cess, Trolley Refuge and other protection work under the jurisdiction of Assistant Divisional Engineer Shahdol of Bilaspur Division. **Tender Value:** ₹ 5,73,92,583/-. **Earnest Money Deposit:** ₹ 11,47,900/-. **Completion Period:** 12 Months.

Sr. No. (3) E-Tender No.: DRM-ENGG-BSP-T-136-26-27, Date: 03.07.2026.
Work: Construction of Track Machine Stabling Sidings including P.Way Works, Pathways, Roads, RCC Tanks, Buildings, Dead Ends, Bridges Extension at Mauhari, Kotma, Udalkachar, Ambikapur, Bishrampur, Surajpur Road & Darritola Railway Stations and Other miscellaneous works under the jurisdiction of Assistant Divisional Engineer Manendagarh. **Tender Value:** ₹ 9,64,77,198/-. **Earnest Money Deposit:** ₹ 19,29,600/-. **Completion Period:** 12 Months.

Sr. No. (4) E-Tender No.: DRM-ENGG-BSP-T-137-26-27, Date: 03.07.2026.
Work: Construction of Long Haul Loop Lines by Extension of Existing Loop Lines and/or Construction of New Railway Lines, including Formation, Bridge Extension/Construction, Blanketing and Connectivity to the Main Line for Long Haul formation/ Goods Parking Operations, along with Provision of Pathways and Other Associated Civil & P.Way Works at Lorha, Rupaund, Amlai, Mauhari and Bijuri Stations, including Construction of Track Machine Siding at Amlai Station, under the Jurisdiction of Senior Divisional Engineer North of Bilaspur Division. **Tender Value:** ₹ 42,82,21,585/-. **Earnest Money Deposit:** ₹ 85,64,400/-. **Completion Period:** 18 Months.

Start Date of Submission of Tender: From **11.00 hours on 14.07.2026. Last Date of Submission of Tender:** Upto **11.00 hours on 28.07.2026.**

The complete information of above e-Tender Notices is available over websites: **https://www.ireps.gov.in** Bids other than e-bids shall not be accepted against above Tenders.

Divisional Railway Manager(Engg) Bilaspur.
CPR/10/PH/268
South East Central Railway @secrail

Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune

New Administrative Building, Near Akurdi Railway Station, Akurdi, Pune - 411044 Email: ad.pmrda@gmail.com

E-Tender No. 07 Year 2026-27

An e-tender is being floated for the appointment of an agency for the year 2026-27 for the recruitment of necessary of purely contractual manpower through Outsourcing agency within the limits of the vacant posts in the approved staffing pattern at the office of Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune. The details of the said tender are being made available on the website www.mahatenders.gov.in from 11.00 AM on 09/07/2026. The last date for acceptance of tender is 3.00 PM on 29/07/2026. Any changes in the tender will be published on the website www.mahatenders.gov.in.

Sd/-
(Rupali Awale-Dambe)
Joint Commissioner, Administration
Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune.

J.No. 1615/2026
Date 08/07/2026

THE HINDU
Air Surcharge as applicable:
New Delhi - Rs. 15/-;
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Metro Railway, Kolkata

Tender Notice for e-tendering is invited by Principal Chief Engineer, Metro Railway for the following work: Name of work: Through ERC renewal in UP & DN Line from KNAP (Incl) Km (-)02/11 to KCEN (Incl) Km 07/14 of Metro Railway, Kolkata. **Approx Cost of Work: Rs. 26,31,813.92, Earnest Money: Rs. 52,600.00, Completion Period: 06 (Six) Months, Date and Time of Closing:** 31.07.2026 at 12:00 Hrs. The Tender Document and other details can be obtained from the website **www.ireps.gov.in**

Abridged e-Tender Notice No.: Civil-2599-2026 (Open) Amendments/Corrigendum, if any, would be uploaded only on the website

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BENGALURU WEST CITY CORPORATION

Office of the Executive Engineer, Vijayanagar Division, West Zone-2, 1st Floor, Shasakara Bhavan, 3rd Main, Vijayanagar, Bengaluru-560040, Mobile: 9480688282 E-mail: vijayanagardivision@gmail.com

No:EE(VJN)/TEND/KPPP/07/2026-27 **Date: 08.07.2026**

INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT) (TWO COVER SYSTEM)
(Tender Notification) (Through GOK KPPP Portal only)

The Executive Engineer, Vijayanagar Division, BWCC invites standard tender documents KW-4 on behalf of the Commissioner, BWCC, Bengaluru from eligible Tenderers registered in GBA or equivalent registration with PWD/CPWD or any state Governmental Organization for the execution of works detailed in the table below. The tenderers may submit tenders for works given in the table through KPPP portal of the Government of Karnataka **(viz https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)**

Sl. No.	Name of the Work/Estimate Cost in Lakhs/Amount Put to tender Rs. in Lakhs/ Period of Completion/EMD amount in Rs.
1	Additional development and Revitalisation works of Vijayanagar Cultural Boulevard & Footpath Development Works in Ward 85- Adichunangiri, 84-Hosahalli, 83-Hampinagara and 91 Gaali anjaneya & Compound Works at KAVIKA Layout PHASE-3 (Package-VJN-01) Annexure-3 (Action Plan No. 78). Est Cost : **Rs.1500.00 Lakhs,** Amount Put to Tender : **1185.37 Lakhs**, EMD **: Rs.15,00,000.00/- (Rs.1.00 lakh through e-procurement portal & the balance Rs.14,00,000/- shall be in the form of Bank Guarantee / FD).** Period of Completion : **11 Months.**
2	Remodeling of Storm Water Drain Works at Vijayanagar Assembly Constituency 1.Storm Water Drain Cum Steel Bridge, Bend Pipes & Chain Link Fencing at 40 feet Road, K.P.Agrahara. 2. Guide Wall & Bed Improvement at KAVIKA Layout & Under Gaali Anjaneya Bridge 3. Shamanna Garden & Manjunathanagar Linking Bridge 4. Secondary Drain works at near in Venkateshwara School Manjunathanagar 5.Storm Water Drain Jacketting Work for V102 Beside Satellite Bus Stand.6. RCC Box drain at Mango tree park in RPC layout (Package-VJN-04) Annexure-7 (Action Plan No. 23). Est Cost : **Rs.1000.00 Lakhs,** Amount Put to Tender : **788.86 Lakhs**, EMD **: Rs. 11,83,300.00 (Rs.1.00 lakh through e-procurement portal & the balance Rs. 10,83,300/- shall be in the form of Bank Guarantee / FD).** Period of Completion : **11 Months.**
3	New & Existing Parks Developmental Work in Vijayanagar Assembly Constituency (Package-VJN-05) Annexure-7 (Action Plan No. 28). Est Cost : **Rs.1500.00 Lakhs,** Amount Put to Tender : **1185.37 Lakhs**, EMD **: Rs.15,00,000.00/-(Rs.1.00 lakh through e-procurement portal & the balance Rs.14,00,000/- shall be in the form of Bank Guarantee / FD).** Period of Completion : **11 Months.**
4	Additional works for Ambedkar Bhavana at Avalahalli Ward in Vijayanagar Assembly Constituency (Package-VJN-06) Annexure-7 (Action Plan No. 30). Est Cost : **Rs.1000.00 Lakhs,** Amount Put to Tender : **788.86 Lakhs**, EMD **: Rs. 11,83,300.00 (Rs.1.00 lakh through e-procurement portal & the balance Rs. 10,83,300/- shall be in the form of Bank Guarantee / FD).** Period of Completion : **11 Months.**
5	Additional development works Deepanjalinagar Lake. Phase-2 & Drilling of borewell and installation of pump & motors in Vijayanagara Assembly Constituency & Additional Works for Amar Javaan Park development Work, Improvement of Play area at Opp Sky Line Apartment & Ornamental Poles for Street Lights to WOC Road in Vijayanagar Assembly Constituency and Ground Development Work in Vijayanagar Assembly Constituency & Additional works for Multipurpose Building opp Hyper Village Bazar in Vijayanagar Assembly Constituency (Package-VJN-07) Annexure-7 (Action Plan No. 24,27, 29, 31, 33). Est Cost : **Rs.1200.00 Lakhs,** Amount Put to Tender : **947.40 Lakhs**, EMD **: Rs.14,21,100.00 (Rs.1.00 lakh through e-procurement portal & the balance Rs.13,21,100/- shall be in the form of Bank Guarantee / FD).** Period of Completion : **11 Months.**
6	Beautification Work of 3 Underpasses & Pedestrian Subway at Vijayanagar Assembly Constituency and Renovation Work for Smt Pramila Bayi Auditorium at Vijayanagar Ward in Vijayanagar Assembly Constituency and Additional work for Rangamandira, Commercial Complex, Multipurpose Building at 3rd Main Road, Basaveshwara Layout & Kanana Bhavana in Vijayanagar Assembly Constituency (Package-VJN-08) Annexure-7 (Action Plan No. 25, 26, 32). Est Cost : **Rs.1000.00 Lakhs,** Amount Put to Tender : **799.62 Lakhs**, EMD **: Rs.11,99,430.00 (Rs.1.00 lakh through e-procurement portal & the balance Rs. 10,99,430/- shall be in the form of Bank Guarantee / FD).** Period of Completion : **11 Months.**

Time Schedule/Calendar of events :
1. Tender documents may be downloaded from the e-procurement portal : **From 10-07-2026. 2.** Last date of submission queries : **16-07-2026 within 3:00 p.m. 3.** Pre-Bid Meeting : **On 16-07-2026 at 4:00 p.m. 4.** Last Date & Time for receipt of tender : **On 18-07-2026 upto 4:00 p.m. 5.** Date & Time for Opening of technical bid : **On 20-07-2026 at 11.00 a.m. 6.** Date & Time for Opening of Financial bid : **21-07-2026 after 16.00 hrs. 7.** Validity of Tender **: 180 days**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, (Vijayanagar), Zone-2, BWCC

BENGALURU NORTH CITY CORPORATION

Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture (Zone-1)
Bengaluru North City Corporation,
Amruthalli Main Road, Byatarayanapura, Bangalore -560092.

No: SADH(BNCC-Z1)TENDER/01/2026-27 Dated: 08.07.2026

INVITATIONTENDER NOTIFICATION
(SHORT TERM) (TWO COVER SYSTEM)

The Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture (North Zone-01), BNCC, (Referred to as Employer in these documents) invites tenders to Implement in accordance with KTPP rules 2000, from eligible and experienced Person/Agencies / Firms (Referred to as Tenderers in these documents) registered in Labour department for Maintenance of Parks and Borewells.

(Standard Tender Document KW-1, KW-2, KW-3 & KW-4)

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Kushal Nagara ward parks (ward No 45). Estimate cost : Rs. 1,14,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 1,13,999.00, EMD: Rs. 1,425.00. Category : ST.
2.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Lingarajapura ward parks (ward No 29). Estimate cost : Rs. 1,19,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 1,19,000.00, EMD: Rs. 2,975.00. Category : Others.
3.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Doddanna Nagara ward parks (ward No 44). Estimate cost : Rs. 1,26,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 1,25,731.00 , EMD: Rs. 3,150.00. Category : Others.
4.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Kammanahalli ward parks (ward No 35). Estimate cost : Rs. 3,28,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 3,27,730.00, EMD: Rs. 8,200.00. Category : Others.
5.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Subbaiahnapalya ward parks (ward No 34). Estimate cost : Rs. 3,46,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 3,45,995.00, EMD: Rs. 4,325.00. Category : SC.
6.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in HRBR Layout ward parks (ward No 33). Estimate cost : Rs. 3,60,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 3,59,800.00, EMD: Rs. 9,000.00. Category : Others.
7.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Venkateshapuram ward parks (ward No 28). Estimate cost : Rs. 3,87,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 3,86,960.00, EMD: Rs. 9,675.00. Category : Others.
8.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Rajiv Gandi nagara ward parks (ward No 14). Estimate cost : Rs. 5,14,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 5,13,955.00, EMD: Rs. 12,850.00. Category : Others.
9.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Jeevanahalli ward parks (ward No 37). Estimate cost : Rs. 5,57,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 5,57,200.00, EMD: Rs. 13,925.00. Category : Others.
10.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in S.K Garden ward parks (ward No 48). Estimate cost : Rs. 5,62,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 5,61,990.00, EMD: Rs. 14,050.00. Category : Others.
11.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Shampura ward parks (ward No 38). Estimate cost : Rs. 7,09,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 7,08,520.00 , EMD: Rs. 8,865.00. Category : SC.
12.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Maruthi Seva Nagara ward parks (ward No 36). Estimate cost : Rs. 8,39,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 8,37,930.00, EMD: Rs. 20,975.00. Category : Others.
13.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Sagayipuram ward parks (ward No 46). Estimate cost : Rs. 8,45,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 8,44,795.00, EMD: Rs. 10,565.00. Category : CAT-IIA.
14.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Hennuru ward parks (ward No 23). Estimate cost : Rs. 10,95,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 10,94,640.00, EMD: Rs. 13,690.00. Category : CAT-IIA.
15.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Kacharakanahalli ward parks (ward No 30). Estimate cost : Rs. 13,39,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 13,38,830.00, EMD: Rs. 33,480.00. Category : Others.
16.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Hebbala Kempapura ward parks (ward No 18). Estimate cost : Rs. 16,56,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 16,55,970.00, EMD: Rs. 41,400.00. Category : Others.
17.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Kaval Bairasandra ward parks (ward No 39). Estimate cost : Rs. 17,34,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 17,33,860.00, EMD: Rs. 43,350.00. Category : Others.
18.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Kalyana Nagara ward parks (ward No 31). Estimate cost : Rs. 18,96,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 18,96,000.00, EMD: Rs. 23,700.00. Category : CAT-IIA.
19.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in HBR Layout ward parks (ward No 24). Estimate cost : Rs. 19,83,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 19,82,999.00, EMD: Rs.49,600.00. Category : Others.
20.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Sampigehalli ward parks (ward No 20) Estimate cost : Rs. 21,50,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 21,49,750.00, EMD: Rs.25,000.00. Category : CAT-IIA.
21.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Kodigehalli ward parks (ward No 13). Estimate cost : Rs. 22,22,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 22,22,000.00, EMD: Rs.50,000.00. Category : Others.
22.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Thindlu ward parks (ward No 12). Estimate cost : Rs. 24,91,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 24,90,830.00, EMD: Rs.50,000.00. Category : Others.
23.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Vidyaranyapura ward parks (ward No 10). Estimate cost : Rs. 32,93,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 32,92,970.00, EMD: Rs.32,930.00. Category : ST
24.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Banasawadi ward parks (ward No 32). Estimate cost : Rs. 36,85,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 36,84,770.00, EMD: Rs.36,850.00. Category : ST
25.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Pulikeshinagara ward parks (ward No 47). Estimate cost : Rs. 37,30,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 37,30,000.00, EMD: Rs.37,300.00. Category : CAT-I
26.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Singapura ward parks (ward No 08). Estimate cost : Rs. 52,11,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 52,10,951.00, EMD: Rs.1,04,220.00. Category : Others.
27.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Byatarayanapura ward parks (ward No 15). Estimate cost : Rs. 54,60,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 54,58,670.00, EMD: Rs.1,09,200.00. Category : Others.
28.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Doddabommasandra ward parks (ward No 11). Estimate cost : Rs. 60,00,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 60,00,000.00, EMD: Rs.60,000.00. Category : CAT-IIA.
29.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Kogilu ward parks (ward No. 21). Estimate cost : Rs. 66,00,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs. 65,96,540.00, EMD: Rs.66,000.00. Category : SC.
30.	Maintenance of Horticulture Works in Jakkuru ward parks (ward No 17). Estimate cost : Rs. 1,22,76,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs.1,22,75,980.00, EMD:Rs.1,84,140.00. Category : Others.
31.	Maintenance & Repair works of Borewells at Sarvagna Nagara Constituency. Estimate cost : Rs. 25,00,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs.21,18,640.00, EMD: Rs.50,000.00. Category : Others.
32.	Maintenance & Repair works of Borewells at Pulikeshi Nagara Assembly Constituency Parks. Estimate cost : Rs. 20,00,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs.16,94,880.00, EMD: Rs.42,380.00. Category : Others.
33.	Maintenance & Repair works of Borewells at Byatarayanapura Assembly Constituency Parks . Estimate cost : Rs. 65,00,000.00, Amount put to Tender : Rs.55,08,424.00, EMD: Rs.1,10,200.00. Category : Others.

Calendar of Events : (1) Date of Notification : **08.07.2026 (2)** Tender can be downloaded from **: 10.07.2026 (3)** Pre bid Meeting : **13.07.2026 at 11.30 AM (4)** Tender Closing Date : **22.07.2026 at 4.00 PM (5)** Technical bid opening date : **23.07.2026 at 4.30 PM (6)** Financially bid opening date : **After Approval Technical Bid.**

Sd/- Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture (North Zone-1), BNCC

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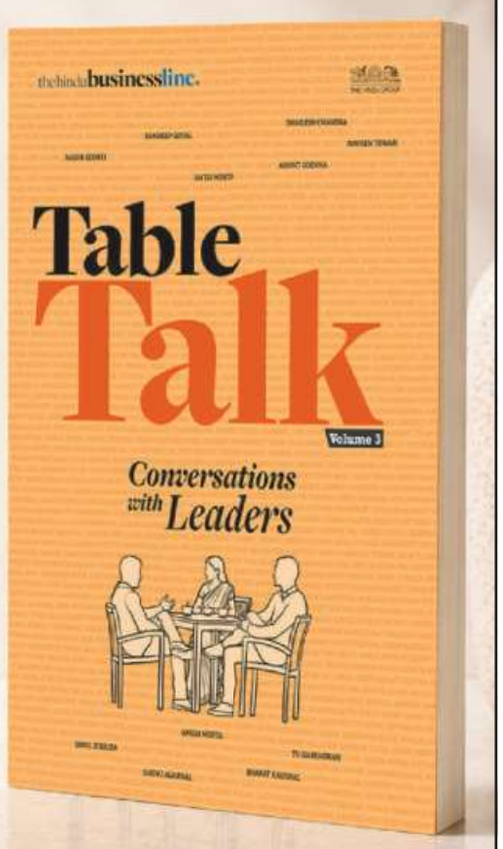

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‘I want to fine-tune my game against spin’

Sai Sudharsan says he is working towards becoming the best version of himself; the southpaw terms the Sri Lanka experience invaluable

CRICKET

S. Dipak Ragav
CHENNAI

Making it count: Sai Sudharsan has made a strong case for himself by scoring heavily for India-A in Sri Lanka. R. RAGU

B. Sai Sudharsan has been in a rich vein of form over the last few months. The Gujarat Titans opener had a 700-plus run season for the second IPL edition in succession and finished as the league’s third-highest scorer (722 runs).

“It was my best IPL so far,” Sai Sudharsan told *The Hindu*. “I didn’t score much in the first few games. I won’t say it was challenging; it was interesting, where the belief, trust and everything increased day by day rather than me becoming doubtful.

“When you are scoring, it is easier to believe in yourself. But when you don’t, are you still trusting the process? Mentally, are you still thinking about not scoring in the previous match? So, in those ways, I learnt a lot – to not take the past into a game,” he added.

The Tamil Nadu batter made his Test debut in England last year and has had an up-and-down start to his fledgling career in whites. But, he felt that it had taught him valuable lessons.

Mental approach

“In Tests, even a small weakness will be challenged. As a batter, you have to keep improving in all those small things. At the same time, there is not much time to do so. You have to be smart enough to pick things and evolve,” the 24-year-old remarked.

“I feel it is all about owning that place. I could have owned it a bit more and been a bit freer [in my approach]. The more I do that, the more I can bring out the best version of myself. A little bit of that happened during the Afghanistan Test match.”

Seamless transition

Post IPL, Sai Sudharsan seamlessly transitioned into red-ball cricket with an 81 against Afghanistan in the one-off Test before striking two centuries for India-A in the recent tour of Sri Lanka. Considering India is set to travel to the island nation for a two-Test series next month, he couldn’t have asked for better preparation.

“Because of the strong breeze, the line of the ball changes quite a lot. Experiencing that was really valuable. You can’t commit too early and judge the line and length. You have to judge the ball as late as possible,” he explained about the things he picked up in the two India-A matches.

Even as he looks towards less hectic weeks, when he will appear in a few TNCA first division league games, Sai Sudharsan has identified the areas to work on.

“The first is from a physical perspective. I want to become stronger, leaner and fitter in terms of my movement and recovery. I want to continue fine-tuning my game against spin and understanding my footwork for the challenges ahead,” he said before signing off.

ISL to run on a club-led model for the next four years

Vivek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

The All India Football Federation (AIFF) announced on Wednesday that the commercial rights of the Indian Super League (ISL) have been handed over to the 14 participating clubs ahead of the 2026-27 season. The agreement between the AIFF and teams will see the ISL move to a club-run model for the next four years.

“We are giving the clubs the commercial rights for this league. The AIFF shall hold on to the administrative aspects of organising the league. “Over the next 24 hours, we will send a letter to the clubs giving them two weeks to confirm their participation,” said AIFF deputy secretary general M. Satyanarayan on Wednesday.

The development follows long-standing uncertainty surrounding the top tier of Indian football. The 2025-26 season was in limbo for many months amid the expiry of the Master Rights Agreement between AIFF and Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL) and a protracted legal battle. It was eventually held in a truncated format.

The 2026-27 edition will return to a full-fledged, home-and-away arrangement. The organisers are aiming to start the new campaign on September 4.

While the agreement is for four years, the clubs have been granted the option of exiting this framework at the end of two years.

AROUND THE CITY

Ashwin slams century in St. John’s victory

Ashwin Arun Kumar’s 104 helped St. John’s Public School (Jalladianpet) defeat Jeppiaar CBSE School (Semmancheri) by 66 runs in the Tagore Sports-TNCA City Schools under-16 cricket tournament on Wednesday.

Ashwin (St. John’s PS, Jalladianpet, 104); Yashveer (Heartfulness Intl.-CBSE, 102).

The scores: St. John’s PS (Jalladianpet) 210/3 in 30 overs (Ashwin Arun Kumar 104, B. Akshadh Rao 51, Ansh Adiga 35 n.o.) bt Jeppiaar CBSE (Semmancheri) 144 in 27.5 overs (Levin Joel 3/25, R. Rishi 3/25).

Jawahar Vidyalaya (Ashok Nagar) 115 in 25.5 overs (R. Jai Saish 35, R. Abilash Gopu 3/15, Raneesh Athreya 3/15) bt Bhavans Rajaji Vidyashram (Kilpauk) 112 in 25.2 overs (B. Aadhitya 39, Padmeshwaran 3/17).

Gurunanak MHSS 99 in 26.4 overs (K. Dinesh Kumar 49 n.o., S. Jenish 3/14, K. Harshavardhan 4/4) lost to Chinmaya Vidyalaya 103/1 in 12.4 overs (S. Rohit Bhavesh 61 n.o.).

Heartfulness Intl.-CBSE 234/6 in 30 overs (B. Yashveer 102, Kridhay 55 n.o., M.V. Gautam Garv 35) bt KSN 112 in 19.2 overs (S. Pranav 4/27).

Govt. HSS-A (West Mambalam) 151 in 30 overs (Rubikshanth 30, N. Dharish 35, R. Aadhavan 3/13) tied with Heartfulness IS NIOS-B (Kolapakkam) 151/8 in 30 overs (S. Hashvamithran 42, Sibeshraj 36 n.o.). *Heartfulness won by fewer wickets lost.*

La Chatelaine Jr. College 119 in 25 overs (J. Avinaash 31, Chayan Kumbhat 3/22) bt Chettinad Hari Shree Vidyalayam (R.A. Puram) 67 in 19.5 overs (S. Adil 3/19).

Bharath SSS (Adyar) 82 in 23.2 overs (M. Sanjeevi 3/15) lost to Marg Vidyalaya (Madipakkam) 83 for no loss in 5.2 overs (K.V. Magizh Iniyan 55 n.o.). *Match reduced to 28 overs per side.*

MCC HSS (Chetpet) 66 in 25.2 overs (P. Dhruv Gothi 4/10) lost to Sir Mutha-A (Chetpet) 67/1 in 6.3 overs (Shashank Katama 30). *Match reduced to 28 overs per side.*

Jeppiaar MHSS (Semmancheri) 190/6 in 30 overs (Trivikram 32, Venugonda Thanishwar 30, S. Jervin 61, T. Siddheswar 3/36) tied with PSBB (Nungambakkam) 190 in 29.5 overs (Rishab Malhotra 74). *PSBB won by fewer number of deliveries taken to reach the target.*

Kola Perumal Chetty Vaishnav 74 in 29.1 overs lost to Don Bosco-B 76/3 in 9.4 overs (G. Sarvesh 30 n.o.).

National PS (Gopalapuram) 102 in 24 overs (A. Arav Raj 4/17) lost to Maharishi Vidya Mandir (Chetpet) 103/5 in 19.3 overs.

Fiitjee Global (Vengambakkam) 92 in 18.5 overs (S. Yathish 3/11) lost to Saraswathi Vidyalaya (Vadapalani) 93/1 in 16 overs (M. Kaarthik Krishnan 34 n.o.).

DAV Boys (Gopalapuram) 61 in 22.3 overs (P.B. Shourya Kumar 4/6) lost to Ebenezer-A (Korattur) 64/2 in 12.1 overs.

Vidya Mandir (Mylapore) 230/8 in 30 overs (Abhijay Royadurgam Tatachari 66, Aadi Shankar Nair 48, S. Dev Dharshan 3/33) bt Dominic Savio (Santhome) 58 in 17 overs (S. Sai Kalyan 3/0). *Second innings reduced to 27 overs due to slow over rate.*

Sri Vimala Vidyalaya (K.K. Nagar) 60/8 in 30 overs (Pradyun Badri 3/9) lost to PSBB-A (K.K. Nagar) 62/0 in six overs (S. Dhakshan 36 n.o.).

Sathish-Shahid pair wins

Sathish Kumar and Shahid secured 62.80% to clinch the IIT Alumni Open bridge on Tuesday. Kalyan and Ashok Rangan were runner-up with 60.12%.

Sai Kishore joins Gloucestershire

Left-arm spinner R. Sai Kishore has signed a six-match deal with Gloucestershire for the remainder of the season.

PVL auction on Aug. 17

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Prime Volleyball League (PVL) has received world body FIVB’s recognition as India’s first division league for the sport and will return for its fifth season from November 30, the organisers announced on Wednesday. The player auction will be held in Goa on August 17.

The PVL clubs will be eligible to compete in Central Asian Volleyball Association (CAVA), Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC), and FIVB club competitions, subject to applicable regulations and qualification criteria.

The FIVB has asked Volleyball Federation of India’s interim head Virender Kanwar to work in “close coordination” with PVL for alignment of domestic calendar, player availability and integration of training camps.

ENGAGEMENTS

Cricket: TNCA inter-district u-16 tournament, pre-quarterfinals, Tiruvallur vs. Coimbatore, OCF, day one, 9.30 a.m.

Tagore Sports-TNCA C. Ramaswamy Trophy u-16 city schools tournament, St. Bede’s-A vs. Chennai Boys HSS (Nungambakkam), Union; Ramachandra PS vs. SBOA, MIT; The Schram Academy vs. St. Bede’s-B, Sumangali.

Jawahar Vidyalaya-B vs. Sishya OMR, Fomra-B; St. John’s (Jalladianpet) vs. Jawahar Vidyalaya-A, GE-A; Heartfulness Intl.-B vs. La Chateline, GE-B; Don Bosco-B vs. Maharishi Vidya Mandir-A, Fomra-A; Marg Vidyalaya vs. PSBB Millennium-A, Gandhi Nagar, 8 a.m.

Olive Tree vs. APL Global, Union; PSBB-B (K.K. Nagar) vs. Santhome-A, MIT; St. Michael’s Academy vs. Nellai Nadar MHSS, Sumangali; The Hindu SSS (Adyar) vs. Heartfulness Intl.-A, Fomra-B; Chinmaya Vidyalaya (Kilpauk) vs. Heartfulness Intl. (CBSE), GE-A; Vidya Mandir vs. PSBB-A (K.K. Nagar), GE-B; Saraswathi Vidyalaya-A vs. Ebenezer MHSS, Fomra-A; Sir Mutha-A vs. PSBB (Nungambakkam), Gandhi Nagar, 1 p.m.

Setting the gold standard

For Australia, which has been used to consistent success, a run without a title for three years would have been a bitter pill to swallow; however, its T20 World Cup triumph during the transition phase makes it the team to beat

P.K. Ajith Kumar
LONDON

One of sport's great anomalies was resolved last Sunday. Australia's women's cricket team won a World Cup. After a gap of three years.

For a team that was so used to winning and that too when it had so many match-winners, not having an ICC trophy for that long in the cabinet must have been a bit frustrating. Players like Ashleigh Gardner had admitted as much, ahead of the T20 World Cup final against England at Lord's.

At the 2025 ODI World Cup, the Aussies were beaten in the semifinal by India, or by an innings of a lifetime by Jemimah Rodrigues to be more precise, at Navi Mumbai. A year earlier, they were knocked out of the T20 World Cup in the UAE, too; they were humbled by the South Africans, who duly went on to crumble in the final against New Zealand.

In fact, it was after defeating the Proteas, in their own backyard, that the Australians had last won a World Cup. That was the sixth T20 World Cup for them. And that was only the eighth edition of the tournament.

So the Australians have now won seven of the 10 World Cups that have been held in the T20 format. After missing out on the inaugural edition in 2009, in which they lost in the semifinals to England, they triumphed in 2010, 2012 and 2014, and finished runner-up in 2016 to the West Indies. Then they scored another hat-trick of titles, in 2018, 2020 and 2023.

Impressive record

Thus, in every edition, they reached at least the semifinals. You may struggle to find another team that has as good a record in a global event, in any sport.

For all their previous triumphs, this one in England would have tasted particularly sweet. Not just it came after that three-year gap, for this was a team in transition and there was a new captain, whose appointment had surprised a few.

But, Sophie Molineux silenced all her critics. And she had to conquer her own doubts and concerns as well. Injuries hadn't helped, and she had to be played purely as a batter, which wasn't exactly an ideal situation. She, however, recovered in time for the World Cup, where her left-arm spin rarely failed to produce a wicket for Australia. She went wicket-less only once in the seven matches, and often it did not take her long to strike.

Molineux was indeed relieved that she could lift that World Cup for Australia. When she was asked if there was a personal satisfaction for her after people had doubts about even her own place in the team, she replied with a smile: "Yep."

She admitted it hadn't been easy. "When I took over, I was a bit messy at the start, to be fair," she explained. "Captaining a couple of games and getting injured; it was a shock, and I suppose there were a few doubts internally, a few doubts externally. But I think what maybe I have learned over my journey so far is that you just have to keep believing and I am incredibly lucky that people believed in me. I believe in this team and this group more than anything as well, so it is really satisfying."

Molineux recalled the difficult days. "When I did miss those games at the start of the summer, after just being announced captain, it probably made me feel it might not work out," she said. "But I am so incredibly lucky with the support I have had over the last, not only just the last six months, but it has been 10 years in this team for Australia. The group has just been incredible in terms of being open to anything and being flexible and we have grown and evolved in the last six months more than I have ever seen."

The guide

Guiding that group quietly has been the coach, Shelley Nitschke. She was part of the Australian team that was the first to win the T20 World Cup, in 2010.

She said Sunday was one of the greatest days for her as a coach. She had been in charge of the team since 2022. "It was super pleasing to come out here and play like we did on the biggest stage in the T20 World Cup," she said. "I couldn't be prouder of the players and how they have gone about it this whole tournament."

Indeed. It was a totally dominant show by Nitschke's girls in the tournament. In the group stage, they began their campaign by crushing South Africa by 65 runs and followed it up with a thumping nine-wicket win against Bangladesh by nine wickets, a massive 98-run victory over the Netherlands and an even bigger win against Pakistan by 113 runs. Then in the last match of Group of Death, they beat India by six wickets.

And that was a match Harmanpreet Kaur's women needed to win if they wanted to remain in the competition. Thanks to a brilliant 27-ball 56 by the captain, India, cheered on by the big partisan crowd at Lord's, set a target of 171, but masterly century partnership by Ellyse Perry and Gardner, two of the finest all-rounders in the history of the women's game, shut India out of the match.

The West Indies was brushed aside by eight wickets in the semifinal. And in the final, in a huge disappointment for the full house at Lord's, England was beaten comfortably by seven wickets. The host stood little chance after managing just 150 for four. Making England bat indeed proved a great decision by Australia. It was the seasoned campaigner Beth Mooney who orchestrated the chase. And that was after coming up with a superb show behind the stumps.

Pat for Mooney

The coach was full of praise for Mooney. "She was unbelievable. We all know how good a player she is, but to be able to do that on the biggest stage certainly takes something special," said Nitschke. "And I think not only that, but probably the way she took the game on early in the piece and really took it to them in the PowerPlay and put us in a winning position. It takes a lot of bravery to do that." Nitschke said the tournament was a satisfying one for her personally too, after the disappointments of the last two World Cups. "It is really pleasing," she said. "I think you learn pretty quickly, you don't take anything for granted. So you need to make sure you enjoy it while you can, because we certainly know that it is really hard to win."

She said the most satisfying thing was the way Australia played. "I think when we lost the semifinals in Dubai at the last T20 World Cup, we were pretty disappointed with how we were playing," she said. "And I think just the style of cricket that we've played, and obviously got the results as well, has been really pleasing. Again, just seeing the girls take the game on the biggest stage, that is pretty brave to do."

The coach said Molineux had been amazing as a captain. "She has shown how we could play, the freedom that we have played with," she said.

"She came on that West Indies tour as a batter only, and we felt like that was a good opportunity for her to get some game time as captain, and be out there working with the bowlers and leading the team on and off the field. I feel like that was a really important part of her journey, and started to really gel the group there, and then it built nicely into this World Cup."

Nitschke has watched from close quarters how Australia over the years evolved into an all-time great side. Women like Meg Lanning, Alyssa Healy, Megan Schutt, Tahlia McGrath, Gardner, Perry and Mooney have all played their parts, and now younger players like Phoebe Litchfield, Georgia Voll, Annabel Sutherland and Lucy Hamilton have shown how easily they could settle into international cricket and continue the legacy. "I think we are very lucky (to have such players)," Nitschke said.

Not for granted

"We certainly don't take the competitions for granted. It is a tough competition, and we know from the last couple of World Cups, that you need to be on at the right time and in the big moments. We are pretty driven by that, and continuing to get better and continuing to drive the game. It is a tough environment, the women's cricket at the moment."

It is just that Australia is considerably tougher than all the others at the moment.

THE GIST

- Coach Nitschke has watched from close quarters how Australia has evolved into an all-time great side
- For all their previous triumphs, this one in England would have tasted particularly sweet for the Aussies. Not only because it came after a three-year gap but also because it was a team in transition and there was a new captain
- Skipper Molineux silenced her critics, conquering her own doubts and concerns as well

Quantum computing age will only begin when we silence the noise

Among other things, quantum computers are expected to herald a new era in how we optimise complex logistical networks and model natural phenomena that overwhelm even our most powerful supercomputers; however, hardware limitations stand between promise and performance

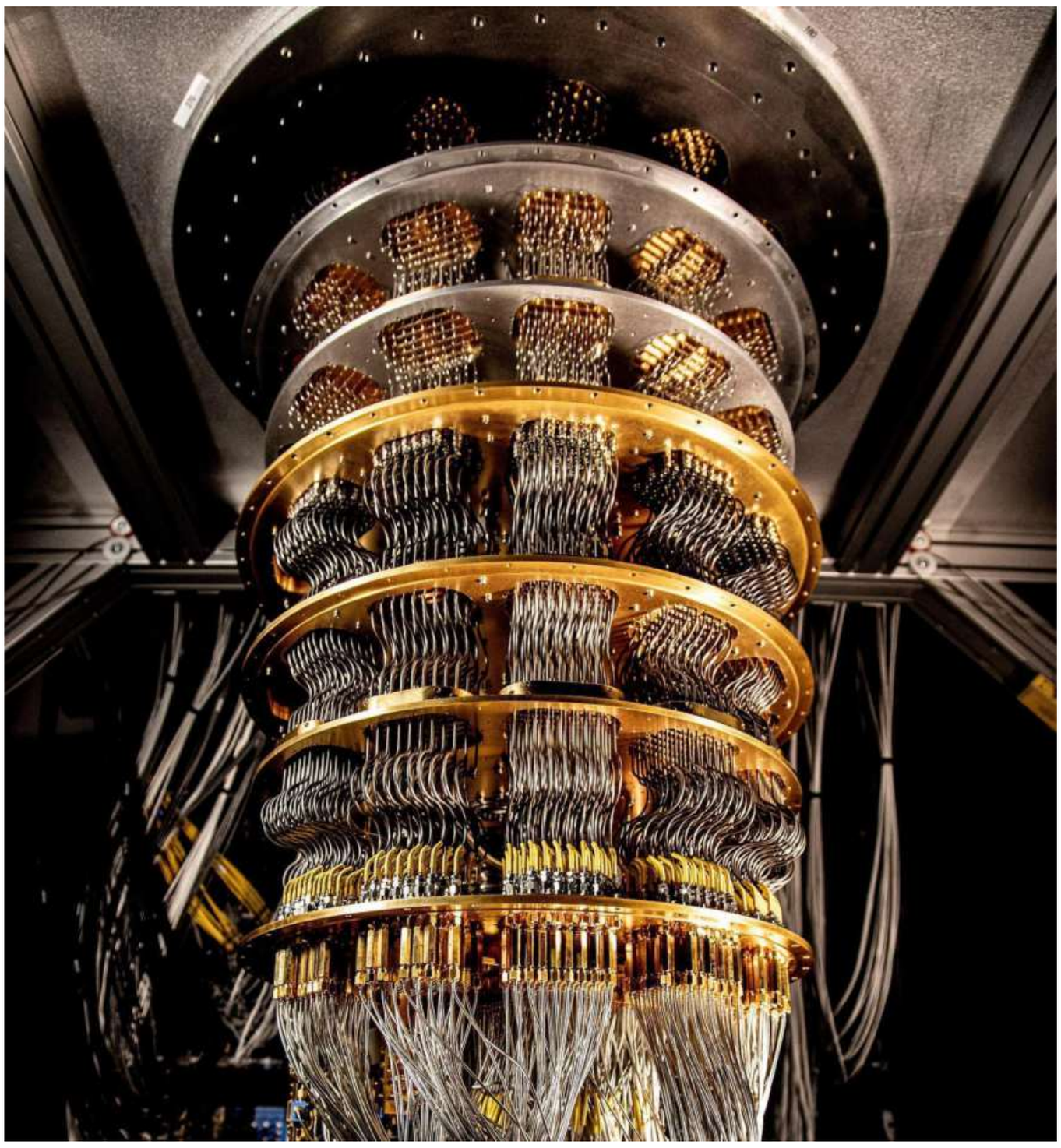
Sayantan Datta
BENGALURU

In a paper published in the *Journal of Statistical Physics* in 1980, the American physicist Paul Benioff described what is now called the quantum Turing machine: a model of a computer that operated according to the laws of quantum mechanics.

Quantum mechanics is the branch of physics that studies the behaviour of matter and light at atomic and subatomic scales. At these scales, the certainty associated with classical mechanics disappears. Instead of pinpointing a particle's properties, scientists can only make educated guesses.

This uncertainty may sound daunting. But Benioff – and other scientists like the British physicist David Deutsch, American physicist Richard Feynman, and American computer scientist Peter Shor – suggested ways to harness it for computation. Their work eventually became the foundation for one of the contemporary world's most ambitious technological pursuits, one for which the Government of India sanctioned over ₹6,000 crore in April 2023.

By 2031, the National Quantum Mission (NQM) – whose objectives include building "intermediate-scale quantum computers" – is expected to "make India one of the leading nations in the development of Quantum Technologies & Applications," according to the Department of Science & Technology website.



A cryostat refrigerator for cooling quantum computing chips is seen at the Google Quantum AI lab in California, U.S., on December 6, 2024. REUTERS

Beyond hype

Beyond nationalistic pride, the possibilities of a quantum computer are tantalising. Among other things, quantum computers are expected to herald a new era in how we simulate molecules and their interactions, secure our digital lives, optimise complex logistical networks, and model natural phenomena that overwhelm even our most powerful supercomputers.

However, those in the thick of it warn against hype. "It is worth treating claims you hear in the field with scepticism," Jason Freidenfelds, spokesperson for Google Quantum AI, the tech giant's quantum computing research division, said. "To date no one has experimentally demonstrated a commercially relevant problem that can be solved by today's quantum computers that could not be solved by a classical supercomputer."

Indian Institute of Science physicist Arindam Ghosh, who chairs the Karnataka Government's Quantum Task Force, agreed. "At least at this point of time, there is no reason to believe that the classical computing that we know as of today is going to go away in any form," he said. Dr. Ghosh also led the vision document for the NQM's Quantum Materials and Devices vertical.

At the heart of this gap between promise and performance is hardware.

Building a quantum computer

The processors of classical computers are made of billions of tiny devices called transistors. Made of silicon, these can amplify or block electrical signals. If a transistor allows current to pass through it, it is said to be in the ON state (represented by the number 1); conversely, if it blocks electrical signals from passing, it is said to be in the OFF state (represented by 0).

These states of a transistor form the fundamental unit of data in classical computers: a bit.

Quantum computers replace the bit with a qubit ('quantum bit'). Unlike a bit, which can be either in the 0 or 1 states at any point of time, a qubit can exist in multiple states simultaneously: 0, 1, and any of the infinite states between them. This is like a coin tossed in the air; it is both heads and tails until it falls on the ground. This property is called superposition. It allows qubits to represent much larger amounts of information as compared with classical bits.

Further, thanks to the laws of quantum mechanics, qubits can also be entangled. That is, their states can become inexorably linked regardless of the physical distance between them. Any action or measurement made on one of the qubits will then affect the state of all other entangled qubits.

This makes quantum computers "massively parallel versions of a classical machine," explained IIT-M quantum computing researcher Prabhu Rajagopal, the current Director-In-Charge of IIT-M's Zanzibar campus.

Superposition and entanglement massively increase the speed of processing – especially for tasks that require a machine to work with large amounts of data and compare many different solutions of a problem. Examples of such tasks include "sorting algorithms and search algorithms," Dr. Ghosh suggested.

Sorting algorithms provide instructions on how to rearrange a group of items into a specific order; for example, an online store that organises products by price in real-time. Search algorithms dictate how to find specific data points from a large set of data (for example, finding which two metals will form an alloy with required properties from all possible combinations of metals).

Depending on their origin, qubits can be of different types. Superconducting qubits are made from a device called the Josephson junction. It involves two superconductors - materials that allow current to flow through them with almost negligible resistance - separated by a thin barrier. Google's quantum processor Willow, launched in December 2024, is an example.

Other ways of fabricating qubits include using tiny particles of semiconductors like silicon, gallium arsenide, or germanium (called quantum dot qubits); trapping and manipulating individual ions (trapped ion qubits); manipulating particles of light (photonic qubits); and using the angular momentum of nuclei within molecules (nuclear magnetic resonance, or NMR, qubits).

Perfect machine, imperfect parts

In 1998, two groups of researchers - one from Oxford University, and another consisting of scientists from IBM, University of California Berkeley, Stanford University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology - unveiled for the first time a quantum computer consisting of two NMR qubits. On that computer, they solved the Deutsch-Jozsa problem, demonstrating for the first time that quantum computers can solve certain problems dramatically faster than classical computers.

The Deutsch-Jozsa problem asks a computer to determine whether a mathematical function is constant or balanced. Functions are rules that take an input and process it to produce a corresponding output. A constant function would return the same value for all possible inputs. A balanced function, on the other hand, would return different outputs for different inputs. Although the problem was of little practical use, the milestone was important. A quantum computer had been realised.

Since then, tech companies have raced to create increasingly larger processors, with California-based Atom Computing having reported in 2023 a quantum computer with over 1,000 qubits. Today's quantum computers have outperformed classical computers on a benchmark, successfully ran algorithms that would take classical computers impractically long amounts of time, and have computed the structures of some small molecules.

Yet they are still years away from being practically useful, all researchers this reporter spoke to agreed. Part of the challenge is to make processors with more qubits. The other, more important part is to deal with "noise and errors," Dr. Rajagopal, the IIT-M quantum computing researcher, pointed out. This is why California Institute of Technology quantum computing researcher John Preskill called contemporary quantum processors "Noisy Intermediate-Scale Quantum Computing".

Qubits are incredibly sensitive and short-lived. Any interaction with the environment - including with particles of light - lead to qubits losing their quantum states, a phenomenon called decoherence. To prevent this, qubits are isolated from the environment and cooled to temperatures near absolute zero (-273 °C).

Further, the mechanisms by which qubits are controlled and manipulated, like lasers or microwave pulses, are themselves rarely perfect. Together, these lead to quantum processors being prone to noise, and, eventually, errors.

Contemporary quantum processors have error rates of 1% to 0.1%. That is, one out of every 100 to 1000 quantum operations results in an error. In contrast, classical computers make errors at the rate of one out of every quintillion (10 followed by 17 zeroes) operations. In fact, some researchers, like University of Copenhagen's Michael Kastoryano, have suggested that error rates of quantum processors are unlikely to decrease beyond one out of 1,00,00,000 operations.

Then the challenge facing quantum computing is, in the words of *Quanta Magazine*, "how do you construct a perfect machine out of imperfect parts?"

Fixing errors

The answer: error correction. This is a set of techniques that forces several qubits to work together as a single "logical qubit". A computer can then use several such logical qubits to perform calculations.

There is, however, one problem. Merely adding more qubits doesn't help. If each qubit is prone to errors, adding more qubits could worsen the performance of logical qubits. But if scientists can push the error rate for individual qubits below a certain threshold, we get a system whose error rate drops exponentially with each additional qubit.

That is exactly what Google Quantum AI researchers showed for the first time in a 2024 *Nature* paper with their processor Willow. "Each time we increase our encoded qubits from a 3x3 to a 5x5 to a 7x7 lattice of physical qubits, the encoded error rate is suppressed by a factor of two," team members Michael Newman and Kevin Satzinger wrote in a 2024 blog post explaining the study. "This culminates in a logical qubit whose lifetime is more than twice of its best constituent physical qubit," they added.

With that, Google is working on its next target: "a long-lived logical, or error-corrected, qubit," spokesperson Freidenfelds said. "We expect the first useful quantum computing applications within the next five years."

Ultimately, Google plans to tile thousands of these logical qubits together to create a "fully fault-tolerant quantum computer," he added. IBM expects to debut theirs by 2029.

'Everything will change'

If these projections are correct, a practically useful quantum computer is practically knocking at our doors. The anticipation among scientists is palpable. "Everything would change" is their common refrain.

"The day we get an industrial-grade quantum computer, everything in this field of climate modelling [will] change," Manmeet Singh, climate modeller and assistant professor at the Western Kentucky University, said. Dr. Ghosh and Dr. Rajagopal echoed his excitement, albeit about the role of quantum computers in materials modelling and cryptography.

While it may take some time for quantum computers to make their way to laptops, if at all, "it could cause a technological revolution well before that," Dr. Ghosh said.

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The WHO has so far marked 506 deaths and 1,561 confirmed Ebola cases in the DRC. REUTERS

Countries try again to seal pandemic treaty after Ebola jolt

Agence France-Presse
GENEVA

World Health Organisation (WHO) member states kicked off another attempt at finalising the missing piece of the pandemic treaty here on Monday, with the Ebola outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) injecting a fresh sense of urgency.

Wealthy countries and developing nations are at loggerheads in talks at the WHO's headquarters over how the pandemic agreement, adopted last year, will work in practice.

Though the treaty was agreed in May 2025, how its key mechanism would operate was left out to get the deal over the line.

The accord aims at preventing a repeat of the disjointed international response that surrounded COVID-19, by improving global coordination and timely access to vaccines

The agreement's Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing (PABS) system deals with sharing access to pathogens with pandemic potential, then sharing benefits derived from them such as vaccines, tests, and treatments.

It was meant to be finalised by May 2026, but progress has been agonisingly slow.

Negotiations have often gone late into the night, producing slender advances and leaving diplomats drained. This two-week session until July 17 is the seventh such round of talks.

As the number of confirmed Ebola deaths in the DRC outbreak topped 500, WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus urged countries to grasp the nettle.

"Keep the destination in sight," pleaded the UN health agency's Director-General.

"A future in which pathogen samples and information move quickly, without needless delay; and in which the benefits that come from them reach the people who need them most, fairly and in time."

The Ebola outbreak in the DRC, declared in mid-May, is a "painful" reminder that "the threat never truly goes away", Mr. Ghebreyesus said.

There have been 1,561 confirmed cases in the DRC, including 506 confirmed deaths, and the outbreak has spilled over into neighbouring Uganda.

"Danger can emerge from anywhere, at any time, in ways we don't always expect," he added.

Before last month's G7 summit, the WHO chief and Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva urged its leaders to find the "political will" themselves ensure the PABS annex gets finished, and "treat July 17 as a deadline, not a milestone".

The pandemic agreement was struck after more than three years of negotiations sparked by the shock of COVID-19.

The accord aims at preventing a repeat of the disjointed international response that surrounded the coronavirus crisis, by improving global coordination, surveillance and access to vaccines.

The Third World Network, an NGO that is monitoring the negotiations, has insisted that meaningful progress "requires developed countries coming down from their maximalist positions and adopting a positive and a constructive outlook".

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Share of declared foreigners repatriated in Assam since 2021

0.5 in per cent. Over 36,000 people have been declared foreigners since 2021, but only 196 have been deported to Bangladesh, the Assembly was informed. Under the Assam Accord, foreigners who entered Assam on or after March 25, 1971, are to be identified and deported. PTI

Number of farmer suicides recorded in Marathwada region

465 The Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar district reported the highest number of cases at 109, an official report said on Wednesday. According to the report, 215 suicide cases were found eligible for financial aid from the government. PTI

Children killed or injured in Sudan war in six months

300 The Sudanese military and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces have been fighting since April 2023. The war is now concentrated in the Kordofan, Darfur and Blue Nile states, with drone warfare causing 60% of casualties, according to UNICEF. PTI

Karnataka: share of SIR enumeration forms distributed

80 in per cent. Karnataka Chief Electoral Officer V. Anbukkumar said that 80.85% of the enumeration forms had been distributed to electors across the State. He said Bommanahalli had recorded 35% distribution, the lowest in Karnataka. PTI

Number of people killed in Balochistan over past four days

92 At least 54 terrorists, 38 security personnel and four civilians were killed during the last four days in various incidents in the restive Balochistan province, the ISPR said on Wednesday. The trouble began on the night of July 4 and 5. PTI

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What is the right to be forgotten?

How does the ruling balance privacy with open justice and free speech? What challenges remain in enforcing the right to be forgotten? What role does the DPDP Act play? Who should decide requests for erasure or de-indexing?

EXPLAINER

G.S. Bajpai

The story so far:
The Delhi High Court, in its recent ruling, has laid down the principles governing the right to be forgotten. The court has evolved a new jurisprudence to protect the privacy of those who continue to be victimised on account of their digital footprints on social media and elsewhere, despite having those matters settled in their favour.

What is the 'right to be forgotten'?
The "right to be forgotten" is the right to have information erased or de-indexed from the public digital environment when its continued accessibility is harmful and serves no public interest.

The concept came to the fore in 2014, when a Spanish citizen, Mario Costeja González, complained to the European Court of Justice that Google continued to display an old newspaper notice about the auction of his repossessed house even though the debt had been settled. The court ruled in his favour, laying the groundwork for the right to erasure, which was later incorporated into Article 17 of the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

How has the idea of the right to be forgotten evolved in Indian law?
The Supreme Court's judgment in *K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India* (2017) held that privacy is a fundamental right under Article 21, including the right to informational privacy. In the years that followed, however, High Courts adopted divergent approaches.

While some permitted anonymisation in limited cases, such as the Delhi High Court ordering the masking of names in certain matrimonial and criminal matters, others rejected similar requests on grounds of open justice.

GETTY IMAGES

The real challenge was the lack of a coherent framework to balance these competing interests, which the May 2026 Delhi High Court judgment sought to address.

What did the Delhi High Court decide?
On May 29, the Delhi High Court ruled in a batch of over 30 consolidated petitions, led by *Laksh Vir Singh Yadav v. Union of India*. The core issue was whether informational privacy could justify the de-indexing or masking of judicial records in a system committed to open justice. The court held that the right to be forgotten flows from Article 21's guarantee of dignity and informational privacy. The structured proportionality test is that retention must have a legitimate purpose, that the harm to privacy must be balanced against the public interest, and that the least intrusive means, typically by masking names instead of deleting the entire judgment, should be preferred. The court also prescribed a two-week deadline for legal databases to comply and explained that only the parties' names should be redacted, not the facts of the case.

How does the right to be forgotten interact with constitutional values?
This is not a stand-alone right. It frequently conflicts with freedom of speech and press under Article 19(1)(a), the principle of open justice, and the public's right to know. A right to privacy must be sacrificed when the public interest is of a high order, particularly in serious cases of crime, but the digital presence should not destroy a person's life long after the trial ends. The judgments are still publicly accessible by case number or a keyword search; only name-based searches are restricted.

What are the practical challenges?
The toughest aspect is enforcement. An acquittal judgment may still appear highly in name-based searches even after a court has ordered the removal of the search results. Search engines are designed so that the original accusation, or the "shadow of crime," is often the first thing the user sees. De-indexing can benefit at the search level, but it won't prevent mirrors, archive copies, or social media sharing. Without effective technical compliance and coordination among platforms, the right may remain largely symbolic.

What is the relationship between the right to be forgotten and DPDP Act?
As of now, the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, offers a limited statutory right to erasure in section 12. It is primarily based on consent and does not explicitly address judicial records and public archives, where the right to be forgotten is most needed. The Act is deficient because rules have not been notified and the data protection board has not been completely effective.

Who should decide requests for erasure or de-indexing?
The challenge lies in balancing efficiency with accountability. Requiring every request to be decided by a court would create significant bottlenecks, while leaving such decisions entirely to technology companies raises concerns about due process and transparency. A more sensible approach would be a tiered system, where cases could be heard by platforms, contested ones by the data protection board, and judicial cases by courts.

The Delhi High Court has established an important framework, but until the Supreme Court rules on the matter, establishes a data protection board, and platforms comply with it, this ruling will be mostly declaratory. The conflict over freedom of expression and open justice is a reality. The task ahead is now to establish the institutions that facilitate it.

(G. S. Bajpai is Vice Chancellor at National Law University Delhi. He acknowledges the assistance of Vibhuti Sharma, Academic fellow, NLU Delhi. Views are personal)

THE GIST

- The Delhi High Court has recognised the right to be forgotten as part of the fundamental right to privacy under Article 21, laying down a framework that balances informational privacy with open justice and freedom of speech by favouring name-masking over deletion of judgments.
- While the ruling provides a legal framework for de-indexing and erasure requests, its effectiveness depends on enforcement by platforms, the operationalisation of the DPDP Act, and the establishment of institutions such as the data protection board.

What is the 'Hummus trail' and why is it under scrutiny?

Can India arrest foreign nationals accused of grave breaches under the Geneva Conventions?

Nivedita S.

The story so far:
On June 2, 2026, the Hind Rajab Foundation (HRF), a Palestinian rights organisation based in Brussels, filed a complaint with the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, the Bureau of Immigration and the police to arrest Eitan Gilboa, an Israeli soldier, who was found to be vacationing in Himachal Pradesh. Gilboa, a member of the 271st Combat Engineering Battalion, was accused by the organisation of committing "war crimes in Gaza" in 2024. The organisation submitted evidence that involves specific instances in which he participated in the destruction of residential buildings and civilian infrastructure in Khan Yunis and Rafah. He filmed videos of himself celebrating the execution of these activities, which were later posted on social media by his mother. The HRF provided geo-located videos, social media videos and chain-of-command documentation along with the complaint.

How does Indian law apply to alleged war crimes?
The HRF alleged that these activities by Gilboa were in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, to which India is a signatory. Under this convention, any intentional launch of an attack which is known to cause loss of life or injury to civilians, along with severe damage to civilian objects, is considered to be a war crime and a grave breach of the convention.

Though India does not have its own law criminalising war crimes, it has passed the Geneva Conventions Act, 1960. Under this law, any act which constitutes a 'grave breach' under four sections of the Geneva Convention is criminalised. India can arrest any person, irrespective of nationality, if found to have committed an offence under the convention, regardless of the geographical location of the offence.

If an arrest is not possible, the Home Ministry and the Bureau of Immigration can facilitate the deportation of the accused from Indian territory. However, the Union government did not issue a statement regarding the allegations by HRF, nor initiated a probe.

What is the 'Hummus trail'?
Though Gilboa has now fled India, he was traced by pro-Palestinian activists and the HRF in Old Manali and Gondla Village of Himachal Pradesh, which are popular spots among Israelis along the 'Hummus trail.'

Every year, around 80,000 Israelis visit India, a large number of them young veterans who have been discharged from the mandatory Israeli army service. This trip, known as the Tiul Gadol, could last up to 6 months or a year and is mainly funded by the bonus they receive after serving in the army. In February 2026, the Israeli government allocated four million NIS to boost tourism collaboration with India.

From the north to the south of the country, there are several areas which are frequented by Israelis, and this is colloquially known as the 'Hummus trail in India'. This includes Kasol (also known as mini-Israel), Kodaikanal, Kerala, Goa, Hampi, Gokarna, Rishikesh, Varanasi, Pushkar, Almora, Dharamkot, and, more recently, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

In these places frequented by Israelis, one can observe several changes to the cultural landscape. It is common to see signs in Hebrew, posters promoting the Israeli Defence Forces, along with cafes, stores and hostels run by Israelis. In 2015, an Israeli-run cafe in Himachal Pradesh faced backlash for allegedly denying entry to Indians with a 'whites only' sign.

According to a 2020 study published in the Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, drug abuse and rave parties are common along the Hummus trail, with drug peddling cases on the rise in these regions.

The study found that to cope with mental health challenges faced by these veterans during their service in the army, they resort to high drug consumption. Mental health workers from Israel have also been sent to India to aid these reservists.

Why is the issue drawing global attention?
"India-Israel tourism is not merely about routine holidays and cultural exchange. It is part of a broader normalisation process that seeks to deepen social and economic ties between the two countries," Azad Essa, author of Hostile Homelands: The New Alliance Between India and Israel, told *The Hindu*. He added that Israel has thanked India multiple times for being one of the few countries that have provided political and moral support to Israel, when much of the world has turned its back on it, at least publicly.

As Israel has killed over 73,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip since the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack, and is currently facing a case filed by South Africa in the International Court of Justice over allegations of genocide, allowing unrestricted entry of Israeli soldiers to India after their service in Gaza demands scrutiny.

The UN Commission of Inquiry, in its report, has said that the Israeli military "deliberately carried out acts inflicting death and severe bodily and mental harm on hundreds of thousands of Palestinian children."

Five-year-old Hind Rajab is among the thousands of children killed by the Israeli forces in Gaza.

The HRF's legal action in other countries against Israeli soldiers travelling there has resulted in successful outcomes in Brazil, Romania, Peru, Belgium, and Canada, according to its website. A court in Chile is the latest to recognise universal jurisdiction over war crimes in Gaza while hearing HRF's complaint against Rom Kovtun, an Israeli-Ukrainian citizen accused of war crimes during the siege of Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza.

"The 'Hummus Trail' – or these extended trips that IDF soldiers take to decompress after military duties – cannot become a route for impunity," Natacha Bracq, Head of Litigation at the HRF, said in a statement.

CACHE

CBSE's supplementary examination and the promise of no injustice

Every Class XII student should have a fair opportunity to verify digitised answer scripts and seek re-evaluation before supplementary examination, so that no one is disadvantaged by errors in the original evaluation

Rajeev Kumar

Barely weeks after the controversy over CBSE's On-Screen Marking (OSM) system erupted, three developments this week have created an extraordinary contradiction. First, CBSE has announced the Class XII supplementary examination, requiring students to improve their performance even though many might have secured substantially higher marks had they been given timely access to their digitised answer scripts for verification and re-evaluation. Second, the Central Information Commission (CIC) has directed CBSE to frame transparent, time-bound Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for providing students with their marks, answer sheets, and assessment records. Third, within a month of appointing a new CBSE chairperson, the government reverted him and converted the post into an interim additional-charge arrangement, even as the OSM controversy remained unresolved.

These developments stand in stark contrast to the Union Education Minister's assurance that no student would suffer injustice – a commitment that inspired confidence among millions of students, parents, and teachers. Yet many students still await access to their answer scripts and an opportunity to verify their evaluation and seek correction of genuine errors. The issue is no longer one of software glitches or administrative procedures, but of whether that assurance has been translated into transparency, accountability, and timely corrective action.

Until every student is given a fair opportunity to verify the original evaluation, requiring them to appear in a supplementary examination addresses the consequence rather than the cause.

Premature test

CBSE's circular of June 30 announced the Class XII supplementary examination, permitting compartment candidates and students who have passed the examination to improve their performance. However, it overlooks another category of students – those whose marks may have increased substantially had they first been given access to their digitised answer scripts for verification and re-evaluation.

The scale of the issue is significant. Of the nearly 17.7 lakh Class XII students, only about four lakh obtained access to around 11 lakh answer scripts out of 98 lakh scripts. CBSE stated that about 95% of the requested scripts had been delivered by the end of May, while the status of nearly 20,000 pending requests remains undisclosed. Consequently, nearly 14 lakh students never had the opportunity to examine their evaluated answer scripts independently. Only about 1.6 lakh students reached the re-evaluation stage, and results were declared for about 87% of them.

Even within this limited sample, several candidates secured extraordinary mark revisions, including increases approaching 20 marks out of 60 in highly structured Science subjects, while another student's History marks rose from 74 to 97. In one widely reported case, a student became the CBSE topper after re-evaluation by securing 100 out of 100 in all five subjects. These outcomes emerged from only a small fraction of students, while the overwhelming majority remained outside the independent scrutiny.

Real test: Asking students to appear in a supplementary examination before ensuring that the original evaluation was accurate and fairly reviewable appears to be premature. FILE PHOTO

Against this backdrop, asking students to appear in a supplementary examination before ensuring that the original evaluation was accurate and fairly reviewable appears to be premature. A supplementary examination is meant to improve academic performance – not to compensate for possible deficiencies in the original evaluation. Before asking students to take a second examination, CBSE must first ensure that every student has had a fair opportunity to verify and, where warranted, correct the first. That remains the unfinished business of the OSM controversy.

A clear roadmap

The present controversy is particularly striking because the CIC, while deciding an appeal by a Class XII student seeking access to her 2021 assessment records, identified a clear way forward. Invoking Section 25(5) of the RTI Act, 2005, the CIC observed that time-bound SOPs for providing marks, answer sheets, and assessment records were "the dire need of today's scenario."

It was further observed that such SOPs would avoid the hardship faced by the young minds. It directed CBSE to formulate and publish a transparent SOP, holding that the denial of access to one's own assessment records was contrary to the spirit of the RTI Act.

Ironically, the OSM framework, introduced to enhance transparency, operated in the opposite direction. Instead of providing automatic access to already digitised answer scripts, students were required to navigate applications, fee payments, portal access, verification, and re-evaluation within overlapping timelines. The resulting delays, portal failures, and restricted disclosure limited independent scrutiny to only a small fraction of students.

The CIC's recent directions provide CBSE with an opportunity to institutionalise a transparent, student-centric review process. The lesson is clear: transparency must be built into the examination system through well-defined, time-bound, and publicly accountable SOPs – not left to ad hoc procedures.

Questions persist

As the OSM controversy escalated, the Union Education Minister publicly accepted responsibility and assured the nation that no student would suffer injustice. Soon thereafter, the government replaced the then CBSE Chairperson with a new full-time incumbent. Yet, barely a month later, he was reverted, and his appointment was converted to an additional-charge arrangement.

The leadership transition does not diminish the need for institutional accountability. Instead, it leaves several fundamental questions unanswered.

There has been no satisfactory explanation for why already digitised answer scripts were not proactively disclosed, forcing students to apply, pay fees and depend on portal access merely to obtain their own records. Nor has the CBSE explained why alternative arrangements were not put in place after widespread portal failures and payment disruptions became evident, or why verification and re-evaluation windows were opened simultaneously even though re-evaluation depended on prior access to answer scripts. Most importantly, despite expressing confidence in the OSM process, the Board has not opened all digitised answer scripts to universal independent scrutiny. Public confidence will be restored not by administrative reshuffles, but by transparency, accountability and timely corrective action.

Seven-day plan

The present impasse can still be resolved before the supplementary examination through a simple, practical, and student-centric framework. Since every Class XII answer script has already been digitised, no further scanning or processing is required.

A short, time-bound transparency exercise can ensure that deficiencies in the original evaluation do not disadvantage any student.

Day 1: Universal disclosure: Provide every Class XII student, free of cost, with a secure digital copy of the evaluated answer script through registered email, WhatsApp, and the respective school.

Days 1-3: Verification: Allow students, parents, and schools to verify the completeness and authenticity of the digitised answer scripts and report any deficiencies relating to scanning, digitisation, document management, or evaluation. Students whose scripts are found to be free from such deficiencies may proceed directly to re-evaluation.

Days 2-7: Re-evaluation: After verified or corrected answer scripts are made available, permit students to seek re-evaluation of identified questions or awarded marks. Complete the process within a fixed timeline, publish anonymised statistics on verification deficiencies, and marks revisions to strengthen public confidence.

Such an exercise would be far more meaningful than requiring students to sit a supplementary examination before confirming the correctness of the original evaluation. It would reinforce transparency, accountability, and fairness while ensuring that no student is compelled to take a second examination because of avoidable deficiencies in the first.

The way forward

The OSM controversy should not end with administrative closure, leadership changes, or supplementary examinations. It should end only when every affected student has a fair opportunity to verify the original evaluation and secure the correction of genuine deficiencies.

In an examination affecting nearly 17.7 lakh students, transparency cannot remain selective; it must become universal.

The proposed seven-day transparency framework offers a practical, low-cost, and time-bound solution. Since every answer script has already been digitised, universal disclosure, verification, and targeted re-evaluation can still be completed before the supplementary examination. Such an exercise would restore confidence in the OSM process while reinforcing fairness, accountability, and student-centric governance.

Ultimately, this is not about defending a technology vendor, an administrative process, or an institution. It is about protecting the academic future of millions of young students. The credibility of India's examination system will be judged not by assurances, audits, or leadership changes, but by whether every student receives a fair, transparent, and trustworthy evaluation.

Even now, it is not too late to restore public confidence. Universal transparency, timely correction of genuine errors, and the assurance that no student suffers injustice should define the true legacy of the CBSE-OSM initiative.

(Prof. Rajeev Kumar is a former Computer Science Professor at IIT Kharagpur, IIT Kanpur, BITS Pilani, and JNU, and a former scientist at DRDO and DST.)

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

What is the meaning and origin of "flea market"? (B. C. Koshy, Palakkad)
If a fish market is a place where you go to buy fish, then a "flea market" should be a place where you go to buy fleas! Makes sense, doesn't it? Luckily this is not the case. The expression "flea market" was originally used to refer to a place where second-hand goods were sold. In order for a place to be called a "flea market", the goods sold had to be 'second hand' and they had to be sold outdoors – out in the open air, not indoors. The assumption being that the second hand goods would attract not only customers, but also fleas! Nowadays, a flea market does not necessarily have to sell only second hand goods; nor does it have to sell its products out in the open air. We have indoor flea markets as well.

Why is the word "number" abbreviated to "No." (M. Murugan, Tiruvannamalai)
The word "number" comes from the Latin "numero". Since the first and last letters of the word are "n" and "o" respectively, the word is often abbreviated to "no."

What is the difference between "nickname" and "pseudonym"? (S. Sheela, Mysore)
A nickname literally means "additional name". All of us have a registered name, but at home we may be called something else. A "Chaithanya" in college may be called "Baboota" at home. When I was in school, I had a friend named Sekhar, but my friends and I never called him by that name. Instead we used to call him "Fats". Fats became his nickname. A nickname is a name given to a person by someone else; it could be someone from within the family or outside.

A pseudonym means more or less the same thing as "nickname". It is an additional name that someone has. But unlike a "nickname" which is usually given by someone else, one can choose one's pseudonym. Writers often choose a fictitious name to write under. For example "Mark Twain" was the pseudonym of Samuel Clemens and similarly "Lewis Carroll" was the pseudonym of Charles Dodgson. When you use a pseudonym, you do not always use it to hide your identity; you may use it because it sounds fancier than your registered name. Perhaps it is easier to remember than your real name. Movie actors very often make use of pseudonyms. Unlike the word "alias", which was discussed in this column several weeks ago, pseudonym and nickname do not have a negative connotation. A word about the pronunciation. The first syllable "pseu" is pronounced like the word "sue"; the "p" is silent. The "o" in the second syllable is like the "a" in "China", while the final "y" is like the "i" in "hit", "bit", and "sit". The stress is on the first syllable.

What is the past tense of "telecast"? (P. Rathna, Chennai)
The past tense of broadcast and telecast are broadcast and telecast.

What does "a.k.a" stand for? (T. Krishna Kumar, Alwaye)
This is an abbreviation which we usually find when we are reading about missing persons. "Rajan, a.k.a, Goldie has been missing since....". The letters stand for "also known as".
Published in The Hindu on March 20, 2001

Word of the day

Lucullan: characterised by extravagance and profusion

Synonyms: luxurious, lavish, sumptuous

Usage: *The celebration ended with a lucullan meal.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/lucullan

International Phonetic Alphabet: /lukʌlən/

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

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Adopted on July 9, 1868, the Fourteenth Amendment transformed the U.S. Constitution by redefining citizenship, due process and equal protection

Prathmesh Kher

QUESTION 1
Name the four distinct guarantees contained in Section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment.

QUESTION 2
The Citizenship Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment overturned which infamous 1857 U.S. Supreme Court judgment?

QUESTION 3
Which phrase in the opening sentence of Section 1 begins the Citizenship Clause?

QUESTION 4
Under Section 3, what vote of Congress is required to remove the disqualification from office?

QUESTION 5
Section 3 of the Fourteenth Amendment originally targeted former officeholders who had supported which conflict?

Visual Question:
Identify this U.S. Supreme Court Justice who, as a lawyer, served as chief counsel for the plaintiffs in the landmark Fourteenth Amendment case Brown v. Board of Education (1954). U.S. GOVERNMENT/PUBLIC DOMAIN

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. The fleet arrived in which part of India on May 20, 1498? **Ans: Kozhikode**
2. What is the disputed doctrine called, based on whose authority the expedition was undertaken? **Ans: Discovery doctrine**
3. What were the fleets of ships funded by the Crown of Portugal, and dispatched on an annual basis from Portugal to India, called? **Ans: Portuguese India Armadas**
4. In which year did the Battle of Calicut take place? **Ans: 1503**
5. There is a port city in India that is named after Vasco da Gama. In which present State is the port in? **Ans: Goa**
Visual: How is this church in Kochi related to da Gama? **Ans: His body was originally buried in this church**
Early Birds: K.N. Viswanathan | Tom Alan Faith | Sumana Dutta | Arun Kumar Singh | Prem Raj P.