THURSDAY
May 7, 2026

CHENNAI
CITY EDITION
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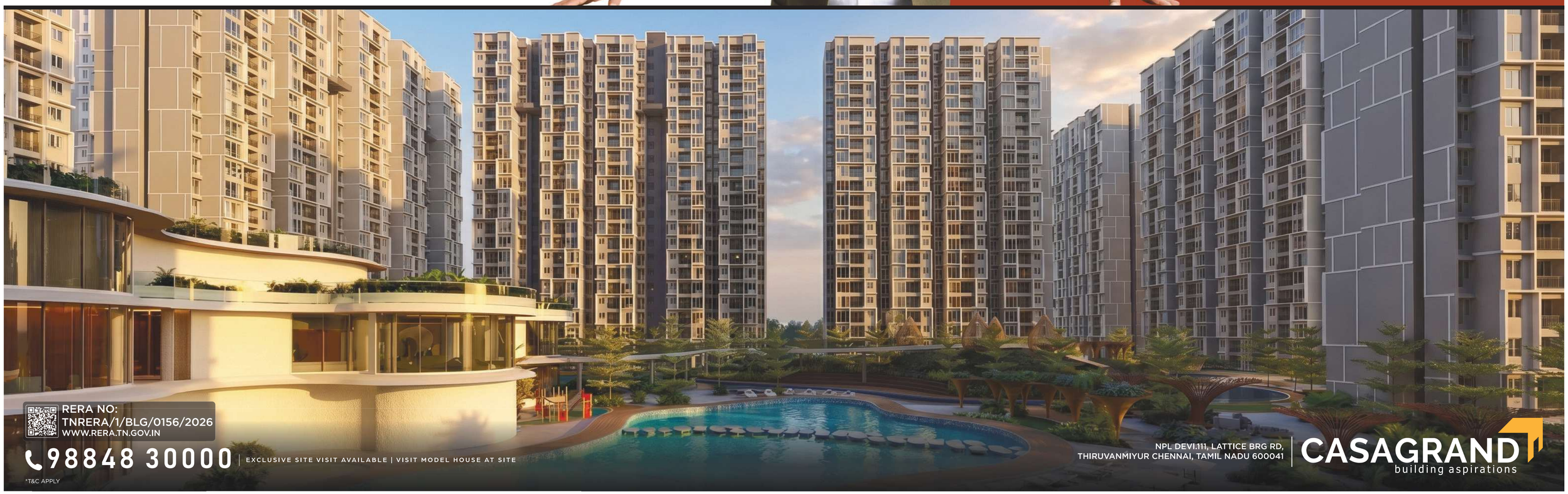

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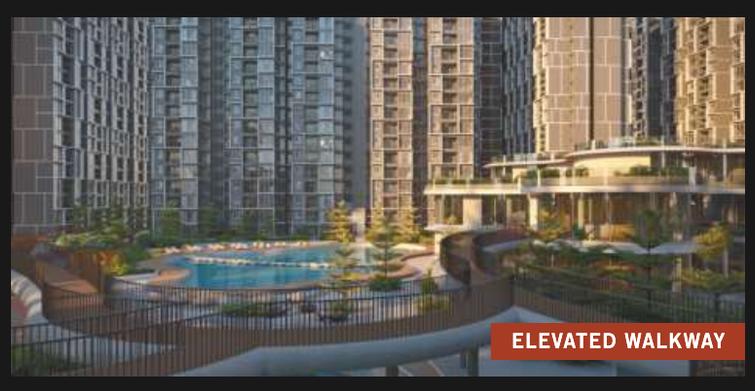
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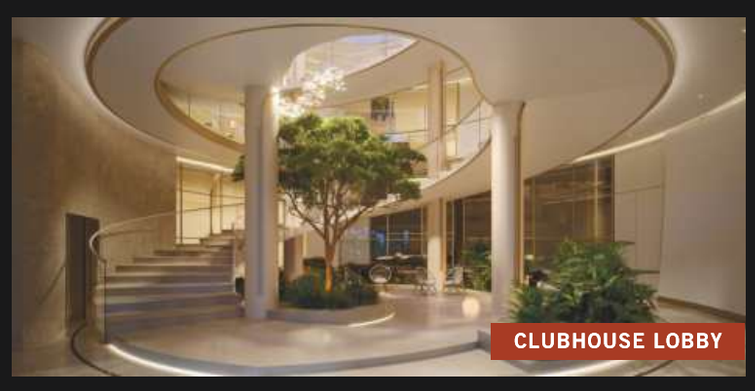
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NCRB REPORT

Overall crime rate drops 6%, cybercrimes go up

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IPL 2026

Ahmedabad to host final, Bengaluru misses out

SPORT » PAGE 15

DELIGHTFUL DAY

Sunrisers crush Kings, climb to the top

SPORT » PAGE 15

STRUCTURAL DEFICITS

Fixing India's health system

Medical education and public service need a greater alignment

EDITORIAL » PAGE 8

FIRST VISIT

India likely to host Rubio for talks in May

NEWS » PAGE 10

NEARBY

Plea in Madras HC seeks FIR against Vijay

CHENNAI
A writ petition filed in the Madras High Court has sought registration of an FIR against TVK president C. Joseph Vijay on the basis of income tax proceedings initiated after the release of his Tamil movie *Puli* in 2015. » PAGE 6

Steep quotes delay two key metro projects

CHENNAI
Two crucial projects to be developed by Chennai Metro Rail at Thirumangalam and Vadapalani have suffered a delay of a few months after discharging of exorbitant construction bids. » PAGE 3

Wet spell to ease summer heat across the State

CHENNAI
Temperatures during the first half of peak summer are likely to ease across the State as minor weather systems may trigger spells of heavy rainfall till May 12. » PAGE 3

METROPLUS » 4 PAGES

T.N. Governor asks Vijay to give proof of majority

Arlekar asks TVK chief to produce letters showing support of 118 MLAs as he stakes claim to form government; Cong. snaps its 20-year-old ties with DMK to back Vijay; AIADMK declines support

N. Sai Charan
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar is learnt to have asked Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) president C. Joseph Vijay, who on Wednesday evening staked claim to form the next government, to produce letters demonstrating support of 118 MLAs, the majority mark in the 234-member Assembly.

Earlier, the Congress, which won five seats as part of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam alliance, snapped its over 20-year-old ties with the Dravidian major and extended support to the TVK. It is learnt the party could be offered two Cabinet berths if the TVK forms a coalition government.

The TVK won 108 seats in the Assembly election. Mr. Vijay has to resign one of his two seats, while one of the MLAs-elect would become the Speaker, who can vote only during a tie. Hence, with the Congress's backing, the coalition's numbers will only be 111 and the TVK needs the backing of seven more legislators.

Mr. Vijay, along with the party's senior leaders, met the Governor, who arrived in the afternoon from Kerala, where too he holds the gubernatorial post. At the Lok Bhavan, sources said Mr. Arlekar asked Mr. Vijay to demonstrate the numbers before he could be invited to form the government. Legally, the Governor is entitled to satisfy himself about such proof since the cumulative number of legislators belonging to the DMK front (68) and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) front (53) exceed those of the legislators backing Mr. Vijay.

The Governor also dissolved the 16th Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly with effect from Tuesday.

AIADMK senior leader K.P. Munusamy, following a meeting of legislators and functionaries chaired by party general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami, categorically told journalists that reports claiming the AIADMK would support the TVK "were not true". The DMK's allies, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the CPI, and Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi, which won two seats each, said the TVK had reached out to them separately seeking support. But leaders of these parties said they would decide only after internal party meetings to be held in due course. Another DMK ally, the Indian Union Muslim League, with two MLAs-elect, had earlier announced it would not extend support to the TVK.

Announcing the TVK-Congress alliance, AICC Tamil Nadu in-charge Girish Chodankar said it was "founded on mutual respect and shared responsibility between the two parties". This move was not only for the formation of the government "but also for future elections to local bodies, the Lok Sabha, and the Rajya Sabha". The "support shall be conditional upon the TVK keeping out from this alliance any communal forces that do not believe in the Constitution of India".

Mr. Chodankar said the TVK and the Congress would strive to bring back Kamaraj's glory days in the State, with a strong commitment to Periyar's social justice ideals and Ambedkar's constitutional ideals.

"Mr. Vijay and Rahul Gandhi jointly pledge to respect this historic verdict of the people of Tamil Nadu for a secular and progressive government, and to fulfil the dreams and promises of the people," he said.

(With inputs from Udhav Naig)

MORE REPORTS ON » PAGE 6

Number theory: TVK chief C. Joseph Vijay meets Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar at the Lok Bhavan on Wednesday to stake claim to form a government. ANI

DMK rejects overtures from AIADMK

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The AIADMK is learnt to have sent feelers to the DMK seeking support to form a government in Tamil Nadu where the recent election threw up a hung Assembly. The DMK leadership, however, gave short shrift to the proposal, sources said. The DMK "was firm on sitting in the Opposition", as it was not interested in going against the people's mandate.

Congress leader V.D. Satheesan at a roadshow in Paravur on Wednesday. THULASI KAKKAT

Ahead of AICC visit, jockeying for CM's post on in Kerala

G. Anand
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

With All India Congress Committee (AICC) observers Mukul Wasnik and Ajay Maken set to individually hear members of the Congress Legislature Party in Kerala on Thursday, jockeying by seemingly anonymous groups for the party's "competing" Chief Minister probables seemed to reach its zenith on Wednesday.

For one, in an open letter to party leader Rahul Gandhi, a group under the banner of "Concerned Citizens of Kerala" argued that the Leader of the Opposition in the previous Assembly, V.D. Satheesan, was the architect of the United Democratic Front (UDF)'s historic win and hence the Chief Minister's mantle should fall on him naturally.

Leaders of electorally significant social groups also seemed to have emerged as powerful behind-the-scenes figures in the Congress's leadership tussle, with Nair Service Society (NSS) general secretary G. Sukumaran Nair appearing to broadcast his "disapproval" of "certain positions" of Mr. Satheesan, and refusing to attribute the UDF's landslide victory to any one leader, saying that "democracy won".

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Suvendu's aide among 3 killed as post-poll violence rocks Bengal

Security forces seen near a vehicle with damaged window through which Chandranath Rath was shot at on Wednesday night. PTI

Shrabana Chatterjee
Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Amid a rise in post-poll violence in West Bengal, unidentified assailants shot dead a close aide of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Suvendu Adhikari in North 24 Parganas district on Wednesday.

The latest incident takes the number of deaths in the State linked to violence after the Assembly election results were announced on Monday to three.

Chandranath Rath, the personal assistant of Mr. Adhikari, was reportedly shot three times at point-blank range in the Madhyamgram area. Mr. Rath was rushed to a hospital where he was declared dead. Earlier in the day, Mr. Adhikari, who is the front runner for the post of Chief Minister, had appealed for calm.

The BJP registered a massive mandate in the election and Mr. Adhikari defeated Trinamool Congress leader and outgoing Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in Bhabanipur.

A BJP worker, Madhu Mondal, died after being allegedly beaten up by Trinamool cadres during a victory procession in New Town on Tuesday evening, while Trinamool worker Abir Sheikh was hacked to death, allegedly by BJP activists, in Birbhum the same day. There have been reports of more deaths in violence, including one in Howrah, which the police have not confirmed yet.

Several Trinamool offices have been vandalised over the past three days, while some were painted saffron to thwart attacks. The Director-General of Police, Siddh Nath Gupta, said 500 companies of Central forces remain deployed across the State to contain post-poll violence. The police have arrested 433 people across the State.

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Wednesday directed the West Bengal Chief Secretary, DGP, and Central Armed Police Forces deployed in the State to ensure zero tolerance towards post-poll violence by anyone. He directed the authorities concerned to immediately arrest those involved in violence and vandalism.

On Tuesday night, bulldozers razed multiple structures in Kolkata's iconic New Market, triggering panic among shopkeepers who downed shutters. According to reports, the prime target was the Trinamool's union office, which was demolished.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

SWEARING-IN ON SATURDAY » PAGE 11

Nicobar gram sabhas signed off on infra project without 50% quorum

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands (A&NI) administration did not achieve the mandated 50% quorum at the gram sabha meetings held to get consent for the Centre's ₹92,000-crore Great Nicobar Island project. Instead, it claimed to have done so by attendance figures ranging from 2% to 15% of the population, which, it argued in the Calcutta High Court, counted as "proper quorum". The submissions were made by the administration in an affidavit to the Bench that is hearing a batch of petitions alleging that procedures under the Forest Rights Act (FRA) had been violated in obtaining consent for the project.

Quorum is the minimum number of members needed in such a meeting to reach a decision. According to the rules issued by the Centre for the implementation of the FRA, a quorum at a gram sabha is achieved only if 'one-half' or 50% of the adult population of that village is in attendance, of which one-third must be women.

The administration submitted that meetings were held for Campbell Bay, Laxmi Nagar, and Govind Nagar gram panchayats, covering seven villages, on August 12, 2022. The Campbell Bay meeting was attended by 105 people, the one in Laxmi Nagar by 163 people, and the Govind Nagar sabha had 81 people. The administration said all three meetings passed "unanimous" resolutions consenting to the project.

Compared to the population of these gram panchayats as per the 2011 Census, the strength of the Campbell Bay meeting was 1.83% of the total population of 5,736, that of the Laxmi Nagar was 14.72% of the population of 1,107, and the attendance at the Govind Nagar meeting was 11.98% of the population of 676. Put together, 349 people (4.6%) signed off on the project at these three gram sabhas meant to represent seven villages, whose total population stood at 7,519 as of 2011.

The submissions, which were taken on record by the High Court on Wednesday, came after the Centre sought time from the court to "demonstrate that consent has been taken from the tribal people".

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Submissions before the Calcutta HC show that meetings to get nod for the ₹92,000-crore plan didn't have mandated strength. FILE PHOTO

Trump pauses Hormuz move; says war will end if Iran agrees to deal

Stanly Johny

U.S. President Donald Trump on Wednesday paused "Project Freedom", launched on Monday and aimed at guiding stranded merchant ships through the Strait of Hormuz, citing "great progress" in talks with Iran. He added that the war could end if the Islamic Republic signed a deal, warning that the U.S. would resume bombing if it did not.

When Mr. Trump announced the operation on Monday, he said any Iranian response would be dealt with "forcefully". Iran claimed that it fired at two U.S. destroyers in the strait and pushed them back while the UAE said it was attacked twice by missiles and drones and one of its tankers came under fire.

Then came Mr. Trump's pause. "Based on the request of Pakistan and other countries..., and... the fact that great progress has been made toward a complete and final agreement with Iran, we have mutually agreed that, while the blockade will remain in full force and effect, Project Freedom will be paused for a short period of time to see whether or not the agreement can be finalised and signed," Mr. Trump said in a social media post.

'Peace advanced'

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif welcomed Mr. Trump's announcement, saying it advanced "regional peace, stability, and reconciliation".

Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed that Washington and Tehran had exchanged proposals in recent days.

In an interview, Esmail Baqaei, Foreign Ministry spokesperson, said Tehran was currently reviewing the American response to its proposal and would present its response through Pakistani mediators.

Iran effectively closed the Strait of Hormuz after the U.S. and Israel started attacking the country on February 28. Active fighting came to an end on April 8, when Mr. Trump announced a ceasefire. But on April 12, the U.S. imposed a blockade on Iranian ports, heaping economic pressure on the country.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

'REVIEWING PROPOSALS' » PAGE 14

Uncertain waters: Vessels seen in the Strait of Hormuz off the Oman coast on Wednesday. REUTERS

INBRIEF

B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Complaint filed against MLA for cutting cake with sword

A complaint has been filed against the newly elected Royapuram MLA, K.V. Vijay Damu of the TVK, for cutting a cake with a sword on Wednesday. G.G. Siva, a social activist, submitted an online complaint to the Commissioner of Police, seeking action against Mr. Damu. He pointed out that similar incidents of cake-cutting in public places across the city had resulted in the arrest of several individuals. The MLA had cut a cake using a sword to celebrate his election victory, in the presence of TVK cadre, including Loyola Mani. The video of the celebration went viral on social media.

Youth assaulted over TVK song ringtone at hospital

A youth was assaulted by a group of persons at Kilpauk Government Medical College Hospital on Tuesday night. The police said the victim, Solomon, a resident of Otteri, had visited the hospital to enquire about the health of his uncle who was admitted there. While waiting at the hospital, his mobile phone rang to the ringtone of the TVK party's song. Enraged by this, a group of people had a heated argument with Solomon, asking him to pause the song. They then brutally assaulted him. The police have registered a case.

Text & Context and Science

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carry explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (May 7, Thursday), the following articles are available:

- When does a CM cease to hold office? **newsth.live/mamatainbengal**
- Invasive species may be the wrong enemy in a changing subcontinent **newsth.live/alienspecies**

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.

Residents call for judicious utilisation of hospital spaces in Tambaram, Chromepet

They raise concern over the underutilisation of two govt. hospital premises on GST Road and urge authorities to repurpose surplus space for emergency health services or other government needs

CITY MATTERS

T. Arvind
CHENNAI

Wasted resource: The three-decade-old Government Leprosy Rehabilitation Promotion Unit in Tambaram, where patient occupancy remains low, with fewer than 10 inmates at a time. T. ARVIND

While several government departments struggle for space and often operate from rented premises, residents and activists have raised concern over the underutilisation of two government hospital campuses along the GST Road in Tambaram and Chromepet.

The Government Leprosy Rehabilitation Promotion Unit in Tambaram, near the Madras Export Processing Zone (MEPZ), has been functioning for over three decades.

The multi-storeyed facility, spread across a large campus, caters to patients from the neighbouring districts. However, a visit to the premises indicates that occupancy remains low, with fewer than 10 inmates at a time, though officials say there are "13 to 15 inmates".

Senior social activist Santhanam questioned the use of such a large facility in a prime locality.

"If the number of patients is low, they can be shifted to another centre. The space can then be used for emergency health services or other government needs," he said, adding that the hospital was not clearly visible from the arterial road.

Officials say some inmates step out for banking or pension-related needs, though clarity on formal procedures governing such movement remains limited.

Long-term patients said they occasionally left the premises for personal needs after making entries in the register.

Medical Superintendent Noor Shahitha said the hospital had around 13 to 15 patients, with at least two doctors on duty daily, supported by nurses and other staff.

She added that only one of the three floors remained unused, while the others were earmarked for male and female wards. Security, she said, was monitored by the patrol police.

Ms. Shahitha added that patients were admitted not only from Chennai, but also from districts such as Tiruvallur, Chengalpattu, and Tiruvannamalai.

Vacant plot

The old Government Hospital in Chromepet, near the MIT Flyover, remains largely vacant after services were shifted to a nearby modernised facility last August.

At present, only a dental college hospital operates on the campus.

On the utilisation of space at the Tambaram Leprosy Rehabilitation Promotion Unit, Dr. Malarvizhi, Joint Director of Health Services, Chengalpattu, said any decision on shifting inmates or repurposing space would require higher-level approval, though discussions were under way.

Renovation in progress

Referring to the old Government Hospital premises in Chromepet, she said the buildings were being renovated to house an Emergency Care and Recovery Centre for persons with mental illness and a one-stop centre for persons with disabilities. A proposal for a paramedical hostel is also under consideration.

Residents and activists stressed the need for timely and effective utilisation of these public assets, as the Pallavaram, Chromepet, and Tambaram regions continue to expand.

18 Russian medical varsities to take part in education fair

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The fair will be held in Chennai on May 9 and 10 at the Russian Centre of Science and Culture

As many as 18 leading medical universities of the Russian Federation will take part in an All India Russian Education Fair to be held across Tamil Nadu this month.

A total of 10,000 MBBS seats are on offer for Indian students at the fair, according to organisers.

Indian students who have cleared National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test and have scored at least 50% marks in relevant core subjects can apply for MBBS courses in Russia. For students from SC, ST, and OBC communities, the minimum marks required is 40%.

Speaking to reporters on Wednesday, Russian Consul General in Chennai Valerii Khodzhaev said his country had about 4,15,000 foreign students in 2025-26 and the number was expected to touch 4,25,000 by the end of the year.

The Russian government has set a target of attracting 5,00,000 foreign students by 2030. Working towards this, the government was improving academic and housing infrastructure at universities and creating a friendly and safe environment for the foreign students.

"Our universities offer some of the best educational programmes," Mr. Khodzhaev said, adding, "We are able to keep our prices reasonable because of the high purchasing power in Russia." MBBS fees in Russia can be as low as ₹3.5 lakhs to ₹5 lakh per annum.

The fair will see participation from educational institutions teaching science, technology, and engineering and those offering programmes in emerging domains like biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and data science.

Alexander Dodonov, Vice Consul and Director, Russian House, said full scholarships were also being offered to about 220 Indian students this year.

C. Ravi Chandran, Managing Director, Study Abroad Educational Consultants, said Russia had 63 public medical universities and more than 600 universities for humanities, sciences, and engineering. "Nearly 98% of Indian students in Russia are medical students. That is because it is the only country where institutions satisfied the latest norms set by the National Medical Council," Dr. Chandran added.

Berezhanskiy Pavel Viacheslavovich, professor of Child Diseases, Sechenov's University, also spoke.

The fair will take place in Chennai between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. on May 9 and 10 at the Russian Centre of Science and Culture. It will then be held at Hotel Royal Court in Madurai on May 12, Hotel Femina in Tiruchi on May 13, GRT Hotel Zibe in Salem on May 14, and The Grand Regent Hotel in Coimbatore the next day. For more details, contact 9282221221.

Enhanced security cover for Vijay withdrawn on TVK leaders' request

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu police on Wednesday night withdrew the convoy and security scale given to TVK leader C. Joseph Vijay, official sources said.

The security protocol accorded to Mr. Vijay, which was on par with the Z-Plus scale given to the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, was reduced to bare minimum.

Hours after the early indications during the counting of votes on May 4 pointed to a huge victory for the TVK, the police enhanced security arrangements at Mr. Vijay's residence and party office.

A senior officer in the rank of a Deputy Inspector-General of Police was deployed to supervise the security of Mr. Vijay.

More than a dozen armed commandos of the Security Branch CID of the State police took charge of the bandobust. An access control system was also put in place, the sources said.

Two more officers in the rank of a Superintendent of Police were directed to report to the Inspector-General of Police, Intelligence.

However, a senior police officer said the security arrangements were withdrawn following a request by senior TVK leaders.

TVK office-bearer arrested for sexually harassing minor girl

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

A 35-year-old man was arrested on charges of sexually harassing a minor girl on Wednesday.

The police said Dinesh, alias 'Pambu' Dinesh, a resident of Kasimedu and an office-bearer of the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, had been absconding since Monday.

The incident occurred on April 23, when the girl visited her grandmother's house.

(*ChildLine operates a toll-free helpline for children in distress -1098*)

UTTAR PRADESH MEDICAL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of Uttar Pradesh Undertaking)
Tender Notice
Tender Ref.No: UPMSCL/Drugs-255/04 Dated: 29th April, 2026
e-TENDER FOR SUPPLY OF DRUGS
Online tenders are invited from licensed manufacturers for supply of drugs to UPMSCL. The details of tender, list of items and Tender Documents are made available on website https://etender.up.nic.in and www.upmsc.in. The last date/time of online submission of the tender documents is **20th May, 2026** upto 15:00 Hrs.
Managing Director
UPMSCL, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
Department of Medical Health & Family Welfare, Uttar Pradesh

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
No.2, 2/1 & 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagar, Bengaluru - 560009. Phone No. 080-22265383 website:www.kiadb.in
No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-12/1102/2026-27 Date:05.05.2026
SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Through GOK KPP Portal Only)
Item Rate Tender under two cover bid system is invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors who have got adequate financial resources, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience for the following works mentioned below:
Name of the works: (1) Formation of Roads including asphalting, construction of RCC Side Drains, Inspection Chambers, Spur Culverts, Valve Cistern, Rain Water Harvesting & Water Supply Works at Sector-1 of Gowribidnur 4th Phase in Jarabandanahalli Village, Gowribidnur Taluk, Chikkaballapura District. (2) Formation of Roads including asphalting, construction of RCC Side Drains, Inspection Chambers, Spur Culverts, Valve Cistern, Rain Water Harvesting & Water Supply Works at Sector-2 of Gowribidnur 4th Phase in Jarabandanahalli Village, Gowribidnur Taluk, Chikkaballapura District. (3) Establishment, Commissioning of 10 MLD Sewage Treatment Plant followed by 5 MLD Tertiary Treatment Plant along with 2 modules of 1.50 MLD each Common Effluent Treatment Plant with 1.50 MLD Capacity RO System & ZLD Facilities on total turnkey basis, including Operation & Maintenance of entire Plant for a period of 10 years at KWIN City at Phase-1 in Nelamangala Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.
- Last Date & Time for Receipt of Tenders: **25.05.2026** upto **4:00** pm.

Applicants May download bidding documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**
Sd/- Chief Engineer-1
KIADB, Bengaluru
DIPR/CP/536/CCL/2026-27

ADMISSION NOTICE
Common Entrance Test-2026
FOR ADMISSION AT

INSTITUTE	COURSES
Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya National Institute for Persons with Physical Disabilities (Divyangjan) (PDUNIPPD) 4, Vishnu Digamber Marg, New Delhi-110002 Website: https://pdunippd.nic.in, E-mail: cetpdunippd2026@gmail.com	• BPT • BOT • BPO
Swami Vivekanand National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research (DIVYANGJAN), Cuttack (SVNIRTAR) Olatpur, PO-Bairoi, Cuttack, Odisha - 754010 Website: https://svnirtar.nic.in, E-mail: nirtar@nic.in	• BPT • BOT • BPO • BASLP
National Institute for Locomotor Disabilities (DIVYANGJAN), Kolkata (NILD) B.T. Road, Bonhooghly, Kolkata -700090 website : https://nild.nic.in, E-mail : mail@nioh.in	• BPT • BOT • BPO
National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (DIVYANGJAN), Chennai (NIEPMD) East Coast Road, Muttukadu, Kovalam Post Chennai-603112, Website: www.niepmd.nic.in, E-mail: niepmd@gov.in	• BPT • BOT • BASLP
Ali Yavar Jung National Institute of Speech & Hearing Disabilities (Divyangjan), Mumbai (AYJNISHD(D) K.C. Marg, Bandra (W) Reclamation Mumbai - 400 050 Website: http://ayjnishd.nic.in, E-mail: ayjnihh-mum@nic.in	• BASLP
Ali Yavar Jung National Institute of Speech & Hearing Disabilities (Divyangjan), Regional Center, Kolkata NIEPID Campus, Manovikas Nagar, Bowenpally, Secunderabad Telengana -500009. Email: adsrc-nihh@ayjnihh.nic.in	• BASLP
Ali Yavar Jung National Institute of Speech & Hearing Disabilities (Divyangjan), Regional Center, Secundrabad NIEPID Campus, Manovikas Nagar, Bowenpally, Secunderabad NILD Campus, B.T. Road, Bonhooghly, Kolkata - 700090 Website:-aderc-nihh@nic.in	• BASLP
Composite Regional Centre for Skill Development, Rehabilitation & Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, (DIVYANGJAN), Guwahati (CRCSRE) Guwahati Medical College Hospital Campus Post Office Indrapur, GMC Hospital Rd, Bhangagarh, Guwahati, Assam - 781032 Website: https://crcguwahati.nic.in, E-mail crcguwahati@gmail.com,	• BASLP
Composite Regional Centre, Patna Sheikhpura, (Old Dharamshala), Near IGIMS Nursing College, Patna-800014 Website: https://crcpatna.nic.in, E-mail :crcpatna@rediffmail.com	• BPO

Eligibility: 10+2 Science with English as Compulsory Subject
Starting date of online Application: 11.05.2026 (Monday)
Closing date of online receipt of Application: 05.06.2026 (Friday)
Date of Entrance Test: 28.06.2026 (Sunday)
To Apply Online go to - https://admission.svnirtar.nic.in
For Furter Details Visit - https://pdunippd.nic.in
All concerned may please note.
Director, PDUNIPPD, New Delhi
cbc 38101/11/0002/2627

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER
E-Tender Notice No.: TRD-ADA-e-Tender-04-2026, dated: 05.05.2026. Asst. Divisional Elect. Engineer (TRD), South Eastern Railway, Adra invites E-Tender for the following work: **Description of work:** Modification of OHE arrangements to eliminate live part on platform. **Approx. Tender Value:** ₹ 8,24,47,408.13. The closing date and time of e-tender-04-2026 for works above is on **26.05.2026 at 15.00 hrs.** and its opening of tender will be done on **26.05.2026 after 15.00 hrs.** Details of above e-tender may please be seen at website **www.ireps.gov.in** (PR-129)

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PERSONAL
CHANGE OF NAME
I, Anantu Thampi Rajesh, 22 years, Son of Rajesh E.R, R/o. Majestic Orchard Ben Foundation, Lilly B5, Reddypalayam Road, Mogappair West Chennai- 600037, have changed my name from Anantu Thampi Rajesh to Anantu Thampi for all future purposes vide Affidavit Dated: 10.04.2026
I, hitherto known as Vanitha K alias Vanitha Karunakaran D/o P. Karunakaran and wife of Sathyakumar Seshachalam, resident of 413-F2, Rasi Builders, 13th East Street, Kamaraj Nagar, Thiruvanmiyur, Chennai, Tamil Nadu - 600041; have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Vanitha Sathyakumar.
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MUSIC DANCE DRAMA
The Music Academy Madras Today: From 6.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. At the Kasturi Srinivasan Hall – Namasankirtanam by V Karthick Gnaneshwar & Party - Programme under the endowment of Abhang Ratna Sri. Ganesh Kumar in memory of Swami Haridhosgiri.
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KRISHNA GANA SABHA
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SUMMER DRAMA FEST 2026:
TODAY : 07.05.26: 7.00 P.M: KARPANAI KUTHIRAI PRESENTS "CHIKKU BUKKU KALYANAM" - WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY VEDARUN RAJKUMAR
TOMORROW: 08.05.26: 7.00 P.M: FATHIMA BABU FAB'S THEATRE PRESENTS "UN KANNIL NEER VAZHINDHAL" STORY & DIALOGUES T.V.RADHAKRISHNAN , DIRECTION : FATHIMA BABU
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CAFÉ: SATTVAA
VALET PARKING AVAILABLE
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Swaminatha Thala Vidhyalaya, 24992672 Today 6pm Guru Vandanam. Poongulam Sabesa Iyer Birthday concert by BU Ganesh Prasad, MR Gopinath, Neyveli Ramkumar, CS Venkata Ramanan. Ragasudha Hall.
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INBRIEF

R. RAGU

Wet spell to offer State respite from heat till May 12

Temperatures during the first half of peak summer, popularly known as the *Agni Natchatiram* period, are likely to ease across Tamil Nadu, as minor weather systems may trigger spells of heavy rain in southern and interior districts till May 12. Some parts of Chennai, including Ambattur, Besant Nagar and Korattur, received mild showers in the last two days. Though light rainfall may continue in the city on Thursday, the humidity levels are expected to remain high. Peak mercury levels have stayed below the 40-degree mark for the past two days in the State, offering respite from the scorching heat.

Overseas scholarship for Adi Dravidar, tribal students

The Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department has invited applications for scholarships under Annal Ambedkar Overseas Higher Education Scholarship Scheme for academic year 2026-27 from students belonging to the Adi Dravidar community, Adi Dravidar converts to Christianity, and tribal communities to pursue higher education abroad. Candidates should have got admission to a Master's or a PhD programme at a foreign university ranked within the top 1000 as per QS World University Rankings, and their annual family income should not exceed ₹12 lakh. The Master's applicant should not be above 35 years and the PhD candidate not above 40 years. Eligible candidates may apply online through websites www.tnadw.gov.in/overseas_scholarship or www.tnadwscholarship.in between May 5 and June 5.

Metro projects at Vadapalani, Thirumangalam face minor delays owing to steep quotes

At Thirumangalam, the CMRL's plan was to integrate the upcoming station in the 118.9-km phase II network with four towers where people can shop, dine, or work, and hop onto a train to commute

TRACK TALES

Sunitha Sekar
CHENNAI

Expansive facility: An artist's impression of the proposed project in Vadapalani.

Two crucial projects to be developed by Chennai Metro Rail at Thirumangalam and Vadapalani have suffered a delay of a few months.

While at Thirumangalam, the Chennai Metro Rail's plan was to integrate the upcoming station in the 118.9-km phase II network (with three corridors) with four towers where people can shop, dine, or work, and hop onto a train to commute; at Vadapalani, a depot with an integrated bus terminal and commercial complex was to come up.

According to officials of Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL), though they had floated bids last year for carrying out the construction of these two projects, it had to be discharged owing to exorbitant quotes placed by bidders.

"This is because prospective bidders had submitted steep quotes for both the projects and it was not unjustified at all. We cannot go ahead with such prices. We modified the bids again to prevent this issue from occurring again. So, for Thirumangalam, we already floated the bids sometime back and once the Model Code of Conduct, which was imposed for the elections, is lifted, we will award the contract. As far as Vadapalani's project is concerned, we will issue the bids shortly. There is only a minor delay of a month or two," an official said.

The Thirumangalam project is a unique one in the phase II network and to which most commuters have been looking forward. Over an area of 3.85 acres, the four towers, including the phase II Chennai Metro Rail station will come up at Thirumangalam and this will be part of corridor 5 (from Madhavaram to Sholinganallur via Thirumangalam and Medavakkam).

Such a design gives commuters the ease of accessing public transport within the same space as that of commercial establishments and office spaces.

In the first three towers, there will be a ground and nine upper floors. The phase II station will be situated on the third and fourth floor of the second tower. In the first and the third tower, there will also be three basements. The fourth tower will include a ground and two floors.

The Vadapalani project coming up over 6.65 acres on Arcot Road aims to modernise one of the busiest depots handling over 1,000 bus services daily. It will turn into a multi-modal transit hub with a modern bus terminal that will have five boarding bays, two alighting bays, passenger amenities, office spaces, massive parking facilities, food court, and retail outlets.

Experts to discuss post-partum care at webinar tomorrow

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Kauvery Hospital, in collaboration with *The Hindu*, will host on May 8 a webinar on 'Post-partum Care for Mothers', as part of its wellness series, to commemorate Mothers' Day.

The post-partum phase involves not only physical recovery after childbirth but also dealing with emotional adjustments, hormonal changes, and the demands of newborn care. The session aims at offering expert insights into holistic recovery.

At the webinar, K. Thendral, Clinical Lead and Senior Consultant, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Kauvery Hospital, Radial Road, will speak on 'General Post-partum Care and Lactation'; P. Sathya Sudhakar, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Kauvery Hospital, Salem, will make a presentation on 'Mental Health and Support Systems'; and Manjeswari G., Psychologist and Sexual Health Therapist, Maa Kauvery, Trichy, will deal with 'Sexual Well-being and Exercises for Post-partum Mothers'. Journalist Soma Basu will moderate the session, which will be held at 11.30 a.m. on May 8.

Those interested may register on https://newsth.live/THKMOE.

Chennai Weather	max	min
Tiruvallur	40	27
Chennai Airport	39	30
Chennai City	36	30

Chennai Airport Today
37°C Morning will be comfortable. Day will be very warm and uneasy. Night also will be comfortable. Dry weather is likely.

Chennai Airport Tomorrow
38°C The weather will be dry. Day will be slightly hot and uneasy. Night will be comfortable.

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Timings
CHENNAI

THURSDAY, MAY. 07			
RISE	05:47	SET	18:25
RISE	23:15	SET	09:56
FRIDAY, MAY. 08			
RISE	05:46	SET	18:26
RISE	23:59	SET	10:48
SATURDAY, MAY. 09			
RISE	05:46	SET	18:26
RISE	00:00	SET	11:40

THE HINDU
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SRMIST launches Mission Mausam Urban Testbed to boost monsoon prediction

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Ramapuram, on Wednesday launched the Mission Mausam Urban Testbed and observational facilities, developed by Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) under the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

The facility is aimed at monitoring aerosols, clouds, precipitation, atmospheric dynamics, and thermodynamic parameters across the city to enhance monsoon prediction and provide early warnings of severe weather.

M. Ravichandran, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, inaugurated the facility in the presence of A. Suryachandra Rao, Director, IITM, Pune; R. Shivakumar, Chairman, SRMIST, Ramapuram, Chennai & Trichy; Thara Prabhakaran, Project Director, IITM; and M. Sakthi Ganesh, Dean (E&T), SRMIST.

SRMIST and IIT-M signs an MoU to facilitate collaboration in research and academic activities in weather and climate sciences. M. SRINATH

"Mission Mausam was established to revolutionise early action on weather and its impact," Ms. Prabhakaran said. "All components of energy and water are observed and modelled to better forecast and inform decision-making, so as to alleviate the adverse impacts of severe weather," she added. "While this partnership is rooted in engineering, atmospheric science, and technology, its ultimate impact will be felt in the health and well-being of the people," Dr. Shivakumar said.

'Propose new ideas'

Mr. Rao asked the young researchers and students in the audience to use the facility as a tool to challenge existing theories and propose new hypotheses.

Furthermore, Mr. Ravichandran said Mission Mausam was one of the projects that received quick approval from the Central government.

He added that since Chennai was a natural laboratory for tropical weather, observing its weather patterns was essential, hence the launch of the observatory in the city.

Centre inaugurated

Inaugural of SRMIST's Centre for Atmospheric Sciences Research and Innovation also took place, along with the signing of an MoU between SRMIST and IITM. The MoU will facilitate collaboration in research and academic activities in weather and climate sciences.

Balaji Ramakrishnan, Director, National Institute of Ocean Technology, Chennai; R.S. Kankara, Director, National Centre for Coastal Research; S.D. Pai, Regional Meteorological Centre, IMD Chennai; and Mr. Ganesh also spoke.

Online process to join arts and science colleges begins today

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Students seeking admission to first year undergraduate degree programmes in government arts and science colleges in the State for the academic year 2026-27 may register online from May 7. The application fee per student is ₹48 while the registration fee is ₹2. For students from SC and ST communities, the application fee has been waived. Those who are unable to apply online independently could submit their applications through Admission Facilitation Centres (AFC) at all government arts and science colleges. Last day for registration is May 29. For admission- related queries, contact the Directorate of Collegiate Education help centre at 044-24343100 and 24342011 between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays.

TAMIL NADU EX-SERVICEMEN CORPORATION LIMITED
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
SCHEDULES ATTACHED TO AND FORMING PART OF GROUP PERSONAL ACCIDENT (NAMED) INSURANCE POLICY FOR CONTRACT PERSONNEL OF TEXCO

1. The Insured M/s. Tamil Nadu Ex-servicemen Corporation Limited, Chennai – 600 035.
2. Risks Covered : In Group Personal Accident Insurance world wide coverage (24 X 7) in Table III as per the Guidelines of IRDA. The benefits required to be covered shall be as under :-

Table	Benefits
III	1. Death only (100% of sum insured). 2. Loss of two limbs, loss of sight of two eyes (100% sum insured). 3. Loss of one limb or loss of sight of one eye (50% of sum insured). 4. Permanent Total Disablement from injuries other than named above (100% of Capital Sum Insured) 5. Permanent Partial Disablement % age of compensation as shown below

Permanent Partial Disablement (Benefit No.5)		Compensation of percentage of capital sum insured.
Loss of toes all Great – Both Phalanges Great – One Phalanx Other than great, if more than one toe lost each		20 05 02 01
Loss of hearing both ears		50
Loss of hearing one ear		15
Loss of four fingers & Thumb of one hand		40
Loss of four fingers		35
Loss of thumb	both phalanges One Phalanx	25 10
Temporary Total Disablement		1 % of the capital sum insured not exceeding INR 20,000 per week but not more than 100 weeks

3. Persons Covered Named 8959 (8957 contract personnel + 2 regular employees) personnel deployed to the projects and Head Office & Branch Offices of TEXCO.
4. Period of Insurance Insurance cover shall be for a period of 12 months (i.e. 01.06.2026 to 31.05.2027) taking into consideration the period between the date of joining/ cessation of contract/removal of individual.
5. Sum Insured Rs.5,00,000/-(Rupees Five lakh per person)
6. Sharing Pattern 100 % share shall be awarded by the L1 insurance company.
7. Publishing Date - available **from 07.05.2026 at 10.00 A.M** in web portal **www.tntenders.gov.in**
8. Document Download/Sale - **07.05.2026 at 10.05 A.M.** in web portal **www.tntenders.gov.in**
9. Seek clarification start date - **07.05.2026 at 12.00.P.M**
10. Seek clarification end date - **18.05.2026 at 11.00. A.M**
11. Pre bid meeting - **18.05.2026 at 11.00. A.M**
12. Bid submission starting date- **07.05.2026 at 12.00.P.M**
13. Bid submission closing date - **20.05.2026 at 11.00.A.M**
14. Bid Opening date - **20.05.2026 at 03.00. P.M**

The schedule of tender form could also be down loaded, free of cost from the Government web portal **www.tntenders.gov.in** and **TEXCO website www.texco.tn.gov.in**

General Manager
TEXCO

DIPR/1834/TEN/2026

V.O.Chidambaranar Port Authority
General Administration Department, Tuticorin
(An Autonomous Body under MoPSW, GoI)

GAD-EST10ESTC(EST)/8/2023-GAD(4848)/D. Date:07.05.2026

V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority invites applications for the following Position:-

Engagement of Assistant Director (Project) on contractual basis:

Position	No. of position	Monthly Remuneration
Assistant Director (Project)	1	Rs. 1,40,000

For details regarding upper age limit, educational qualifications, etc., visit VOC Ports' website at www.vocport.gov.in (careers). Last date for the receipt of applications is 27.05.2026.

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E-mail: dir-mines@karnataka.gov.in

No. DMG-17012/26/2025/2026-27 **Dated: 06.05.2026**

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Department of Mines and Geology is calling tender for auction of seized generated iron ore fines under respective notification through MSTC.
Eligibility conditions, terms and conditions, date and time for participating in the electronic auction are provided in the Tender Document. Separate Lot wise auction notifications are published in MSTC portal. Tender Documents, notifications, updates and other details for the e-auction process of respective lots shall be available in electronic form only at the website of MSTC Ltd.
https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/aucsearch/search.jsp
The auction of old stock for each lot is "AS IS WHERE IS AND NO COMPLAINT BASIS". The interested bidders shall ascertain the quantity and quality of the Iron /Manganese ore before participation. The Department is not responsible for any dispute arising after confirmation of the bid.
Interested bidders may visit the MSTC Ltd website.

Sd/-
Director,
Department of Mines & Geology

DIPR/CP/533/NR/2026-27

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ISSN 0971 - 751X

‘Outer Ring Road belt is emerging as a strategic hotspot for investment’

Experts at a roundtable say the corridor is emerging as a strategic hotspot for urban expansion as it connects multiple routes; they also cite real estate boom in cities that have built ring roads

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

A panel discussion moderated by Prince Fredrick, Civic Affairs Editor at *The Hindu*, featured insights from Jerry Kingsley, head of Research India and City Lead-capital markets (Chennai) at JLL; Karthik Bhatt, historian and author; Janakarajan, president of SaciWATERs, and Dipta Kirti Chaudhuri, chief marketing officer at Casagrand. R. RAVINDRAN

The Outer Ring Road (ORR) belt is emerging as a strategic hotspot for future urban expansion and investment, real estate experts said during a round table discussion titled ‘Chennai’s Next Expansion - Why ORR will define it’. “The ORR is the first major ring road development that connects multiple routes. Starting from Vandalur, it touches the Chennai-Bengaluru highway,” said Jerry Kingsley, Head of Research India and City Lead for Capital Markets (Chennai) at JLL, at the event which was presented by Casagrand on the topic ‘*The Hindu* Outer Ring Road-Chennai Advantage: Where Smart Investment Begins’. The round table discussion was moderated by Prince Fredrick, Civic Affairs Editor, *The Hindu*.

Mr. Jerry cited examples of what Hyderabad and Beijing had done. “If you look at Beijing, it has five different rings - this is a good development model. When Hyderabad ORR came, there was a real estate boom and an escalation in price by 10-15%. It also gave connectivity to commercial hubs,” he said.

Mr. Jerry cited another example of how land prices went up on the Radial Road. “In 2005, the land value on Radial Road was ₹10 lakh to ₹15 lakh per acre. Now we are talking about ₹50 crore to ₹55 crore per acre,” he said.

Diptakirti Chaudhuri, CMO of Casagrand, said that ORR is like a connector of corridors. Sharing details about the group’s Thirumudivakkam project he said, “We are in the process of launching it. We will start construction soon. It is a 41-acre project. We are trying to create residential units along with social infrastructure.” Mr. Chaudhuri also explained how the company realised that ORR would grow fast. “We realised that people want a certain kind of living–one that includes increasingly spacious homes, closeness to nature, and ample opportunities for children to grow away from pollution and congestion. We need to adopt a lifestyle similar to the West, where people live in the suburbs and work wherever necessary,” he added. Karthik Bhatt, Historian and Author, spoke about how Chennai grew over the years. “T. Nagar developed to address the housing needs of people,” he said. Likewise ORR is also developing based on need as congestion is high in the city.

Janakarajan, President, South Asia Consortium for Interdisciplinary Water Resources Studies, said, “Before the development of any urban infrastructure it is extremely important for us to understand what is the location advantage and disadvantage.”

ORR best positioned to address all problems of a home buyer: expert

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Sanjay Chugh, director and city lead-land transactions at ANAROCK Property Consultants Private Limited; Gautam Agarwaal, chief operating officer at Casagrand; Karthik Nagappan, CEO of Super Chennai; and Vidhya Mohankumar, founder and principal of Urban Design Collective, at a session moderated by Rosella Stephen, Ideas Editor, *The Hindu*, in Chennai on Wednesday. R. RAVINDRAN

The Outer Ring Road (ORR) is where the next wave for housing will happen, said Gautam Agarwal, Chief Operating Officer of Casagrand.

“There are no large land parcels within the city. ORR addresses all the problems which a home buyer has,” he said during a round table discussion with Rosella Stephen, Property Plus Editor and Ideas Editor, *The Hindu*, on the topic ‘The ORR Opportunity: Infrastructure, Liveability, and Long Term Value’. The event was presented by Casagrand.

Mr. Agarwal said that ORR has fueled growth of cities across the world. Hyderabad has seen this success and growth and ORR will do the same magic to Chennai, he added. “Buyers in Chennai are asking for better living spaces. They are very conscious and ask whether the area would flood or not. We help them navigate all these issues,” he explained.

He also spoke about the largest candy-themed inflatable park that has been set up at Casagrand property. “The theme park has been doing good. It is getting a good response and we are sold out everyday,” he said.

Sanjay Chugh, City Lead and Director of ANAROCK Property Consultants Private Limited, spoke on what is needed on ORR.

“The biggest thing we really need to create on ORR is infrastructure. We have a great road. But beyond the road, we need to build social infrastructure. You need reliable piped water, proper drainage systems, and consistent power supply. If you want to attract people, you need to build a complete ecosystem around them. Growth happens by creating jobs, housing, and retail–this is how development follows,” he said.

To a query on whether ORR would have sufficient water supply, Mr. Chugh said: “I don’t see water being an issue as of now and the quality of water here is good. It will take another 30-40 years for ORR to see water shortage.” He also noted that this corridor does not have any polluting industries and has more warehouses.

‘30-minute city’

Karthik Nagappan, CEO of Super Chennai, said, “One of the biggest outcomes of the Super Chennai enclave is the vision of a 30-minute city–where residential and work clusters are within a convenient 30-minute reach, enabling better work-life balance. The ORR is uniquely positioned to bring this to life, with its strong connectivity, available land parcels, and the right ecosystem to drive this transformation, setting a benchmark for future urban development.”

He then added: “In Chennai, educational institutions have always grown in the suburbs. There are places you can stop and have a great view.”

“Earlier, most people would travel to T. Nagar or Tambaram for their needs. Today, places like Urapakkam and Guduvanchery have well-known brands every ten minutes. This transformation happened because of developments such as Shriram City, SRM University, and Mahindra World City,” Mr. Nagappan said.

Vidhya Mohankumar, Founder and Principal of Urban Design Collective, said that ORR is a greenfield development which is an advantage.

“ORR is already growing at this point. The question now is how will it grow,” she said. She also pointed out that although OMR is an economic success, it still has several shortcomings–for instance, even after 20 years, basic infrastructure like sewage connections remains inadequate. She said that things like this should be factored in while developing ORR.

COUNCIL OF SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH (CSIR)
Anusandhan Bhawan, 2, Rafi Marg, New Delhi-110001
Advt. No. 02/2026

CSIR invites applications/nominations for the position of Chairperson, CSIR-Recruitment and Assessment Board (CSIR-RAB), New Delhi, in Level 16 of pay-matrix (Rs. 2,05,400-2,24,400) plus allowances as admissible or such consolidated pay as recommended by the Search cum Selection Committee.

For eligibility criteria and other conditions, please see the detailed/complete advertisement No. **02/2026** on CSIR website **www.csir.res.in**. Applications /nominations may be sent along with complete bio-data through email at drc.hqrs@csir.res.in or by post to Director Recruitment Cell, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), Anusandhan Bhawan, 2, Rafi Marg, New Delhi-110001 on or before **15/06/2026.**

CBC 36202/11/0001/2627

UTTAR PRADESH MEDICAL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of Uttar Pradesh Undertaking)
Tender Notice
Tender Ref. No: UPMSCL/Drugs-257/05 Dated: 29/04/2026
e-TENDER FOR SUPPLY OF DRUGS
Online tenders are invited from licensed manufacturers for supply of drugs to UPMSCL. The details of tender, list of items and Tender Documents are made available on website https://etender.up.nic.in and www.upmsc.in. The last date/time of online submission of the tender documents is **20/05/2026 up to 15:00 Hrs.**
Managing Director
UPMSCL, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
Department of Medical Health & Family Welfare, Uttar Pradesh

UTTAR PRADESH MEDICAL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of Uttar Pradesh Undertaking)
Tender Notice
Tender Ref.No: UPMSCL/Drugs-256/06 Dated: 30th April, 2026
e-TENDER FOR SUPPLY OF DRUGS
Online tenders are invited from licensed manufacturers for supply of drugs to UPMSCL. The details of tender, list of items and Tender Documents are made available on website https://etender.up.nic.in and www.upmsc.in. The last date/time of online submission of the tender documents is **21st May, 2026 upto 15:00 Hrs.**
Managing Director
UPMSCL, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
Department of Medical Health & Family Welfare, Uttar Pradesh

CORRIGENDUM NO. 1 AGAINST TENDER NOTICE NO. CON/2026/APR/01 DATED: 07-04-2026
Corrigendum- 1 has been issued against **Tender No. CE/CON/KJG/EPC/2026/03**. For details please visit **www.ireps.gov.in**
Chief Engineer/CON/Meghalaya Project, Maligaon
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
(Construction Organisation)
Serving Customers With A Smile

CENTRAL RAILWAY
REMODELING WORK
Open E-Tender Notice No.: BB.LD.585.W.893.CONTR3 of Dated: 04.05.2026
Name of work: Tender No.: BB.LD.585.W.893.ContR3 for 25 KV AC OHE Modification work in connection with Extension of Platform No. 4,5,6 and Yard Remodeling Work at CSMT for 15 Car Suburban Train in Mumbai Division. **Approx Value:** ₹4,73,78,462/-, **Bid Security:** ₹9,47,600/-, **Cost of Tender Form:** Nil, **Completion Period:** 12 Months, Validity of Offer: 60 Days. I.Tender Closing Date & Time of aforesaid Tender: Upto **11.00** hrs. of **26.05.2026** and will be opened after **11.00 hrs.**), II. The prospective tenderers are requested to visit the website **www.ireps.gov.in** for details of tenders & corrigendum, if any. III. Tender may participate in above e-tender electronically through website **www.ireps.gov.in** only & submission of manual offers against e-tender are not allowed. Manually, if submitted shall neither be opened nor considered. IV. Bid Security should be paid as per details given in tender document. V. For further enquiry, may contact: Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (Traction Distribution), Mumbai Division, Central Railway, Annex Building, 2nd floor, Mumbai CSMT-400001 on Phone 022 - 2261 2355. Complete Details of Tenders are available at the website **www.ireps.gov.in.** The complete details of tenders are also available in the “Notice Board” of the Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (Traction Distribution), Mumbai CSMT-400001.
Sr. DEE(TD)BB
IT IS FORBIDDEN TO CROSS THE RAILWAY GATE IN CLOSED POSITION 114

Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited
(A wholly owned Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
(CIN: U04010KA2002SGC030438)
NOTIFICATION INVITING TENDER (NIT) (Through e-procurement portal)
No:BESCOM/CGM(Proj)/DGM-1/AGM-1/BC-14/26-27/Cys-34
BESCOM Re-invites the tenders for “Providing Electrical infrastructure to the regularized IP sets by extending 11 KV lines, Erection of 25 KVA Star 1 (4 Star) rated Distribution Transformers and Extension of LT line on Partial Turnkey basis (25 KVA Distribution Transformer will be supplied by BESCOM) under PERCENTAGE QUOTING BASIS in BESCOM” with the following tender enquiry nos.

Sl. No.	Enquiry No’s	Name of the Sub Division
1	BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT878/CALL-2	Kanakapura USD
2	BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT880/CALL-2	Yadiyur
3	BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT881/CALL-2	Sathanur
4	BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT882/CALL-2	Bangarapete
5	BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT889/CALL-2	Channapattana RSD
6	BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT890/CALL-2	Tumakuru RSD-2
7	BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT892/CALL-2	Gowribidanuru
8	BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT900/CALL-2	Harihara
9	BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT908/CALL-2	Teligi
10	BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT909/CALL-2	Tiptur
11	BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT911/CALL-2	Hosadurga
12	BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT913/CALL-2	Chitradurga Rural

Availability of Bid documents: 13.05.2026 onwards. Last date for submission of bid Queries: 18.05.2026 before 17:00 Hrs. Pre-Bid meeting: 19.05.2026 at 11:00 Hrs. Venue of Pre-Bid meeting: Conference Hall, 3rd Floor, BELAKU BHAVANA, Corporate office, BESCOM, K. R Circle, Bengaluru- 560 001. Last date & Time for bid submission: 25.05.2026 at 15:00 Hrs. Opening of Technical Bids: 26.05.2026 at 15:30 Hrs. The bid documents can be downloaded and necessary assistance can be obtained through the e-procurement portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in, E-procurement Help Desk: Phone No: +91-8046010000 +91-8068948777, E-mail: support@eprochelpdesk.com**
Aspiring bidders needs to be registered on e-procurement portal. Bidders can take the assistance from the e-procurement during office working hours.
Sd/-Chief General Manager (Ele)Projects, BESCOM.
E mail: cgmproject.bescom@gmail.com
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BUSINESS CONNECT
A Business Initiative

GRT Jewellers Opens in Cuddalore

GRT Jewellers announces the relocation of its Cuddalore showroom to a bigger, grander, showroom on Imperial Road. To celebrate this new beginning, GRT Jewellers is extending exclusive offers to its customers. Customers can avail Rs. 250 less per gram on Gold Jewellery Purchase, Rs.100 extra per gram on Old Gold Jewellery Exchange, 12.5 percent off on Diamond and uncut diamond value except solitaires, 25 percent off on wastage (VA) for Silver Articles, and 10 percent off on MRP of Silver Jewellery. Speaking on the occasion, Mr G.R. ‘Anand’ Ananthapadmanabhan, MD, GRT Jewellers, shared “We are deeply thankful to our customers for their unwavering support, which motivates us to keep growing and creating memorable jewellery shopping experiences.”Adding to this, Mr G.R. Radhakrishnan, MD, GRT Jewellers, remarked: “Every milestone in our journey is made possible by the trust our customers place in us.”

BoB Senior Citizen Vishesh Samman

Bank of Baroda announced the launch of ‘bob Senior Citizen Vishesh Samman’, a savings bank account designed for customers aged 60 and above. The account offers free online doctor consultations for up to six family members via Practo, concessions on medicines and diagnostic services, and two complimentary doorstep banking services per month. It includes a 50 percent waiver on processing charges for Reverse Mortgage Loans, concessional locker rentals, and the Bob Bhoomi RuPay Select Debit Card, which provides a range of lifestyle privileges including health check-ups, international & domestic airport lounge access, gym membership, spa/salon, golf, OTT membership etc. Dr. Debadatta Chand, MD & CEO, BoB, expressed pride in serving senior citizens with thoughtfully curated offerings. The account requires a Monthly Average Balance (MAB) of Rs.1 lakh.

Dr. Raghavan Recognised in Kolkata

Arun Raghavan, Diabetologist and Metabolic Physician, Revivo Clinic was conferred the “ Excellence in Obesity Care Award “ by the Association of Metabolic Obesity Physicians and Clinical Endocrinologists at Kolkatta,in recognition of his contributions in advancing comprehensive Obesity and Metabolic care. The Award highlights his work ih transforming Obesity management through evidence based holistic clinical practice.

Indian Oil Reassures Public on LPG

Mr. V C Asokan, State Level Co-ordinator of the Oil Industry in Tamil Nadu, issued an important statement to reassure the public about the availability of petroleum products and LPG. He confirmed that adequate stocks of petrol and diesel are available at all retail outlets across Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, urging citizens against panic buying. The supply chain—from refineries to retail outlets—is functioning smoothly, with continuous monitoring to ensure uninterrupted availability. Mr. Asokan also highlighted that Oil Marketing Companies (IOC, BPC, and HPC) are maintaining seamless supplies of domestic LPG, with delivery waiting periods reduced to less than five days in most areas. Auto LPG stocks are also sufficient at retail outlets. He urged the public to continue normal consumption patterns, assuring that OMCs are committed to reliable energy access for all consumers.

VIS Records 100% Result in 10th ICSE

Vellore International School (VIS), Chennai proudly announces an outstanding academic achievement, with a 100 percent pass result in the Grade 10 ICSE Board Examinations for the Batch of 2026. The cohort has also achieved an impressive class average of 76 percent, reflecting the school’s unwavering commitment to academic excellence. This milestone stands as a testament to the visionary leadership of Chairman Dr. G. V. Selvam, whose guidance continues to inspire and shape the institution’s ethos and pursuit of excellence. Vellore International School remains dedicated to nurturing well-rounded, future-ready learners, and this accomplishment further reinforces its reputation as a centre of excellence in holistic education. The journey of success continues.

Challani Celebrates 13th Anniversary

Challani Jewellery Mart celebrated its 13th Anniversary at Grand Sheraton recently amidst much pomp and splendor. Mr.Ravi, IPS, Mr.Isari Ganesh, Mr.Vikramaraja, Mr.Varadarajan, Sowbhagya, Mr.Jayantilal Challani, Mrs.Hemalatha Jayantilal, Mr.Rishub Challani, Mr.Goutham Challani, Mr.Sripal Challani and many other personalities participated. 52 employees were rewarded with TV, Washing Machine and Refrigerator and 8 employees were gifted with plots worth 15 lakhs each for their contribution to the growth of the organisation. Mr.Erode Magesh and Mr.Ramakrishnan addressed the gathering with their powerful speeches. Staff staged thier dance performances much to the thrill of the audience. The whole day was filled with fun, achievements and recognition. Mr.Elayaraja, VP gave the vote of thanks.

Govt. of Uttarakhand

Uttarakhand 25 Silver Jubilee Year
GAURAV, VIKAS AUR SANKALP KA PARV

Devbhoomi Uttarakhand

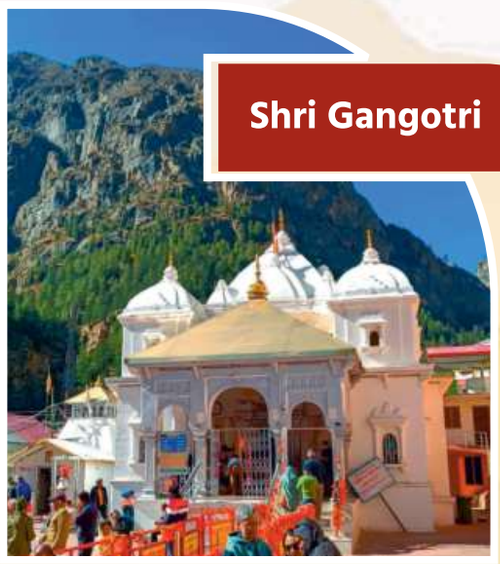
VIKAS BHI, VIRASAT BHI

Chardham Yatra

A WARM WELCOME TO ALL DEVOTEES

Shri Yamunotri

Shri Gangotri



Shri Kedarnath

Shri Badrinath

SPIRITUAL AND NATURAL ATTRACTIONS NEAR THE CHAR DHAM ROUTE

Near Yamunotri

Janki Chatti & Hanuman Chatti, Kharsali Village, Saptarishi Kund, Lakhamandal, Kedarkantha Trek, Rana Chatti.

Near Kedarnath

Bhairavnath Temple, Vasuki Tal, Gaurikund, Triyuginarayan Temple, Chopta - Tungnath - Chandra Shila, Deoria Tal.

Near Gangotri

Gaumukh Trek, Bhojbasa & Tapovan, Surya Kund & Gauri Kund, Harsil Valley, Mukhimath (Mukhba), Dayara Bugyal Trek, Gartang Gali, Kashi Vishwanath Temple (Uttarkashi), Nachiketa Tal & Dodital.

Near Badrinath

Mana Village, Vyas Gufa & Ganesh Gufa, Bhimsila, Auli, Valley of Flowers, Vasudhara Falls, Charanpaduka, Tapt Kund & Narad Kund, Jyotirmath (Joshimath), Satopanth Lake, Pandukeshwar, Adibadri Temple, Hemkund Sahib.

Triyuginarayan Temple

Valley of Flowers

Auli

Devprayag

Gartang Gali

Rishikesh

Harsil Valley

Kartik Swami Temple

"The Honourable Prime Minister has termed the third decade of the 21st century as the 'Decade of Uttarakhand.' In line with the Prime Minister's vision, we are working with an 'unwavering commitment' (Vikalp Rahit Sankalp) to make the state an ideal state in every field."

Pushkar Singh Dhami
Chief Minister, Uttarakhand

Important Information

Mandatory Registration: Registration is compulsory before commencing the Yatra.

Verify Contact Details: Please ensure you enter the correct mobile number during registration.

Be Prepared for Weather: Carry adequate woolen clothes, an umbrella, and a raincoat.

Accurate Health Data: Provide precise health information during the registration process.

Senior Citizen Advisory: Senior citizens are advised to undergo a medical check-up before starting the journey.

Medication: If you are on prescribed medication, carry a sufficient stock of your medicines.

Acclimatisation: Take frequent breaks at various transit points along the route to acclimatize to the high-altitude climate.

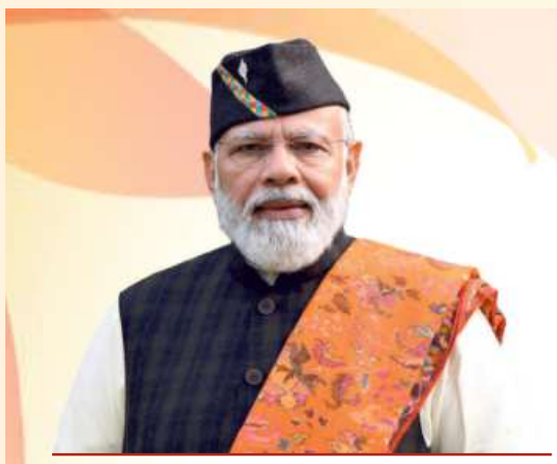
Health First: If you feel unwell, please do not proceed with the journey.

Beware of Scams: Avoid unauthorised individuals claiming to facilitate 'Darshan' at the shrines.

Keep Tracks Clean: Cooperate with us in keeping the pilgrimage routes clean; do not litter.

Safe Driving: Maintain controlled vehicle speed and park only in designated parking areas.

No Plastic: Strictly avoid the use of single-use plastic.



My dear Countrymen,

The sacred Chardham Yatra has commenced in the holy land of Devbhoomi Uttarakhand. This divine pilgrimage to the four shrines, including the darshan of Baba Kedar, is a magnificent celebration of India's eternal (Sanatan) cultural consciousness. Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya gave a new direction to Indian culture through his pilgrimages to Badrinath and Kedarnath. Similarly, Jagadguru Ramanujacharya and Jagadguru Madhvacharya also visited Badrinath to enrich their spiritual philosophies.

Even today, these four shrines nestled in the lap of the Himalayas remain divine centers of our eternal faith and belief. Every year, people belonging to diverse languages, traditions, and cultures come here, further strengthening the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat'. This year's Yatra is an extension of that very tradition.

Our scriptures state:

अग्निष्टोमादिभिर्यज्ञैरिष्ट्वा विपुलदक्षिणैः।
न तत्फलमवाप्नोति तीर्थाभिगमनेन यत्॥

Meaning: The immense merit (Punya) earn through grand Yagyas (sacrificial rituals) and charity is profound. However, the merit obtained through a pilgrimage (Tirtha Yatra) is even greater than that gained through those rituals.

In the resolve for a 'Viksit Bharat' (Developed India), the role of a 'Viksit Uttarakhand' is extremely vital. A few years ago, at the gateway of Baba Kedar, I had said that this decade would be the 'Decade of Uttarakhand.' Today, the progress of Uttarakhand is turning that belief into reality. Uttarakhand is setting new benchmarks in all three sectors: tourism, spirituality, and economic growth.

The great ritual of development (Vikas ka Mahayagya) that has been underway in Uttarakhand for the past few years has made the Chardham Yatra more accessible, safer, and divine than ever before. This is providing great convenience to the visiting devotees, saints, and tourists. In all these efforts, every care is being taken to preserve the natural beauty of Uttarakhand.

I would also urge every guest visiting Uttarakhand to truly enjoy this new experience. During your journey, I encourage all travellers to observe a "Digital Fast" and strive to live within the natural beauty of Uttarakhand. This will provide you with a unique sense of satisfaction.

Historically, we have always traveled from our homes to Devbhoomi for the Chardham Yatra with a specific resolve. In this spirit, I wish to urge you to take Five Resolves (Panch Sankalp):

First Resolve – Cleanliness is Paramount: Maintain cleanliness within and around the shrines. Contribute your part to keeping the rivers clean. Take a pledge for a journey free of single-use plastic and uphold the dignity of this sacred land.

Second Resolve – Sensitivity towards Nature and Environment: Be sensitive toward this divine Himalayan land. While maintaining the balance of nature, contribute to environmental conservation through initiatives like 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' (A Tree in Mother's Name).

Third Resolve – Emphasis on Service, Cooperation, and Unity: Since ancient times, our pilgrimages have been a medium for universal service and social harmony. Even today, people serve pilgrims with this same spirit. I urge every pilgrim visiting the Chardham to perform at least one act of service every day of their journey. Help your fellow travellers and connect with people coming from different parts of the country. By participating in their traditions, strengthen the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat' through this pilgrimage.

Fourth Resolve – Promoting 'Vocal for Local': From the time you leave your home until you return, ensure that you spend at least five percent of your total travel budget on purchasing local products. Even if a local item is not immediately needed in this season, try to buy it for future use.

Fifth Resolve – Adherence to Discipline, Safety, and Decorum: Follow the rules of the journey and traffic instructions. As a responsible and alert citizen, make this pilgrimage safe and accessible. Let us ensure that our journey does not cause any inconvenience to the people involved in the organisation and management of this Yatra.

In recent years, a large number of creators and influencers have started visiting the Chardham. I urge all of you to make an effort to share the local stories of Uttarakhand and its small, unique traditions with the masses.

May the blessings of Baba Kedar and all the four shrines infuse your life with new energy, new inspiration, and new resolutions. This is my wish for you.

My heartiest best wishes to all of you for a successful, safe, divine, and soulful journey.

Yours

Narendra Modi

Panch Kedar	Panch Prayag	Panch Badri
1. Kedarnath	1. Devprayag	1. Vishal Badri
2. Tungnath	2. Rudraprayag	2. Yogdarshan Badri
3. Rudranath	3. Karnprayag	3. Bhavya Badri
4. Madhmaheshwar	4. Nandprayag	4. Vradha Badri
5. Kalpeswar	5. Vishnuprayag	5. Aadi Badri

Use only the official portal for Helicopter Bookings To Avoid any Fraud
www.heliyatra.irctc.co.in

During the Chardham Yatra, you can also visit and experience the divine Panch Kedar, Panch Prayag and Panch Badri. In the Panch Badri, Lord Vishnu is worshipped in various unique forms

Modes of Registration

Visit the website or scan the QR Code:
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M CH-CHE

INBRIEF

Announcement of Class XII Board exam results postponed

The announcement of the Tamil Nadu State Board exam results for Class XII has been postponed, officials of the School Education Department said on Wednesday. The results were scheduled to be announced on May 8. Officials of the Directorate of Government Examinations said the results were being processed, and a new date would be announced later. Sources in the department said the announcement of the results had been put off as the new government was yet to be formed. A total of 8,16,289 students had written the Class XII exams, which began on March 2 and ended on March 26.

NTK candidate to plant 6,450 saplings to thank voters

The NTK candidate for Salem (North), M. Gunaseela, who secured 6,450 votes in the recently concluded Assembly election, has announced that she will plant 6,450 saplings as a gesture of gratitude to the voters. She said the saplings would be planted at Mookaneri in Kannankurichi, and along the lake, with the aim of increasing green cover and promoting environmental conservation. She said the planting would be carried out in phases, and arrangements would be made to ensure the saplings' growth. Party functionaries and volunteers would take part in the drive.

AIADMK sticks to its stand of not extending support to TVK

Deputy general secretary Munusamy dismisses reports of the party's inclination to support the TVK, after Palaniswami holds a meeting with newly-elected legislators and senior office-bearers

T. Ramakrishnan
CHENNAI

The AIADMK on Wednesday reiterated that it would not support the regime likely to be formed by the TVK.

Stating this after the party general secretary, Edappadi K. Palaniswami, held a meeting with newly-elected legislators and senior office-bearers, its deputy general secretary K.P. Munusamy, in a conversation with *The Hindu,* did not give any lengthy reason for the decision. "Ours is a big institution. This observation explains everything, doesn't it?" he said, dismissing reports of the party's inclination to support the TVK.

Notwithstanding his assertion, there were voices within the organisation that wanted to support the government of the fledgling party. On Tuesday, former Finance Minister C. Ponnaiyan told *The Hindu:* "We are an ally of the BJP. How does the question of my party supporting the TVK or taking support from the TVK arise?"

However, later in the day, the tone for the reconsideration of the party's stand was set by Leema Rose, the newly elected legislator from Lalgudi, who told the media that negotiations were under way between Mr. Palaniswami and the TVK over the formation of the government. When *The Hindu* tried contacting her on Wednesday, she remained incommunicado. On Tuesday, there were also varying reports regarding a meeting between TVK general secretary 'Bussy' N. Anand and Mr. Palaniswami.

AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami at a meeting with newly-elected MLAs and party office-bearers on Wednesday.

Since Wednesday morning, sections of the AIADMK have been spreading the word that a large chunk of MLAs-elect was rallying behind former Law Minister C.Ve. Shanmugam, who was elected from Mailam, for the purpose of sharing power in the government. Mr. Shanmugam, who was not accessible to this journalist despite repeated efforts, told reporters that it was for the party to take a call.

Some of the new legislators, including L. Jayasudha and former Ministers K.P. Anbalagan and N. Thalavai Sundaram, to whom this correspondent spoke, said that when they all met the AIADMK general secretary on Tuesday to exchange pleasantries, there was neither a discussion on the party's stand vis-à-vis the likely TVK regime, nor any signature campaign favouring the organisation's support for the new government.

Mr. Shanmugam's political stock seems to have gone up in the wake of the party's abysmal performance in the western belt and moderate showing in the old North Arcot-South Arcot (NASA) region, covering the districts of Vellore, Tirupattur, Ranipet, Tiruvannamalai, Kallakurichi, Cuddalore, and Villupuram. The party, which secured 47 seats across the State, won 16 in the region. Mr. Shanmugam and his colleague, S.P. Velumani, held talks at the former's residence before meeting Mr. Palaniswami.

There are reports in sections of the media that the BJP is keen on the AIADMK supporting the TVK government to prevent any room for the Congress's support.

However, some functionaries of the AIADMK feel that, as their party and the TVK are on the same page with regard to opposing the DMK, they should come together.

Besides, as the Leader of the Opposition post has gone to the DMK, there is no point in trying to find relevance for the party to remain in the Opposition. It would be beneficial for the AIADMK to be "a part of the change" in the government. Such a move will be in sync with the "thinking" of 2.38 crore electors, who are less than 40 years of age and constitute a major chunk of change-makers, some office-bearers say.

There is also a view in the party that, by becoming an ally of the TVK regime, the entire Opposition space will have to be ceded to the DMK as, after all, the TVK has grown, to some extent, at the expense of the AIADMK.

A senior leader of the party in the western region says the TVK's senior leader and former School Education Minister K.A. Sengottaiyan is in contact with some of the MLAs of the AIADMK, triggering talk that the party is heading towards a split.

AIADMK MLAs in resort

Most AIADMK legislators were housed in a resort in Puducherry, a senior leader said. According to the leader, the TVK had not formally sought support from the AIADMK to form a government.

After outreach to Cong. and CPI(M), TVK approaches CPI for support

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

TVK president C. Joseph Vijay has reached out to the CPI, a constituent of the DMK-led Secular Progressive Alliance (SPA), seeking its support to form a government.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, CPI State secretary M. Veerapandian said the party had received a letter from Mr. Vijay, seeking support. "The party has called for an executive committee meeting on May 8. We will discuss and, if required, we will call for an urgent State committee meeting the next day to take a call on the TVK's request," he said.

The CPI had won two seats in the Assembly election. The TVK had already reached out to the Congress and the CPI(M) – both part of the SPA. The Congress had won five seats, and the CPI(M) two.

Since Mr. Vijay has to resign from one of the two constituencies – Perambur and Tiruchi East – from where he was elected, the TVK would effectively have 107 MLAs. This would bring down the strength of the House to 233. The TVK needs the support of 10 more members to get a majority of 117.

Meanwhile, VCK leader Thol. Thirumavalavan said a decision on supporting the TVK would be taken after consulting senior office-bearers. The meeting is likely to be held on Thursday or Friday.

Should Cong. stand with 'those rejected by the people', asks party MP

The Hindu Bureau
MADURAI/TIRUCHI

Congress MP B. Manickam Tagore, who was among those in the party pushing for an alliance with the TVK before the Assembly election, on Wednesday said the people of the State had rejected the M.K. Stalin-led DMK.

In a social media post, he said the Tamil Nadu election results "have gone against the DMK". The Virudhunagar MP ridiculed the Dravidian party, claiming that half of the DMK's Cabinet Ministers had lost their seats in the election. He further said the Congress had won only five out of the 28 seats it had contested as part of the DMK-led Secular Progressive Alliance (SPA), and claimed that the national party had faced collateral damage "for no fault of ours".

Claiming that the ruling BJP at the Centre was eyeing Tamil Nadu, Mr. Tagore said the question before the Congress was clear: "Should we stand with those rejected by the people's verdict, or should we unite with the force that fought against the BJP and will fight to stop the BJP from ruling Tamil Nadu?"

Meanwhile, Karur MP S. Jothimani said the Congress and the DMK should part ways with mutual respect, avoiding harsh criticisms against each other, in the wake of the national party's decision to support the TVK.

'Congress has adopted BJP's shortcuts in Tamil Nadu'

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Reacting strongly to the Congress's decision to unilaterally snap ties with the DMK and align with the TVK, DMK treasurer T. R. Baalu on Wednesday alleged that the national party had adopted "shortcut routes" in Tamil Nadu, similar to those followed by the BJP in several States.

"The Congress can support anyone; it is their right. But political ethics demand that they remain faithful to the people who voted for them," Mr. Baalu said in a statement.

"Failure is not new to us, nor is betrayal. But neither is permanent. Time will provide the answer," he added.

Mr. Baalu said the Congress's statement outlining its political stand had exposed its "true character" which, he claimed, had remained dormant at times. "Whenever the Congress faced a crisis, the DMK, as a faithful friend, stood by it. The price we paid was heavy, but we faced it with a smile," he said.

Recalling the cordial ties between the DMK leadership and Congress leaders such as Sonia Gandhi, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, and Rahul Gandhi, Mr. Baalu said Mr. Gandhi had once reiterated his commitment, saying M.K. Stalin was the only leader he would address as a "brother".

"But we are not surprised that the relationship has come to an end," he said. Mr. Baalu said the Congress had "pawned" in a "despicable manner" its five MLAs, who were part of the Secular Progressive Alliance.

The roller-coaster relationship of DMK and Congress finally derails

B. Kolappan
CHENNAI

The over two-decade-old relationship between the DMK and the Congress, with a brief break during the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, has finally come to an end. Whenever the two parties engaged in tough bargaining over seat-sharing – first in 2011, when the Congress insisted on being allotted 90 seats and eventually got over 60, and again in 2026, when negotiations reached a stage of brinkmanship – the alliance ended up losing the election.

Though together, they shaped India's coalition politics and remained an antidote to the BJP and its ideology, their relationship was not free of tension. In 2004, DMK leader M. Karunanidhi, demanding important portfolios for his party's Ministers, as agreed in the pre-poll arrangement, announced that they would not assume office until his demands were met. The Congress, then at the mercy of its allies, obliged. However, it stood firm in 2009 and retained the key portfolios. The 2G spectrum issue further widened the divide between the two parties, and the DMK quit the Congress-led government before the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, even though the Congress leadership sent senior leaders, including Pranab Mukherjee, Ghulam Nabi Azad, and A.K. Antony, to placate Mr. Karunanidhi. It was M.K. Stalin who stubbornly refused to entertain the Congress's plea. The parties, however, came together again in the 2016 Assembly polls.

Pulling apart: Though together, the two parties shaped India's coalition politics and remained an antidote to the BJP and its ideology, the relationship was not free of tension. FILE PHOTO

Lack of options

What prevented the Congress from walking out of the alliance was the long-standing relationship and the emergence of the BJP as a major force at the Centre. It also could not find a suitable ally in Tamil Nadu, as the AIADMK had often taken a soft Hindutva line, and had been more comfortable in the company of the BJP. What was expected to happen in the run-up to the 2016 elections has now occurred after the 2026 elections.

"We were not able to find an appropriate reason to leave the alliance, even though there was a strong opinion in favour of joining the TVK of actor Vijay, since we have sailed together in many elections. We could not say no when Mr. Vijay reached out to us. It is the wish of the majority of the party workers in the State," said a senior Congress leader, who had opposed snapping ties with the DMK in the 2026 elections.

He added that though there was a good understanding between the leaders of the DMK and the Congress, the treatment meted out to local Congress leaders by DMK functionaries created considerable resentment. "They are celebrating the end of the alliance," he said.

The DMK defeated the Congress in 1967 and consigned it to the margins of Tamil Nadu politics thereafter. The two parties remained mutually antagonistic, with a wide gap between them, especially following the Emergency, when many DMK leaders were incarcerated. The Congress's hopes of re-emerging in Tamil Nadu politics were further dashed by the emergence of another Dravidian party, the AIADMK, launched by M.G. Ramachandran. Between them, the two parties shared power, leaving little space for the Congress, which was forced to align with one or the other.

Its attempt to revive its fortunes in 1980 failed. The Congress, then headed by the late M.P. Subramaniam, succeeded in persuading Karunanidhi to agree to an equal share of seats and power. However, the plan came a cropper, as the alliance was defeated.

Irrespective of the outcome of the 2026 Assembly elections, the DMK leadership had made up its mind to snap ties with the Congress after the bitter experience of seat-sharing negotiations. Mr. Stalin was reportedly upset that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, with whom he believed he shared a close bond, did not reach out during the negotiations. He also failed to share the dais with Mr. Stalin during the campaign. When a suggestion to send winning Congress candidates to meet Mr. Stalin and thank him was turned down, it became clear that the relationship had effectively ended.

Another Congress leader, however, questioned the logic of extending blanket support to Mr. Vijay and contesting alongside him in all future elections, including the Rajya Sabha polls.

"We may have differences with the DMK, but no leader in the country has opposed the BJP in the manner Mr. Stalin has. What will be the Congress's stand if Mr. Vijay does not show a similar commitment to opposing the BJP," he asked.

He also pointed out that the emergence of the TVK had disrupted bipolar politics in the State, potentially making things easier for the BJP, which has been waiting for such an opportunity. "A three-cornered contest will eventually weaken one of the Dravidian parties, and may pave the way for the BJP to step in and occupy that space. Even now, the BJP can manoeuvre the situation to its advantage with the help of the Governor. While supporting Mr. Vijay, the Congress cannot afford to allow any compromise in its stand against the BJP," he said.

Plea in HC seeks FIR, money laundering probe against Vijay over 2015 tax dispute

Mohamed Imranullah S.
CHENNAI

A writ petition has been filed in the Madras High Court, seeking registration of a First Information Report (FIR) against Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) president C. Joseph Vijay on the basis of income tax proceedings initiated after the release of his Tamil movie *Puli* in 2015 for alleged suppression of income, receipt of unaccounted cash remuneration, and concealment of financial transactions.

The High Court Registry numbered the writ petition on Wednesday, and it is expected to be listed under the caption, 'For Maintainability', shortly. Though the case was filed on March 18 this year, the Registry had refused to number the case. However, the first Division Bench of Chief Justice Sushrut Arvind Dharmadhikari and Justice G. Arul Murugan, on April 8, directed the Registry to number it, subject to maintainability.

The Income Tax Department had conducted a search-and-seizure operation on a premises belonging to Mr. Vijay on September 30, 2015, and seized certain incriminating materials. The materials indicated that P.T. Selvakumar and Shibu of SKT Studios, the producers of *Puli*, had paid him ₹4.93 crore in cash, apart from the remuneration of ₹16 crore through cheques.

The producers had deposited the Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) only for the cheque amount, and not the cash transaction. When Mr. Vijay was confronted with the records, he reportedly admitted to having received ₹5 crore in cash, and agreed to pay the tax on it. When asked how much of unaccounted income he had earned in the last six years, he replied that he hadn't received any unaccounted cash but for the ₹5 crore for *Puli*.

C. Joseph Vijay

The case pertains to alleged suppression of income, receipt of unaccounted cash remuneration, and concealment of financial transactions

Additional income

Nevertheless, to cooperate with the I-T Department and resolve the tax issues in an amicable manner, Mr. Vijay had agreed to disclose an additional income of ₹15 crore (including the cash transaction of ₹5 crore) for the financial year 2015-16, and pay the necessary tax on it.

Subsequently, on July 29, 2016, he filed his return of income for the assessment year 2016-17, declaring his total income to be ₹35.42 crore, including the additional ₹15 crore. While filing the returns, he claimed depreciation of assets worth ₹17.81 lakh, and sought an exemption for his fans' club expenses of ₹64.71 lakh.

However, the department disallowed his claims and passed an assessment order on December 30, 2017, determining the taxable income to be ₹38.25 crore. The assessment order also stated that the actor would not have disclosed the additional income but for the search-and-seizure operation.

Therefore, the department imposed a penalty under Sections 271(1)(c) and 271AAB(1) of the I-T Act. Though he chose to go on statutory appeal against the assessment order as well as the penalty imposed under Section 271(1)(c), the penalty under Section 271AAB(1) alone was challenged by way of a writ petition. Justice Senthilkumar Ramamoorthy dismissed the writ petition on February 6, 2026.

Though a writ appeal was filed against the dismissal order, it is yet to be listed for hearing before a Division Bench. In the meantime, referring to these incidents, the present petitioner, M. Rajkumar of Kodungaiyur in Chennai, had approached the court, seeking a direction to the I-T Department to initiate prosecution against Mr. Vijay, and also to the appropriate law enforcement agencies to register an FIR.

The petitioner has also sought a direction to the I-T Department to place the materials before the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) for the purpose of ascertaining whether any offence under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, too, had been committed.

D.N. Jeevara, MLA, being greeted by Speaker U.T. Khader on Wednesday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Karnataka BJP leader takes oath as MLA after recount

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU/MANGALURU

Karnataka BJP leader D.N. Jeevaraj was sworn in as MLA on Wednesday, following a recount held three years after the Assembly election.

Assembly Speaker U.T. Khader administered the oath of office to him.

Mr. Jeevaraj had lost to Congress' T.D. Raje Gowda in the 2023 election from the Sringeri Assembly constituency. Following a recount of postal ballots polled in 2023, as directed by the High Court of Karnataka, he was declared elected from the seat, setting off a controversy.

The Congress accused the BJP of a "criminal conspiracy" and asked how 255 valid votes polled in favour of Mr. Gowda were declared invalid in the recount. An FIR has been registered against Mr. Jeevaraj for allegedly tampering with postal ballots.

The BJP earlier accused Mr. Khader of "intentionally" delaying the oath-taking of Mr. Jeevaraj and sought the Governor's intervention. Denying the charges, Mr. Khader said the circumstances of Mr. Jeevaraj's election were unique and hence he would have to study the legal aspects. However, hours later, he rushed to Bengaluru and administered the oath.

Kerala CPI(M) to take feedback on poll rout from all party members

It will provide platform to cadres at all levels to voice their criticism 'fearlessly'; State secretary admits to organisational issues and says party will corrective steps to win back people's trust; CPI members criticise Pinarayi's style of functioning

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Jolted by one of the biggest defeats in its electoral history, the CPI(M) in Kerala has decided to hold meetings at all levels to allow party members to voice their criticism and opinions "fearlessly."

After a meeting of the party's State secretariat here on Wednesday, CPI (M) State secretary M.V. Govindan told mediapersons that the State leadership will conduct a review and take corrective measures to win back the confidence of the people.

The decision to provide a platform for party members down to the branch committee level to express their opinion comes in the wake of the crushing defeat of the party even in some of its strongholds in Kannur.

People's script: A hoarding that reads 'Bye, Bye Pinarayi' was put up by an association in Thiruvananthapuram after the results. PTI

Mr. Govindan said the State secretariat had carried out only a preliminary assessment of the causes of the defeat. A detailed analysis will be done at all levels of the party.

"The party understands that there have been organisational and political issues as well as negative propaganda against the party, which contributed to the defeat.. The Left has a history of learning from setbacks and taking corrective steps to make a comeback. We will make an honest assessment," he said.

Review meetings

It will hold meetings of party committees at various levels. "All the comrades across all levels will have the opportunity to raise issues freely and fearlessly. The party's election review will be prepared based on the discussions in these meetings, instead of the State secretariat preparing a review and passing it to lower levels," said Mr. Govindan.

The CPI too will hold meetings in all districts to assess the party's performance. At a party meeting on Wednesday, members criticised the style of functioning of outgoing Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. "Changes will be made wherever it is needed. What needs to be corrected will be corrected," party State secretary Binoy Viswam said.

Sabarimala review: SC questions validity of PIL against 1962 order

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday questioned the maintainability of public interest litigation (PIL) or writ petitions challenging the authority of the Dawoodi Bohra community leaders to excommunicate their members.

In 2023, the court had referred to a nine-judge Bench for an authoritative pronouncement on whether the practice of excommunication among the Dawoodi Bohras could continue as a "protected practice" despite the coming into force of the Maharashtra Protection of People from Social Boycott (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act of 2016.

The petitions had challenged a 1962 judgment of a five-judge Constitution Bench in the *Sardar Syedna Taher Saifuddin vs The State Of Bombay* case. The reference to the Dawoodi Bohra was later tagged with the Sabarimala case.

On Wednesday, Justice B.V. Nagarathna, a member of the nine-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, asked senior advocate Raju Ramachandran, appearing for the writ petitioners, if a Constitution Bench judgment, that too one which had held the fort for over 60 years, could be challenged through PILs, however "reformist" they may intend to be.

A.P. govt. dismisses 51 doctors for long absence

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

Citing long absence from duty, the Andhra Pradesh government has dismissed 51 doctors of teaching hospitals under the purview of the Directorate of Medical Education (DME), Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav said on Wednesday.

A release from the Health Department said 41 of them were Assistant Professors, eight were Associate Professors and two tutors. The Minister said the government had earlier issued show-cause notices to the doctors and given them a chance to explain themselves. However, they failed to respond, he said.

4 farmers die in shed collapse in Telangana

The Hindu Bureau
MANCHERIAL

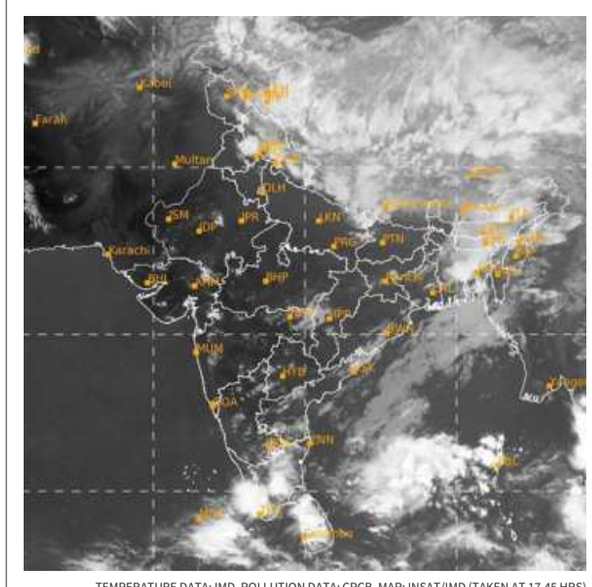
Four farmers died after sheds collapsed on them at a paddy procurement centre in Mancherial district of Telangana on Wednesday. Four injured farmers were hospitalised.

Owing to gusty winds in the region, farmers had gathered at the procurement centre located between Kothur and Gampalpalli villages to cover grain heaps with tarpaulins, sources said. As the winds picked up, the farmers moved closer to nearby structures for shelter, when the tin-roofed sheds collapsed on them.

BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao expressed condolences and sought ₹25 lakh ex gratia for the families of the deceased. Criticising the government over the delay in procurement, he said farmers were being forced to guard their produce at the centres for prolonged periods.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.45 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Kerala. Thunderstorm with lightning & gusty winds likely at isolated places over Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Sikkim, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	31.9	23.4	Kozhikode	7	35.9	25.4
Ahmedabad	—	40.2	28.0	Kurnool	—	39.5	28.1
Aizawl	—	31.9	17.2	Lucknow	—	33.3	21.0
Allahabad	8.1	35.4	20.6	Madurai	—	36.0	22.6
Bengaluru	3	32.9	22.0	Mangaluru	1	35.0	24.0
Bhopal	—	37.2	21.4	Mumbai	—	33.9	25.3
Bhubaneswar	—	36.1	22.8	Mysuru	—	35.0	21.0
Chandigarh	—	34.3	18.0	New Delhi	—	35.4	20.7
Chennai	—	36.6	28.6	Patna	0.2	30.0	24.3
Coimbatore	—	36.8	24.4	Port Blair	7	33.7	25.7
Dehradun	—	31.7	16.2	Puducherry	—	33.4	26.2
Gangtok	17	16.6	12.7	Pune	—	40.2	24.5
Goa	—	36.5	27.4	Raipur	—	37.1	22.2
Guwahati	—	33.1	23.3	Ranchi	—	32.0	20.0
Hubballi	—	38.0	23.0	Shillong	—	22.4	12.9
Hyderabad	1	36.5	25.6	Shimla	18	21.1	9.0
Imphal	—	31.0	19.3	Srinagar	—	25.1	8.3
Jaipur	—	36.6	24.6	Thiruvananthapuram	—	37.0	27.1
Kochi	—	32.6	27.2	Tiruchi	—	36.6	26.4
Kohima	—	24.0	15.0	Vijayawada	—	36.6	28.4
Kolkata	—	34.1	26.1	Visakhapatnam	4	33.9	25.0

(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	.19	.18	.53	147	135	
Bengaluru	1	—	.47	151	148	
Chennai	.16	.10	.16	37	52	
Delhi	.24	.63	.92	171	169	
Hyderabad	.20	.22	.15	65	98	
Kolkata	8	.57	.21	40	47	
Lucknow	.11	9	.41	168	101	
Mumbai	.13	106	.15	48	72	
Pune	—	.23	123	41	75	
Visakhapatnam	.11	.29	.14	24	63	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Sri Ganganagar, Rajasthan recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 274 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Madikeri, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 25

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

CORRIGENDUM NO. 01
AGAINST TENDER NOTICE NO.
CON/2026/APR/02
DATED: 20-04-2026

Corrigendum- 01 for **Tender No. CE-CON-DK-EPC-2026-02** has been published. For details please visit **www.ireps.gov.in**

Chief Engineer/CON/NL Project, Maligaon
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
(Construction Organisation)
Serving Customers With A Smile

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE

DRM(S&T) NWR, Ajmer on behalf of the President of India invites E-Tender for the following work up to 15.00 Hrs. on the mentioned date. **Tender No.:-** DRM-S&T-14-2026-27, **Name of Work:- Ajmer Division:-** Providing Design, manufacture, supply, installation, testing and commissioning of Electronic Interlocking (EI) systems along with execution of indoor and outdoor complete MACLS work with Std-III to suit RE standards at Khemli station in C/W Development of common user facility for line no. 4 at Khemli (KLH) station, CONCOR siding and development of rail siding (UCWL) at Khemli (KLH) station in Ajmer Division of NWR. **Approximate cost of work:-** Rs. 73394402.33, **Bid security:-** Rs. 1467900.00, Date & Time of opening E-Tender - **01.06.2026** at 15.30 Hrs. The details of above E-Tender are available on website **www.ireps.gov.in.**

662-DO/26

Please join us on /NWRailways

RAIL WHEEL FACTORY
Yelahanka, Bangalore – 560064
Website: www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in
e-mail:smm.rwfblr@gmail.com

Tender Notice No. RWF/S/03/2026-27
Dated 05/05/2026

On behalf of the President of India, the Principal Chief Materials Manager invites Electronic Open Tender from for supply of the following two items, on the Indian Railways e-portal www.ireps.gov.in.
Sl. No.: 1. **Tender No.:** P2256302A. **Brief Item Description:** Replacement of 2 nos. of 400 KVA Transformers with 2 nos. Transformer of 500 KVA capacity and LT switch gear panel with associated works for Canteen substation as per Specification No.R WF/EL/P/2025-26/06. **Quantity:** 1 Set. **Tender Closing Date and Time: 18/05/2026** 14:00 hrs. **Sl. No.:** 2. **Tender No.:** P2265192. **Brief Item Description:** Design, Manufacture, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 5 Ton EOT crane for extension of wheelset stacking area of assembly as per RWF Technical Specification No.RWF/M&P/ASSY/2025/5 T EOT crane. **Quantity:** 2 Nos. **Tender Closing Date and Time: 28/05/2026** 14:00 hrs. **Pre-bid date 12/05/2026** 15:00 hrs. Tender corrigendum can be viewed on our website www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in or www.ireps.gov.in. The tender documents, Specification and the corrigendum to the Tender will be available on the portal only.

Principal Chief Materials Manager

DESIGN, SUPPLY, ERECTION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING WORKS

E-Tender Notice No. Dy.CEE/CON/RE/08/2025-26 Dated: 30-04-2026. Open tender through e-Tendering system is invited from experienced and reputed contractor(s)/firm(s) for the following works: **Tender No. ELC-RE-MLG-7-25-26-RT. Name of work:** Design, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 132/27 kV Traction Sub-Station including SCADA, Feeding Post and Shunt Capacitor Bank with Two (02) No. 21.6/30.24 MVA Traction Transformer at Rupai in Tinsukia Division for N.F. Railway, along with associated Civil and S&T Works. **Tender value:** ₹24,73,74,719.66/-. **Earnest Money:** ₹49,47,500/-.**Date & Time of submission of tender: 15.00** hrs. on **01-06-2026 & opening at: 15.00** hrs. on **08-06-2026**. The complete information and tender document of above e-Tender will be available at **www.ireps.gov.in**

Dy.CEE/CON/HQ/Maligaon
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
(Construction Organisation)
Serving Customers With A Smile

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
CONSTRUCTION ORGANIZATION
GeM Bid No. GEM/2026/B/7478954 Dated: 27.04.2026

Name of Work
1. Manpower Outsourcing Services - Officer's Rest House @ Trichy, Mayiladuthurai, Pattukottai, Karaikkal, Construction Stores Depot / Ponmalai, Main Gate and Camp office of Deputy Chief Engineer, Gauge Conversion, Trichy.

Sl. No.	App Cash value (in ₹)	Earnest Money Deposit (in ₹)	Period of completion in months	Bid End Date / Time	Opening date / Time
1	1,43,55,345.89	2,21,800.00*	Twenty Four (24)	21.00 hrs on 07.05.2026	21.30 hrs on 07.05.2026

*Corrigendum issued vide GEM/2026/B/7478954-C1 dated 28.04.2026

Deputy Chief Engineer / Gauge Conversion / II / Tiruchchirappalli

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ବିଦ୍ୟୁତ୍ ଶକ୍ତି ସଂଚାରଣ ନିଗମ ଲିଃ
(ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାରଙ୍କ ଏକ ଉପକ୍ରମ)
OPTCL Lifeline of Odisha
ODISHA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
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Regd. Office: OPTCL Tech Tower, Janpath, Saheed Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751007

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

E-Tender No.	Tender Description:	Estimated Cost
CPC-03/2026-27	Bid invited from reputed bidders in single stage two part bidding system for Selection of agency for providing the services of skilled/high-skilled manpower for various maintenance works of Grid Sub-Stations and transmission lines of OPTCL in four(04) Lots in e-tendering mode only.	
	LOT-1: Central (O&M) Zone, BBSR	**Rs. 3,22,45,944/-**
	LOT-2: Northern (O&M) Zone, Balasore	**Rs. 2,51,86,635/-**
	LOT-3: Southern (O&M) Zone, Berhampur	**Rs. 2,17,11,036/-**
	LOT-4: Western (O&M) Zone, Burla	**Rs. 2,77,57,425/-**
	Last Date & Time of Submission of Bid: 05.06.2026 upto 17:30 P.M.	

Complete set of bidding documents are available at **www.tenderwizard.com/OPTCL** and **www.optcl.co.in**.

s/d
Chief General Manager (CPC)

HIPR-10/2026-27

/optcl.odisha /optcl_odisha

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

OBITUARY

We deeply mourn the demise of **V.Suresh Kumar Reddy** (82 Years)
Passed away on 06th May 2026 at Chennai.
Mourned by Radhika ,Swetha, Smitha , sons-in-law , grandchildren, brothers and family.
Residence Address: No 234/278, B3, JJ Road, Alwarpet, Chennai - 600018

DEATH

SHRADANJALI

Our dearest sister **Pushpa @ N. LAKSHMI** passed away on 6th May.
The memories u have left shall be remembered always, dear Pushpa. None can replace you.
Inserted by : **Mohan and Brothers Family**
VISHAL ENTERPRISES
Nacharam, Hyderabad

HOMAGE

HOMAGE

Smt. P. VINUSHAA
D.O.B: 19/03/1965 - D.O.D: 27/04/2026
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DEATH

S.RM.S NARAYANAN CHETTIAR
(24.06.1929- 06.05.2026)
Passed away on 06 May 2026 in Chennai.
Mourned by:
Wife, Children, Grandchildren, Sons-in-law, Daughters-in-law, Relatives and Friends.
Savandi will take place on Sunday, May 10.
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Cost of success

The BJP's path to victory in Assam undermined the health of India's polity

Himanta Biswa Sarma is expected to take oath as Chief Minister after leading the BJP to power in Assam yet again. Mr. Sarma was a Congress leader when the party came to power in the north-eastern State in 2011, but switching sides in 2015, he became the central figure of the BJP not only in Assam but also in States around it. Starting in 2001 on a Congress ticket, he has won six consecutive elections from the same Assembly seat. Having emerged as a very powerful leader, he joined the BJP, and was appointed Chief Minister in 2021. Since then, he has reshaped the politics of the State through exceptional organisational ability, communal rhetoric, and the partisan use of state power. An infrastructure push combined with welfare delivery – the Orunodoi scheme of direct cash transfer to women and Mission Basundhara, a flagship initiative to streamline and digitise land records and protect land rights – not only enabled the BJP's deep expansion, but along with other measures, including the delimitation of Assembly constituencies in 2023, reshaped the State's political landscape. Mr. Sarma has been both the creator and the principal beneficiary of this process.

The BJP's victory in Assam has significant implications for power dynamics within the party nationally. Mr. Sarma is perceived to be close to Union Home Minister Amit Shah. The BJP alone commands a majority in the 126-strong Assembly, and the ruling coalition has 102 members. The BJP has not only decimated the Opposition but also rendered regional parties inconsequential. It has consolidated a spectrum of fragmented social groups and diluted the linguistic and ethnic politics of the State. But in doing so, it has sharply polarised Assam along religious lines. The delimitation carved out constituencies by packing and cracking communities in ways that suppress Muslim representation, with the BJP and the Congress now mirroring a Hindu-Muslim binary in the newly elected Assembly. Eviction drives have disproportionately targeted Bengali-speaking Muslim communities; 40,000 individuals were displaced in 2025 alone, officially framed as anti-encroachment action but widely seen as selective targeting. Assam is a sensitive border region, and the BJP's approach to its governance needs to be commensurately sensitive. All parties have a legitimate right to consolidate themselves and win elections. But that must be done with the utmost attention to the long-term health of the polity and the interests of the country as a whole. At this moment of triumph, the BJP in Assam would do well to reflect on the costs of the victory that it has just secured.

Back in the saddle

Congress leaders in Kerala should rise above personal ambitions

Riding a massive anti-incumbency wave, the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) returned to power in the Kerala Assembly on May 4, ending 10 years of its being in the political wilderness. After an unprecedented defeat in 2021, the alliance worked systematically for a comeback, winning four by-elections, the general election in 2024 and the civic-body polls last year before storming back into the State Assembly through deft electioneering and collective effort that sought to capitalise on surging resentment against the functioning of the Left Democratic Front (LDF) government led by CPI(M) leader Pinarayi Vijayan. The BJP reopened its account, securing three seats, finishing second in six and clinching a substantial share of votes in pockets in north, central and south Kerala, redrawing the electoral landscape. Its low vote share notwithstanding, the party is doubtless growing, albeit incrementally. To be fair to the Left, which received a debilitating blow, the outgoing government embarked on a path of growth, filling infrastructure gaps, soliciting private investment and pursuing sustainable industries without forgoing its Leftist thrust on welfare and public governance, despite facing fiscal embargoes and pocket veto by inimical Governors. While Left supporters acquiesced in its political economy, many could not digest the lack of accountability and the overbearing, if not dismissive, demeanour of the CPI(M)'s senior leadership. The Left tried to claim what was seen as an emerging Hindu vote base through events such as the Global Ayyappa Devotees' Meet, even while selectively targeting the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) for presumably being in concert with the forces of political Islam. The IUML employed everything in its armour to hand a crushing defeat to the Left, not just in Malappuram, its stronghold, but also in other parts of the State. Rebellion broke out in the rank and file of the Left ahead of the elections over issues of nepotism and the concentration of power in a single person bestowed with a cult status, which the UDF leveraged. It led to the fall of some decades-old Left citadels, with a cascading effect elsewhere as well.

Back in the saddle, the immediate task before the Congress and the UDF will be to stay true to their slogan of being a team and finalise a cabinet with a popular and efficient leader. A historic mandate of 102 seats, also counting the independents it backed, should inspire the alliance to form a government that is accessible, competent and grounded. The period between polling and counting saw senior Congress leaders draw public ridicule for an unabashed display of a lust for the chief ministerial post, to the dismay of the party high command and the allies. Democracy would be better served if the Congress acted responsibly, with the leaders setting aside personal ambitions for the larger good.

Understanding inequality in India's growth story

There have been some significant policy changes in the recent past – this includes the implementation of the new Labour Codes and the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Bill, 2025 replacing the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) – which have raised serious concerns regarding the welfare of informal workers and those belonging to rural India. These changes are accompanied by the official understanding that inequality is much less of a concern today than it was in the early 2010s, even though data comparability itself is an issue.

Saswata Guha Thakurata

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, FLAME University, Pune

Chaitanya Talreja

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Shiv Nadar University Chennai

Inequality estimates, initial observations

Analysis of inequality warrants clarification on a few issues, among other things.

The first is inequality of what – income, wealth, consumption expenditure? Second, how is it measured? Third, along which axis it is assessed – caste, class, gender, religion?, and fourth, data source and comparability of estimates generated from multiple surveys, if marked with methodological changes. Our estimate from the Household Consumer Expenditure Survey (HCES 2023-24), conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO), suggests that overall consumption expenditure inequality, measured by the Gini index, is 0.29 – higher than the widely cited World Bank estimate of 0.25. The World Bank's method too, in this regard, came under scrutiny. With further disaggregation, one finds that urban, as expected, is more unequal than the rural sector. India's consumption boom during the last couple of decades has been primarily driven by non-food expenditure. We find that inequality is much higher for the same compared to food expenditure. This is true for the rural and urban sectors, the inequality for both being higher in case of the urban sectors, and relatively more for non-food expenditure.

Since most growth-inducing activities are urban-centric and agricultural distress persists, it is imperative to examine the urban-rural gap, which is shown by the mean ratio here. A higher than unity mean ratio would reflect a relatively better position than the respective all-India average. Lesser than unity would imply otherwise. There is a substantial gap between urban and rural sectors in this regard and the disparity is more striking in the case of non-food expenditure. For example, average urban non-food monthly per capita expenditure (MPCE) is about 1.5 times higher than the all-India average, while that for rural is much lower than the same point of reference.

Our disaggregated analysis also reveals a considerable gap between the consumption share and per-capita spending of overall MPCE-based deciles. In the urban sector, the top 10% of the population alone contributes 27% of the total non-food expenditure, implying that the rest of the 90% contributes only 73% of the same. The mean MPCE of the topmost decile is six times that of the bottom most decile for the urban sector, compared to 4.5 times in the rural sector. Strikingly, the mean MPCE of the top most decile in the urban sector is nine times that of the bottom most decile in the rural sector. Once we proceed a step further and decompose total inequality into within- and between-group components, it appears that: in urban India, within-decile and between-decile inequalities account for about 33% and 67% of food expenditure inequality, respectively, and about 10% and 90% of non-food expenditure inequality. The relative importance of between-decile group inequality for non-food consumption holds true for the rural sector too. Further, the per-capita consumption expenditure of the richest 5% is six times higher than that of the poorest 5% in the rural areas; the same is nine times for urban areas. In short, the urban sector, which is more affluent, is more unequal than its rural counterparts.

Inequality dynamics in India

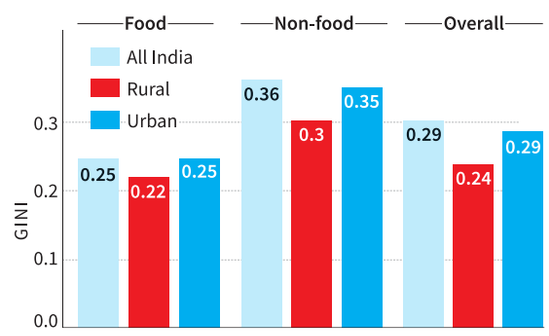
First, it is almost unanimously agreed upon that the superrich segment of the Indian population is hardly captured by the NSS surveys (consumption or wealth); thus any inequality estimation based on the same is a gross underestimation. Our own calculation based on this data suggests that about one fourth of even the richest 10% in India benefited from the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) and about 13% of them have access to Below Poverty Line (BPL) ration cards.

Second, for a nuanced understanding of inequality dynamics in India, one must go beyond inter-personal or solely income/spending groups-based (for example, decile; percentile) inequality calculations and analyse disparity along various socio-economic axes such as caste and class. Deploying an alternative class-based analysis alongside a closer examination of the growth process and policy changes since Independence, Vamsi Vakulabharanam of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, in his book, *Class and Inequality in China and India, 1950-2010*, shows that since the 1980s (even before the 1991 reforms), urban owners, managers, and professionals have gained disproportionately, contributing to India's consumption boom,

In contrast, urban informal workers, rural small farmers, and agricultural labourers have lagged markedly behind. All these added to increasing between-class inequality *vis-à-vis* within-class inequality in India's evolving urban landscape. Over the last decade or so, there has not been any systemic change despite various welfare measures, to counter or reverse such trend in class-based inequality. Typical explorations of inequality often overlook this growth-class-inequality nexus. Moreover, a large share of Indians remains engaged in debt-led consumption. The complexities involved in the issue of inequality in India warn us that policies formulated on the presupposition of lower disparity could be misleading and may produce adverse, albeit unintended, welfare implications.

Consumption expenditure inequality in India

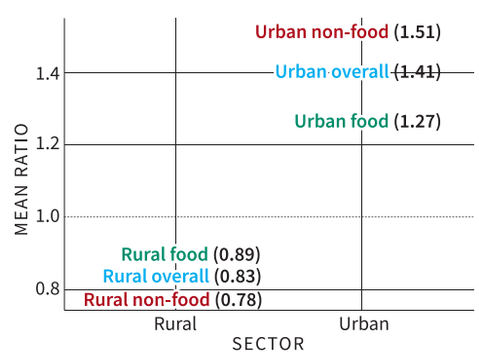
Locating inequality by space and consumption type



Source: Authors' calculation and illustration using unit level data of Household Consumption Expenditure Survey 2023-24.

Note: We disaggregate the overall consumption expenditure into food and non-food consumption expenditure.

Figure 2: Urban – rural gap by consumption type



Source: Same as figure 1. Respective mean ratio is in parenthesis.

Note: Here, mean ratio implies the ratio of sectoral average MPCE to All India MPCE.

For example, mean ratio for urban non-food consumption is calculated as the ratio of average urban non-food MPCE to that of all India (rural and urban combined) average non-food MPCE.

Fixing structural deficits in India's health system

On March 11, 2026, the Minister of State for Health, Anupriya Patel, informed Parliament that 43 new medical colleges have been established and 11,682 MBBS seats along with 8,967 postgraduate seats have been approved for the 2025-26 academic year.

Will this address India's problem of non-availability of doctors in the public health system? Of the 8,967 new postgraduate doctors, how many will actually have the inclination to serve in aspirational districts or underserved areas? Of the 43 newly sanctioned medical colleges, only eight are under State governments, eight are in the Employees' State Insurance (ESI) sector, and 27 are in the private sector. Private medical colleges, after charging high capitation fees, have no obligation to post their trainees in government service, nor can they be compelled to do so. There is also no clearly defined policy or stipulations to ensure that public health institutions benefit maximally by filling existing vacancies in specialist cadre posts.

Merely investing in capital expenditure and infrastructure alone will not yield the desired improvement in health services in hilly, tribal, and other remote underserved areas. Eleven out of 18 All India Institutes of Medical Sciences report around 40% vacancies in their teaching and research faculty positions. Without adequate research and teaching capacity, how can we effectively train specialists?

Dr. K.R. Antony

Public health system and policy development adviser

Glaring vacancy rate

According to The Health Dynamics of India 2022-23 report, the vacancy rate in 5,491 rural Community Health Centres (CHC) across 757 districts in India is 79.9%, with only 4,413 specialists available against a requirement of 21,964. Since 2014, the shortfall of specialists in CHCs has remained at around 17,500, despite the creation of additional postgraduate medical seats – 72,627 across 731 medical colleges.

Newly graduated specialists are often unwilling to work in remote and underserved areas due to inadequate facilities, including lack of equipment, decent staff quarters, schools for their children, and adequate peer medical support. If specialists were available at CHCs, patients from rural and tribal areas would not need to travel long distances to district headquarters hospitals or medical colleges.

> There needs to be greater alignment between medical education and public service

A CHC serves as a first referral unit for a population of about 1.6 lakh to 2 lakh and is expected to have 30 beds with five specialists – physician, surgeon, obstetrician, paediatrician, and anaesthetist. However, the majority of CHCs remain crippled due to a persistent shortage of specialists, a problem that has continued for many years.

Yet, States continue to construct more CHCs to utilise available central government funds, even though many of them function effectively as primary health centres. There are 5,491 CHCs across 785 districts – about seven CHCs per district – which is not a feasible model. With only 4,413 specialists available at present, just 882 CHCs can be fully operationalised, effectively leaving only one functional CHC per district in addition to the district hospital for specialised care.

Flawed budgetary focus

The central health Budget is largely focused on infrastructure, without matching allocations for drugs, diagnostics, ambulance services, emergency care, or salaries for temporary staff. If the goal is to improve people's health, it must prioritise operational outcomes rather than merely investing capital in building construction, leaving the rest to be managed by State budgets.

How do we manage better with what we have in hand? We need to put the brakes on overly enthusiastic declarations of new CHCs, which often serve populist political mileage rather than functional need.

Classify all PHCs and CHCs into normal, difficult, and most difficult areas based on defined criteria, as was done in Chhattisgarh under the Rural Medical Corps Scheme. The most difficult areas are those with persistently high staff vacancies over long periods. Introduce special incentives such as additional compensatory financial allowances, priority for postgraduate seats, staff quarters, and quality schooling facilities for children, among others.

Additional steps to take

Hereafter, all government-sponsored postgraduate seat allocations must be linked to existing vacancies in CHCs or district hospitals. Candidates willing to fill a specialist vacancy in a CHC should be allotted a seat in the corresponding speciality, with the assurance that upon completion of training, they will be posted there immediately.

Conversely, aspirant doctors must provide an undertaking to serve in the designated government facility first. Priority may be given to those who commit to a 10-year service bond in difficult-area CHCs, along with additional incentives under the National Health Mission. We must strictly follow an "all or none" principle in posting specialists – either all five specialists are placed in a CHC or none at all –avoiding piecemeal deployment or the dilution of services by spreading specialists too thinly.

Urgent construction of staff quarters and renovation of operation theatres, labour rooms, intensive care units, and 24-hour emergency units must be undertaken in such CHCs, which may number two or three per district. Similar undertakings and post graduate training can be awarded to nurses willing to serve in remote needy areas.

When adequate specialists are posted as a team at the sub-district or town level, the image of government hospitals improves in the public eye. The workload is better distributed, and optimal sharing reduces stress on doctors on duty. Interpersonal communication with patients also improves. This, in turn, enhances patient satisfaction and reduces conflicts between the public and doctors and other health staff.

We can no longer afford to see nearly 70,000 specialists graduating from 731 medical colleges without adequately filling the vacant posts in the public health system, which remains the only source of care for the poor and marginalised.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Congress's political moves

It is regrettable that the Congress party has degenerated into an untrustworthy political entity. It has shown no hesitation in shamelessly disowning the alliance that brought it to victory or jumping ship for the sake of power. Anyone who understands the pulse of Tamil Nadu politics knows this fact: if the Congress were to contest alone, its party workers would lose their security deposits. After winning by riding on the votes and the influence of the DMK, the Congress's tendency to forget alliance ethics overnight and defect to the opposing side is a threat to democracy itself.

S. Padmanabhan,
Kochi, Kerala

The Congress's move to support the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam is troubling as it will undermine the INDIA bloc alliance. Such a shift ignores the political understanding that held the alliance together during the Assembly elections and the general election in 2024. It also overlooks the larger picture for the 2029 general election. Strategic decisions must be guided by long-term coherence, not short-term numbers.

A.B. Eddy,
Chennai

A Congress spokesperson has argued that since the TVK defeated the DMK, and the Congress too lost 23 of 28 seats it contested, there is no betrayal in the Congress supporting the TVK for government formation. The arithmetic is right; the logic is inverted. Both the Congress and the DMK were routed by the same force: the TVK. The Congress survived largely on the strength of the DMK. That it now uses those five seats as a kingmaker lever to install the very party that destroyed its alliance is not a political pivot — it is political parricide. The voter who elected a Congress MLA, voted against the TVK. That verdict has been laundered into its opposite within 48 hours.

Gopalaswamy J.,
Chennai

The TVK's rise signals a public desire for political renewal, but its next steps will define its credibility. Seeking Congress support is pragmatic, yet an overreliance on legacy parties risks diluting its independent mandate. The future demands a careful balance — firm ideological clarity without rigid isolation. If the TVK can convert this moment into a model of transparent coalition-building and policy-driven governance, it may redefine regional politics. Otherwise, it risks becoming just another player in the same old power arithmetic.

Shahim Maindala,
Bantwal, Mangaluru

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

A new roadmap for independent cinema

Vani Tripathi Tikoo

Actor, Producer, and the Artistic Director of the International Film Festival of Delhi

The latest rule changes by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences are not merely procedural – they signal a philosophical shift in how global cinema is seen, validated, and circulated. By loosening the "one country, one film" submission rule for the International Feature category, and allowing festival-acclaimed films to qualify independently, the Academy Awards are attempting to dismantle one of the most enduring bottlenecks in world cinema. For India, this is not just an administrative tweak – it is a structural opening, especially for its vibrant but sidelined independent film ecosystem.

For decades, India's Oscar journey has been shaped as much by internal gatekeeping as by external perception. The country's official entry – decided by committees – has often sparked debate, with selections that leaned toward middle-of-the-road narratives rather than daring or politically nuanced cinema. This has meant that some of India's most globally resonant films never even entered the Oscar race.

No dearth of candidates

Consider *The Lunchbox*. Directed by Ritesh Batra, the film premiered at Cannes Critics' Week; garnered universal acclaim; and travelled widely across international festivals. Its delicate storytelling, anchored in loneliness and urban alienation, spoke a cinematic language that global audiences immediately embraced. Yet, it was not selected as India's official Oscar entry. Under the new rules, a film like *The Lunchbox* could have bypassed national selection and entered the Oscars directly.

Similarly, *Court* by Chaitanya Tamhane, which is a deeply political examination of India's judicial system, won the Orizzonti Award at Venice and multiple international honours. While it was India's official entry, it lacked the sustained campaign infrastructure to penetrate the Oscar shortlist. Under a system that values festival recognition more directly, such films gain not just eligibility but also legitimacy.

Or take *Masaan*, directed by Neeraj Ghaywan. Premiering in the 'Un Certain Regard' section at Cannes and winning two awards, *Masaan* bridged the spaces of the intimate and the universal with remarkable ease. Its exploration of caste, grief, and aspiration in small-town India resonated far beyond its geography. Yet, it never became India's Oscar entry. In the new framework, its festival success alone could have propelled it into the awards race.

Even more telling are films such as *Village Rockstars* by Rima Das. A deeply personal, almost handmade film set in rural Assam, it won the National Award and travelled internationally, embodying a kind of authenticity that the global film community increasingly values. While it was India's official submission, its lack of campaign backing limited its reach. A festival-driven qualification system could amplify such voices, allowing them to compete on artistic merit rather than industrial muscle.

> For Indian filmmakers, especially those outside the mainstream industry, the Oscars are no longer a distant, opaque institution mediated by national selection

Lack of representation

Indian independent cinema has long been globally visible but institutionally underrepresented. The new Oscar guidelines disrupt this pattern by shifting the axis of validation from national committees to international circuits. This is particularly significant in a country like India, where cinema operates across multiple languages, regions, and aesthetic traditions. The idea that a single film can "represent" such diversity has always been flawed. By allowing multiple entry points, the Academy is acknowledging that cinema is not a monolith but a mosaic. However, this expanded access also introduces new complexities. Festival success, while crucial, is not a guarantee of Oscar traction. The Academy's ecosystem still relies heavily on visibility, campaigning, and industry networks. Films such as *All We Imagine as Light* by Payal Kapadia demonstrate how crucial sustained global engagement is. Under the new rules, such films are better positioned, but they still require strategic backing to convert acclaim into nominations.

Yet, the broader implication of these changes lies in how they reshape cinematic aspiration. For Indian filmmakers, especially those outside the mainstream industry, the Oscars are no longer a distant, opaque institution mediated by national selection. They become a more accessible platform – one that rewards global dialogue over domestic endorsement. This could catalyse a shift in how films are conceived, produced, and circulated. One may see greater emphasis on international co-productions, festival strategies, and cross-cultural storytelling. At the same time, there is a risk of homogenisation – of films tailoring themselves to perceived "festival tastes" at the expense of local specificity.

But the history of cinema suggests otherwise. The most globally successful films are often those most deeply rooted in their own contexts. Bong Joon-ho's *Parasite* did not dilute its Korean identity to achieve global success. The lesson for Indian cinema is clear: authenticity travels.

The road ahead

Ultimately, the new Oscar guidelines acknowledge that cinema today is transnational – not because it erases borders, but because it speaks across them.

For Indian independent cinema, this is a moment of possibility. The challenge lies in building the ecosystems that can support this transition: better international distribution, and robust campaign infrastructures. If that happens, the impact could be profound. Not just in terms of awards, but in how Indian stories are positioned within the global cinematic imagination.

The rise of an apolitical polity

TVK's victory points to the importance of alternative modes of outreach

STATE OF PLAY

B. Kolappan
kolappan.b@thehindu.co.in

Even though Tamil Nadu's outgoing Chief Minister M. K. Stalin put on a brave face and said he would face both defeat and success with equanimity, his loss in the Kolathur constituency appears to have shaken him. As the leader of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), he campaigned across the State for his party, and had been confident that his own constituency was secure, having nurtured it like no other. He will go down in history as the fourth sitting Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu who has lost an election.

Constituencies represented by a Chief Minister typically attain VIP status by default. Kolathur, however, became Mr. Stalin's second home, as he made it a point to visit almost every week. The constituency saw the development of hospitals, schools, flyovers, playgrounds, and colleges, among other facilities.

Yet voters chose the candidate of the fledgling Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), V. S. Babu, a former DMK leader and district secretary. Observers point to a shift in voting patterns among certain communities in the constituency, including Christians and Scheduled Castes, some of whom appeared to favour actor C. Joseph Vijay's TVK.

Shift among Christians

This trend was not confined to Kolathur. In several constituencies across the State with a significant Christian population – traditionally seen as supportive of the DMK due to its strong anti-Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) stance – there appeared to be a shift in preferences. The decline in vote share for the DMK and its allies in districts such as Kanniyakumari, which has a substantial Christian population, suggests the alliance may have lost ground among these voters. In Killiyur, Congress candidate Rajesh Kumar, who had won by a margin of over 50,000 votes in 2021, saw his victory margin shrink to just over 1,000 votes this time. Other constituencies in the district witnessed a similar trend. A comparable pattern appeared in Kolathur, where some voters seemed to favour Mr. Vijay over Mr. Stalin, despite the Chief Minister's continued engagement with the community, including organising annual Christmas events and extending financial support to certain churches.

Some voters framed their preferences in identity terms, expressing a desire for greater representation in leadership.

Apolitical Gen-Z

Beyond Kolathur, the DMK appeared to be struggling to connect with sections of 'Generation Z' or Gen-Z, whose political engagement tends to be more fluid and less tied to established party structures. Historically, the Dravidian movement has drawn significant strength from student mobilisation. In contrast, campus politics today appears far more subdued. Student unions are absent in many colleges, and even where they exist, they are often largely apolitical in character. The proliferation of engineering and professional colleges, along with a shift away from the humanities, has further contributed to the weakening of political engagement among students. For many students, the primary focus is on securing employment through campus placements, leaving limited space for sustained political involvement. The DMK leadership appears to be continuing to rely on an older political idiom, rooted in the rhetoric of the 1950s and 1960s, and often centred on emotive appeals, which may have limited resonance in today's social media-driven campaign environment.

In contrast, Mr. Vijay's campaign suggests that electoral success can, at least in certain contexts, be achieved without a deeply entrenched organisational structure or continuous engagement through traditional media, large-scale conferences, or expansive campaign spending. His approach points to the growing importance of alternative modes of outreach, particularly those that connect more directly with younger and digitally engaged voters. In many constituencies, voters did not know the candidates of Mr. Vijay's party. They voted for him and his symbol, the 'Whistle'.

Mr. Vijay's victory has put an end to the bipolar politics of Tamil Nadu, hitherto dominated by the two Dravidian parties. The shift towards a three-cornered contest has created space for smaller parties as well as a party like the BJP, which has been making sustained efforts to establish a foothold. The TVK's emergence may realign Tamil Nadu's political equations more broadly.

TVK makes inroads into AIADMK's core voter base in T.N.

Historical floors show the DMK losing less of its core support and more of its floating votes

DATA POINT

Pon Vasanth B.A.
Sambavi Parthasarathy
Srinivasan Ramani

The Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), which sprung a surprise in the 2026 Assembly elections, has not only altered the bipolar nature of Tamil Nadu's politics for the first time since 1977, but has also raised questions over the future of the two Dravidian majors – the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK).

However, analysis of region-wise variations in the vote shares secured by the TVK, the DMK and the AIADMK in the 134 constituencies they directly faced each other showed that the electoral outcome has become an existential threat for the AIADMK, which seems to have lost its core vote bank to the TVK. In contrast, the DMK has largely retained its core vote bank.

In three of the five regions – Greater Chennai, central and south – the vote share secured by the AIADMK in the seats it contested is the lowest in 2026. For the DMK, the vote share secured in 2026 was its lowest ever only in the Greater Chennai region **(Table 1)**.

A closer analysis also showed that there was a strong negative correlation between the vote shares secured by the AIADMK and the TVK in almost all of these 134 constituencies **(Table 2)**. This means that wherever the AIADMK's vote share dropped, the TVK's vote share went up. This was more pronounced in the constituencies in the central and south regions **(Chart 1)**.

This negative correlation between the AIADMK and the TVK was robust across all regions, except the West, which had been a stronghold of the former in the past few decades.

In comparison, such a correlation was not observed between the TVK and the DMK, except in the Greater Chennai region where the TVK swept the polls by hurting both the Dravidian parties. In fact, in the north, central and west regions, both the DMK and the TVK had a positive correlation, which means wherever the TVK had good vote shares or lower ones, the DMK had the same as well.

Curiously, if the AIADMK had lost a chunk of structural or core support to the TVK, then the DMK should have emerged victorious overall, thanks to the split in the anti-incumbency votes. But that did not happen. The reason is visible in another set of data: the change in vote shares since 2021. **Table 3** shows the swing in those same 134 seats.

In most regions, the DMK lost a higher share of votes than the AIADMK – except in the west and the south. And overall, across these 134 seats, the DMK's vote share dropped by 13.9 percentage points against the AIADMK's 12.0.

This seeming contradiction where the AIADMK is hitting its lowest floors while the DMK is witnessing a larger overall swing compared to 2021, is best explained by the kinds of voters each party lost. The DMK shed a bigger pool of floating/swing voters to the TVK, either due to anti-incumbency or a clear preference for a new film-star-led party that promised change. These losses were broadly uniform across constituencies, which is why they show up as a large swing but do not correlate with the TVK's seat-by-seat strength. The AIADMK lost a smaller share of votes overall because it had a lower vote share than the DMK to begin with in 2021. But a larger fraction of what it lost was core support.

In a party system, where the AIADMK's political identity rests on it being the anti-DMK pole, the TVK's inroads into the "Two leaves" base poses a serious threat to the party founded by former Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran.

Breaching the AIADMK firewall

Only 134 constituencies in which the DMK, the AIADMK and the TVK directly contested against each other in 2026 were considered so that patterns measure transfers between these parties alone and controls for coalition effect

TABLE 1: Years in which the DMK and the AIADMK hit their lowest vote share in the constituencies where they directly contested against each other (*floor refers to the lowest vote share secured by the party)

Region	DMK's floor* year	DMK's voteshare in that year (%)	AIADMK's floor year	AIADMK's voteshare in that year (%)
Central	1977	29.08	2026	30.03
Greater Chennai	2026	30.8	2026	20.25
North	1991	26.93	1989	27.54
South	1977	18.14	2026	23.19
West	1977	20.39	1996	32.18
All regions	134	-0.75	-0.09	-13.9

TABLE 2: Correlation coefficients (-1 to +1) between parties' vote shares shows higher -ve values for TVK vs AIADMK

Region	Constituencies	TVK vs AIADMK	TVK vs DMK
Greater Chennai	22	-0.63	-0.32
North	23	-0.69	0.04
Central	26	-0.77	0.04
West	34	-0.58	-0.43
South	29	-0.73	0.02
All Regions	134	-0.75	-0.09

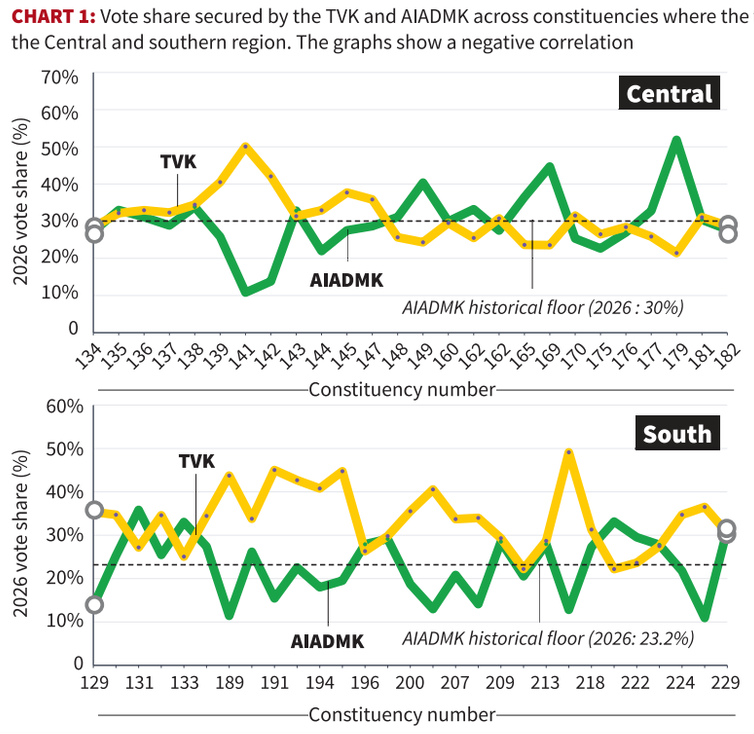
Wherever the AIADMK's vote shares fell, the TVK's rose

TABLE 3: The regionwise drop in vote share (in % points) of DMK and AIADMK between 2021 and 2026

Region	DMK	AIADMK
Greater Chennai	-14.9%	-9.7%
North	-19.3%	-12.3%
Central	-16.4%	-8.5%
West	-9.6%	-14.3%
South	-11.6%	-13.9%
All regions	-13.9%	-12.0%

Data sourced from ECI

CHART 1: Vote share secured by the TVK and AIADMK across constituencies where the three parties were in direct contest in the Central and southern region. The graphs show a negative correlation



Campaign fever: TVK flags spotted at an AIADMK rally in Namakkal district as part of its Statewide Makkalai Kappom Thamizhagathai Meetpom campaign in October 2025. LAKSHMI NARAYANAN E

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 7, 1976

Better coffee yields with honey bees

A special experiment conducted by the bee-keeping wing of the Khadi and Village Industries Board in collaboration with the Central Bee Research Institute, Poona, during the blossoming of the coffee plants in Yercaud last month has proved to be a success.

During the one-week period of the experiment when coffee plants were in full blossom it was found that the honey production doubled. In 12 bee-hives kept at selected places, it was found that the average yield from each box was 3 kg as against about 4 kg during normal times.

Special steps were taken to enclose a portion of the coffee plants completely secure from pollination by bees or other natural agents ensuring only self-pollination; in another section coffee plants were allowed to be pollinated by all natural agents including bees, and in the last section coffee plants were surrounded by bee-hives so as to ensure maximum pollination by bees.

The Coffee Research Department is also taking follow-up action to find out the quality and quantity of coffee seeds that would be available from each of these sections after about nine months.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 7, 1926

Plague's heavy toll in the Punjab

Simla, May 5: Plague has now assumed alarming proportions in the Punjab. During the week ending 10th April, there were no less than 7,236 cases and deaths stood at 5,379.

Practically every district in the Punjab has some area affected by plague with the exception of Simla, Kangra, Shahpur, Jhelum, Jhang, Multan and Muzaffergarb. The largest number of cases and deaths are reported from the Eastern districts.

Practically all the districts also report stray cases of small-pox. During the week, 365 cases of small pox occurred and 120 were deaths therefrom.

Balaspuri States are reported to be free from infection. The Health Department, Punjab is organising a campaign for meeting this situation.

From Page One

Suvendu's aide killed in Bengal post-poll attacks

Kolkata Police Commissioner Ajay Kumar Nand said action will be taken against police officers who were present at New Market during the incident but did not prevent it.

In a clash at the Nazat police station in Basirhat Police district, five police personnel, including two CAPF personnel, were injured. Fifteen persons have been arrested in connection with the incident.

The West Bengal BJP leadership, including Samik Bhattacharya and Mr. Adhikari, have urged party supporters to shun violence. Mr. Adhikari said BJP workers should not eye Trinamool party offices as illegal activities were conducted on those premises.

"I am not supporting any violence, but do not compare the situation with 2021 when the Trinamool won," Mr. Adhikari said. He said that in 2021, over 12,000 FIRs were filed and 57 persons were killed.

(With inputs from Sreeparna Chakrabarty)

Jockeying intensifies for CM's post in Kerala

The letter by "Concerned Citizens of Kerala" to Mr. Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, said reports that AICC general secretary K.C. Venugopal had staked a strong claim to the post despite not having contested in the Assembly election had "disturbed Congress workers and democratic minds" in Kerala.

The faction fighters also sought to draw a fine distinction between Mr. Venugopal's role as an "election manager" and Mr. Satheesan's "political leadership".

The letter also noted that "public sentiment in Kerala carried a moral force" and recalled how popular demand had forced the CPI(M) to reverse its decision to keep party veteran V.S. Achuthanandan out of the fray in the 2016 Assembly election. "People here instinctively resist attempts to deny political recognition to those who earn it through struggle and public acceptance," the faction warned.

Meanwhile, disparate groups supporting Mr. Satheesan, Mr. Venugopal and senior leader Ramesh Chennithala upped the ante in what appeared to be a three-way leadership war in the party.

Nicobar project ratified without 50% quorum

In the supplementary affidavit filed by an official of the Tribal Welfare Department, the A&NI administration has argued that due process was followed under the FRA to hold special gram sabhas, with "prior notice and proper quorum", which passed resolutions on forest rights of the people and consented to the diversion of forest land for the project. The administration also justified its prior notice of one day for such meetings .

"It is irrelevant to say that tribal communities were excluded from the FRA process," the administration said, because their "adequate representation" had been ensured in the Sub-Divisional Level Committee (SDLC), which had accepted the gram sabha resolution and recommended for clearance under the FRA.

Responding to this, the petitioner, in an affidavit has further made the point that regardless of the quorum at these gram sabhas, the Nicobarese and Shompen tribal communities are not covered under the gram sabha structure and are represented through the Tribal Council instead, which should have been the appropriate body to consult with and seek consent from. The petitioner also pointed out that dozens of names of attendees appeared in all three gram sabha meetings and in some cases, names were found repeated in the list of attendees of the same gram sabha as well.

If Iran agrees to deal, war could end: Trump

In a separate post on Wednesday, Mr. Trump said the war could come to an end and the strait would be opened for all if Iran accepted a deal.

"Assuming Iran agrees to give what has been agreed to, which is, perhaps, a big assumption, the Epic Fury will be at an end, and the highly effective Blockade will allow the Hormuz Strait to be OPEN TO ALL, including Iran," Mr. Trump said. "If they don't agree, the bombing starts, and it will be, sadly, at a much higher level and intensity than it was before," he added.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said on Wednesday transit through the strait would become safe as the security situation in the Persian Gulf improves "with the aggressor's threats neutralised".

Iran's state media reported on Wednesday that the country had officially launched a new mechanism to govern maritime traffic through the strait. "Under the newly implemented system, all vessels intending to transit the Strait will receive an email from the official address info@PGSA.ir outlining the rules and regulations for passage," according to a report by Press TV.

Ships are required to obtain a transit permit before crossing the strait, it said.

CJI's role in CEC, EC appointments was temporary, pending new law: SC

Court's observation was in response to pleas challenging a 2023 Act, which replaced the CJI with a Union Minister on the selection panel; petitioners argue this law overrides a Constitution Bench judgment which sought a panel of PM, LoP, CJI

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

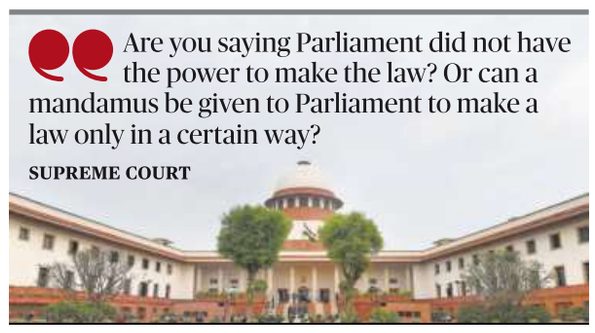
The Supreme Court on Wednesday said the Chief Justice of India's involvement in the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs) was only meant to last until Parliament came up with a law.

The court's observation was in response to multiple petitions challenging the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service, and Term of Office) Act of 2023.

The petitioners, who include the Association for Democratic Reforms and activist Jaya Thakur, said the 2023 law clothed the political executive of the day with a dominant, if not "exclusive", control over the appointment of the CEC and ECs.

The law was introduced in December 2023, ostensibly to countermand a Constitution Bench judgment in March the same year.

> Are you saying Parliament did not have the power to make the law? Or can a mandamus be given to Parliament to make a law only in a certain way?
>
> SUPREME COURT



This judgment had declared that CEC and EC appointments should be made on the recommendation of a committee of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition of the Lok Sabha (LoP) or the leader of the largest Opposition party in the Lok Sabha, and the Chief Justice of India (CJI).

The court had ordered that its judgment would remain operative till "Parliament makes a law in consonance with Article 324(2) of the Constitution".

Consequently, the government brought the 2023 Act, replacing the CJI with a Union Cabinet Minister in the committee. The current CEC, Gyanesh Kumar, was the first to be appointed to the office under the new law.

'Prime Minister's man'

On Wednesday, senior advocate Vijay Hansaria, appearing for the petitioners, said the Constitution framers and the Supreme Court itself had never intended the CEC to be the "Prime Minister's baby or the Prime Minister's man".

Mr. Hansaria submitted that both the Constitution framers and the Supreme Court had warned against leaving the appointment of Election Commissioners exclusively in the hands of the executive.

He referred to the Supreme Court's own observations in the March 2023 Constitution Bench judgment (*Anoop Baranwal v. Union of India*) that the "fierce independence, neutrality and honesty" envisaged in the institution of the Election Commission required an end to government monopoly and "exclusive control" over appointments to the highest poll body.

Prior to the judgment, the CEC and ECs were appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister. The judgment had brought the appointment process on par with that of the CBI Director.

However, Justice Datta highlighted that even the Supreme Court had only intended the judgment to be operative till Parliament passed a law.

"Are you saying Parliament did not have the power to make the law? Or can a mandamus be given to Parliament to make a law only in a certain way?" Justice Datta asked.

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, also for the petitioners, said their case was not just about the replacement of the CJI with a Cabinet Minister in the committee. It was also about the constitutionality of an Act which had effectively reverted the control over the appointment of CEC and ECs to the Executive.

"The point is Election Commission appointments cannot be under the control of the executive," he submitted.

Mr. Sankaranarayan said the Anoop Baranwal judgment had addressed a "legislative vacuum". Before March 2023, appointments of the CEC and ECs were made by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister. The "arrangement" had ensured that the power of appointment rested with the Political Executive.

"This mechanism ought to have stopped in the 1950s, but whichever parties came to power found the arrangement convenient," Mr. Sankaranarayanan said.

Arguments would continue on Thursday.

CBI conducts searches in 'cyberslavery' case; 1 held

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has conducted searches at nine locations across four States and arrested one accused on the charge of being part of a network trafficking Indian nationals for "cyberslavery" in South-east Asian countries, primarily Myanmar and Cambodia.

The agency searched the premises of suspects in Delhi, Mumbai, Uttarakhand's Kashipur, and Lucknow, Gonda and Saharanpur in Uttar Pradesh.

"One individual has been arrested in Lucknow for his alleged role in facilitating the trafficking operations. Preliminary findings suggest that agents receive payments in exchange for supplying Indian nationals," the CBI said.

The organised network sent job seekers to these countries on the pretext of lucrative opportunities. "These facilities have been described as hubs of 'cyberslavery', where trafficked individuals are forced to participate in various forms of cyber-enabled fraud," the CBI said.

Rubio may visit India for talks, Quad Foreign Ministers meet in May end

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

In a visit expected to shore up India-U.S. ties, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio is set to travel to India for bilateral talks and to attend the Australia-India-Japan-U.S. Quad Foreign Minister's Meeting (FMM).

U.S. Ambassador to India Sergio Gor said that he hoped to welcome Mr. Rubio to India "soon". Sources told *The Hindu* Mr. Rubio is expected to be in Delhi from May 24 to 26, his first since taking over as U.S. Secretary of State in January 2025.

"The United States deeply values our growing partnership with India, and we are excited to build even stronger ties that will benefit both our nations and the world," Mr. Gor, who is also U.S. President Donald Trump's Special envoy for South and Central Asia, said in a post. "See you soon, Mr. Secretary!" he added.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio during his visit to Washington in February. AP

In a separate post after meeting with Delhi Lieutenant-Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu, Mr. Gor announced that several U.S. Governors would visit India in the months ahead.

Mr. Rubio's visit will include a public reception in Delhi on May 24 to celebrate 250 years of the United States Declaration of Independence. He will hold talks with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, and call on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in discussions that are expected to set the course for India-U.S. ties after several ups and downs over tariffs and sanctions, as well as the impact of the war in West Asia.

On May 26, Mr. Rubio and Mr. Jaishankar will be joined by Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong and Japan's Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi for the Quad FMM. Mr. Motegi and Ms. Wong have both visited Delhi in the past few months, and are expected to travel to India just for the Quad talks. All eyes will be on whether the Quad meet agrees on a date for the Summit, which the government hopes to hold later this year, after trying unsuccessfully to host it for the past two years. In particular, a visit to India by Mr. Trump, who faces mid-term elections in November, will be key to scheduling the Summit.

Major trade deal

Indian and U.S. officials are also expected to review the progress in the Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) during Mr. Rubio's visit. Although an interim agreement was announced by Mr. Trump and Mr. Modi in February this year, it has missed several finalisation deadlines, and remains unfinished due to uncertainty over the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to strike down Mr. Trump's "liberation day tariffs".

The remains of a scooter that local people claim caught fire after a loud sound outside the BSF headquarters in Jalandhar. PTI

Low-intensity blasts reported near BSF, Army areas in Punjab

Vikas Vasudeva
CHANDIGARH

Two low-intensity explosions within a span of a few hours were reported near military areas in Amritsar and Jalandhar in Punjab on Tuesday.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann blamed the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) over what he termed "small blasts", while State police chief Gaurav Yadav attributed them to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

A low-intensity explosion was reported from the boundary wall of the Army cantonment on Khasa Road in Amritsar around 11 p.m. on Tuesday. Earlier, around 8 p.m. in Jalandhar, a scooter parked near the headquarters of the Border Security Force's Punjab Frontier caught fire. Investigation is being carried out by the police in coordination with the Army.

BSF recovers suspected Pak. boat off Gujarat coast

The Hindu Bureau
AHMEDABAD

An unclaimed boat suspected to be of Pakistani origin was found abandoned in a creek area along the Gujarat coast in Kutch district on Wednesday, officials said.

BSF personnel recovered fishing equipment from the vessel, but no suspicious materials were found. The boat was located near the India-Pakistan maritime boundary in the Arabian Sea.

Investigations are under way to determine the origin of the vessel.

Officials noted that Indian fishermen are prohibited from entering the creek, while Pakistani fishermen have, on occasion, crossed into Indian waters to fish.

Vietnam major pillar of India's Act East Policy, says Modi as defence, rare-earth ties renewed

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

India's relation with Vietnam is a partnership that does not aim at any other country in the Indo-Pacific region, said senior officials on Wednesday.

The remarks came soon after India welcomed General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam's Central Committee To Lam, who is also the current Vietnamese President.

During a bilateral discussion at Hyderabad House between To Lam and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the two sides elevated the bilateral relation to the level of "enhanced comprehensive strategic partnership" and signed at least 13 documents, including one on cooperation in critical minerals.

"Vietnam is a major pillar of India's Act East Policy and Vision MAHASAGAR. We have a common outlook in the field of Indo-Pacific. With our strengthening ties in the field of defence and security, we are helping rule of law, peace, stability and prosperity. India will expand ties with ASEAN through its relation with Vietnam," said Mr. Modi, welcoming Mr. Lam.

Key partners: Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets Vietnamese President To Lam in New Delhi. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Mr. Modi said India-Vietnam trade has touched $16 billion and would touch $25 billion by 2030.

Recalls Nehru's visit

Delivering a speech at the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) after being hosted at Hyderabad House by Mr. Modi, Mr. Lam referred to India's support to Vietnam's liberation and said, "We will never forget that Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was the first foreign leader to visit Vietnam in 1954, just one week after the liberation of Hanoi."

In a joint statement, the two sides welcomed the steady progress in the implementation of the defence Lines of Credit (LoC) extended by India to Vietnam, acknowledging that the LoC helped "Vietnam's defence capabilities" and advanced bilateral defence cooperation.

The Ministry of Public Security in Vietnam also firmed up plans to enhance work with the National Security Council Secretariat of India.

The visiting side also sealed thirteen documents with India, including an MoU between the Reserve Bank of India and the State Bank of Vietnam on cooperation in the area of Payment Systems and innovation in digital payments as well as an MoU on radioactive and rare earth minerals.

Earlier in the day, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held a bilateral meeting with Vietnam's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence, Phan Van Giang in New Delhi reaffirming the strong momentum in India-Vietnam defence relations.

The discussions focused on expanding cooperation in maritime security; defence industry collaboration; and joint research. The two sides also stressed the need to enhance regular military interactions

First BJP govt. in West Bengal will be sworn in on Saturday

BJP Legislature Party meeting will be held tomorrow; Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Minister Amit Shah and several Chief Ministers of NDA-ruled States will be present at the event; Sovandeb Chattopadhyay likely to be the Opposition leader

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

The Chief Minister and a few members of the Council of Ministers of the first Bharatiya Janata Party government in West Bengal will be sworn in on Saturday.

The day is considered auspicious in the Bengali calendar. *Pachise Baishak* (25th day of the Bengali month of Baishak) is celebrated across the State, as it marks the birth anniversary of Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore.

West Bengal BJP president Samik Bhattacharya told presspersons that a meeting of BJP MLAs-elect will be held on Friday. The BJP government will be sworn in the next day, he said.

"The meeting of BJP legislators-elect will be held at 4 p.m. on May 8. The new BJP government will take oath at 10 a.m. on May 9 at Brigade Parade Ground," Mr. Bhattacharya announced on Wednesday.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and several Chief Ministers from BJP and National Democratic Alliance-ruled States are expected to be present during the ceremony. Mr. Bhattacharya also visited the State Secretariat, Nabanna, and discussed arrangements for the swearing-in with the Chief Secretary.

Setting up: Preparation under way at the Brigade Parade Ground in Kolkata for the oath-taking ceremony of the new West Bengal Ministry. ANI

Suvendu says he will follow the directions of BJP leadership; party to say which of his seats to retain

With the BJP securing 207 of the 293 Assembly seats that went to the polls, all eyes are on who will be sworn in as the next Chief Minister of the State.

BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari, who defeated Trinamool Congress chairperson Mamata Banerjee in Bhabanipur, described himself as a "disciplined" worker of the party.

He said he would follow the directions of the party leadership. Mr. Adhikari added the party would take a call on which of the two seats he won – Bhabanipur and Nandigram – he would retain.

Alongside speculation over the post of the Chief Minister, there are talks in the party on ministerial berths. Senior BJP leader Dilip Ghosh, former Rajya Sabha member Swapan Dasgupta, Siliguri MLA Sankar Ghosh, prominent woman face Agnimitra Pal, and the party's seniormost leader, Tapas Roy, are among the top contenders.

Meanwhile, newly elected Trinamool Congress members held a meeting at party supremo Mamata Banerjee's residence, with senior-most party leader Sovandeb Chattopadhyay likely to be appointed the Leader of the Opposition.

During the day, West Bengal Chief Electoral Officer Manoj Kumar Agarwal met Governor R.N. Ravi at the Lok Bhavan to complete the statutory formalities of handing over the Gazette notification containing names of elected members of the new Assembly.

On security deployment

In a separate development, additional police deployment and area security arrangements outside the residences of Mamata Banerjee and Abhishek Banerjee at Harish Chatterjee Street and Harish Mukherjee Road, respectively, were withdrawn following a review, though their existing security categorisation remains unchanged.

Senior officials of the Kolkata Police and the West Bengal police said that both Ms. Banerjee and Mr. Banerjee would continue to get police protection.

"In accordance with the 'Yellow Book' protocol, the former Chief Minister will be accorded Z-Plus category security," West Bengal Director-General of Police Siddh Nath Gupta said.

Voices of dissent emerge in Trinamool as leaders blame IPAC, ticket choices

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

In the wake of defeat in the Assembly election, voices of dissent have surfaced within the Trinamool Congress, with some leaders blaming political consultancy firm Indian Political Action Committee and the party's functioning for the electoral setback.

Trinamool's outgoing Rajganj MLA Khageswar Roy blamed the IPAC for the party's defeat. "We had to go according to the IPAC's instructions. The IPAC played a major role in who got ticket in the election. The party and the IPAC together caused this massive defeat," Mr. Roy said.

Athlete Swapna Barman had replaced Mr. Roy as the Trinamool candidate from Rajganj, though he won in 2021. He said that Ms. Barman's lack of political experience led to her loss from a seat where the Trinamool had won four times in the past.

He said no local leaders were consulted by the party or the IPAC before changing candidates, which led to the defeat.

Former Trinamool MLA and district president Sourav Chakraborty expressed frustration regarding the party's performance and internal strategy after the poll setback.

Big change: Security has been scaled down at outgoing Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's residence in Kolkata. PTI

"This is bad candidate selection. Everyone loves and trusts *Didi* [Trinamool chairperson Mamata Banerjee]. New people were brought in by the IPAC," Mr. Chakraborty said. He also added that the party needs to rethink its strategy and relationship with the IPAC for some real change.

Minister quits party

Another outgoing Trinamool MLA and Minister of State for Sports and Youth Affairs, former Indian cricketer Manoj Tiwary, quit the party soon after its loss alleging corruption within the ranks. "*Paap baap keo chare na* [Sins do not spare even the father]," Mr. Tiwary posted on social media.

"I faced multiple obstacles at every step while trying to do my work in the last five years... [former Sports Minister] Aroop Biswas did not let me work; they brought me into politics to use me," Mr. Tiwary said in a video message.

He also alleged that he was coerced into joining the party and fighting the 2021 election as a Trinamool candidate.

Famous Bengali singer Kabir Suman, also a former Trinamool MP, told the local media that he was not a fan of the party and that he was coerced into contesting on their ticket in the past.

Cong. steps up attack on BJP over 'vote theft', 'electoral engineering'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday alleged that a significant number of BJP MPs in the Lok Sabha had won their seats through vote *chori* (theft). The ruling party would struggle to cross even 140 seats if the elections were held fairly today, he said.

In a post on X in Hindi, he said that "every sixth" BJP MP among its 240 Lok Sabha members had secured victory through electoral manipulation.

Rahul Gandhi

"They are not hard to identify – should we, in the BJP's own parlance, label them '*ghuspethiya*' [infiltrator]? And what of Haryana? There, the entire government itself is '*ghuspethiya*'. The very institutions they keep in their pockets – the ones they manipulate to distort voter lists and the electoral process – are themselves 'remote-controlled'," Mr. Gandhi said. "Their real fear is the truth. For, if fair elections were held, they would not be able to win even 140 seats today," he added.

Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera sharpened the attack, accusing the BJP of "systematic electoral engineering". He said electoral rolls were being "deliberately manipulated" and democratic institutions "compromised" to produce favourable outcomes, particularly in West Bengal and Assam, which he termed "manufactured verdicts".

"*Abki baar loktantra ka antim sanskar* [This time, final rites of the democracy]," Mr. Khera said, alleging that democratic processes had been hollowed out. Citing seats where deletions under the special intensive revision (SIR) were higher than the margin of victories, he called for judicial intervention.

Himanta resigns as CM of Assam; swearing-in likely after Monday

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday submitted his resignation to Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya, paving the way for the formation of a new government.

The Governor accepted Mr. Sarma's request to dissolve the 15th Assam Legislative Assembly. He asked him to continue as the caretaker Chief Minister till the oath-taking ceremony.

Mr. Sarma told presspersons that the new Ministry would be sworn-in after May 11, by when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Legislature Party leader would be elected.

Formal process: Assam Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya with outgoing Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday. PTI

On Tuesday, the BJP Parliamentary Board appointed Union Minister J.P. Nadda the central observer and Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini the co-observer for the election of the Assam BJP Legislature Party leader.

"Following the election of the leader, we will hold an NDA (National Democratic Alliance) meeting for a proposal to support the BJPLP leader," Mr. Sarma said. He said the meeting would be held on or before May 11. "We will get to know the date from Nadda *ji*'s office by tomorrow," he added.

A BJP spokesperson said Prime Minister Narendra Modi was likely to attend the oath-taking ceremony.

No word on Nishant's inclusion ahead of Cabinet expansion

Amarnath Tewary
PATNA

Ahead of the Cabinet expansion of the Samrat Choudhary-led National Democratic Alliance government in Bihar on Thursday, Patna witnessed intense political activities. There was speculation that Nishant Kumar, son of former Chief Minister and JD(U) president Nitish Kumar, could be inducted into the new Cabinet.

Senior JD(U) leaders held several meetings in Patna on Wednesday, including at the residence of the party's national working president, Sanjay Jha, leading to speculation over the possible political debut of Mr. Nishant. Later, the leaders also met Mr. Nitish.

The Cabinet expansion event scheduled to be held on Thursday at Gandhi Maidan here is expected to be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP president Nitin Nabin and other senior NDA leaders. However, no official confirmation has come out yet on Mr. Nishant's inclusion.

JD(U) leaders hold series of meetings in Patna; many call for induction of Nitish Kunar's son

Second leg of yatra

Mr. Nishant is currently on the *Sadbhav Yatra* across the State. He started the campaign from Champaran district on May 3 and will begin the second leg of his yatra from Vaishali on Thursday.

He had earlier indicated that he wanted to strengthen the party organisation and showed reluctance to join the Cabinet. However, speculation remains strong. "If Nishant joins the Cabinet, it will be like wish fulfilment for all party leaders and workers. We want him to lead us," said State JD (U) president Umesh Kushwaha.

Opposition Benches in Rajya Sabha to see many changes after poll results

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

The sweeping changes in the Tamil Nadu, Kerala and West Bengal State Assemblies as a result of the recent elections are also set to alter the composition of the Opposition benches in the Rajya Sabha, with the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam likely to debut in the Upper House in the next round of polls expected in mid-June.

If AIADMK MP C. Ve. Shanmugam, who won from the Mailam Assemhly constituency, resigns his Rajya Sabha seat, then TVK could enter Parliament earlier than anticipated.

He told *The Hindu* that he will take a decision on the matter in the next couple of days. If he choses to resign from the House, then the election for his seat could be held along with 22 other seats from eight States that are due to go to the polls in June. Considering the TVK's strength in Assembly, it should be able to win the seat.

The biggest setback will be for the Left parties. In April 2027, three Kerala MPs are retiring: the IUML's Abdul Wahab, and the CPI(M)'s John Brittas and V. Sivadasan. The Left Democratic Front's collective strength of 35 seats in the Kerala Assembly is one short of the required number to elect a Rajya Sabha MP. In April 2028, their strength in the Upper House is set to dip further when another three Kerala seats go to the polls. Again, the Left is unlikely to have the numbers to get any of its candidates elected. CPI MP P.P. Suneer, who is scheduled to retire in 2030, will then be the last remaining Left MP in the Upper House.

Poll impact: Between the two rounds of Rajya Sabha elections this year, the Congress will pick up three extra berths. ANI

Impact on DMK

The DMK benches will feel the impact in June 2028 when six MPs from Tamil Nadu are set to retire. Of these, three are from the DMK, two from the AIADMK, and one from the Congress. Considering the Assembly elected on May 4, and the subsequent Congress pledge to support the TVK, the DMK is likely to return only one MP to the Rajya Sabha.

For the Trinamool Congress, the first hit will be slightly delayed, coming in August 2029, when the next round of Rajya Sabha elections is held for West Bengal. Six members from the State, five from the Trinamool and one from the BJP, are set to retire, including the Trinamool's Rajya Sabha leader Derek O'Brien. Based on its present strength in the State Assembly, the Trinamool will only be able to get one member elected to the Upper House.

The next round of attrition from the Trinamool's benches is expected in April 2030, when four of its MPs will retire, reducing its strength to six until the next round of Assembly polls in the State.

Between the two rounds of Rajya Sabha elections this year, the Congress will pick up three extra berths.

By the November, the Congress's tally will go up from 30 to 33. The Congress will also increase its strength at the cost of the Left members in the Rajya Sabha in April 2027 and 2028.

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF RAJASTHAN
nirf 87 RANK 27 RANK
Category-I University
QS ASIA 2026
A++ NAAC

CONTRACTUAL POSITIONS

1. Project Manager*-1
2. Medical Officer (Male & Female) -1 each
3. Assistant Professor for ODL Pragammes -3
4. Faculty for DACE Programme -1

For more details, visit: www.curaj.ac.in
*Till the completion of the Project.
Registrar

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Jorawar Singh Gate, Amer Road, Jaipur-302002 (Rajasthan)
Website: www.nia.nic.in

VACANCY NOTIFICATION NO. 1/2026

Online Applications are invited for the following Posts for **NIA, Panchkula:** Professor (14 Posts), Associate Professor (14 Posts), Assistant Professor (6 Posts), all in different Subjects, Medical Officer (1 Post), Deputy Director (Admn. & Fin.) (1 Post), Accountant (1 Post), Nursing Officer (1 Post) & Librarian (1 Post);
And for the following Posts for **NIA, Jaipur:** Assistant Professor (5 Posts), Panchakarma Vaidya (1 Post), Radiologist (1 Post), Junior Translation Officer (1 Post), Accountant (1 Post) and Pharmacist (1 Post).
All Details like Subjects, Reservations etc. are available in the Website of the Institute: **www.nia.nic.in.**
Applications are to be filled Online only in the Website of the Institute. The Date of Starting of Online Filling of Applications is 11-5-2026. The Closing Date for Online Filling of Application is 20-6-2026. The Institute reserves the right to increase or decrease the number of vacancies, to withdraw the vacancy of any or all Posts and to reject any or all applications without assigning any reason, whatsoever.
JP SHARMA
Date: 5-5-2026
JOINT DIRECTOR (ADMN.)

INBRIEF

India, Algeria hold first joint defence commission meet

India and Algeria held their inaugural Joint Commission meeting in New Delhi on Tuesday, marking a significant step forward in bilateral defence ties. According to the Defence Ministry, the discussions focused on enhancing cooperation in key areas such as training, joint military exercises, medical collaboration, and defence industry engagement. Both sides signed the Rules of Procedure to oversee the implementation of India-Algeria defence cooperation. The meeting was co-chaired by Joint Secretary (International Cooperation) Amitabh Prasad and Algeria's Chief of Staff of the Naval Forces, Major General Kaid Nour Eddine.

CBI files chargesheet in builder-bank nexus case

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has filed a chargesheet against three companies, their directors, some officials of the Bank of India, ICICI Bank and UCO Bank, and proxy homebuyers in an alleged builder-bank nexus case. The agency alleged a conspiracy by public servants and other private persons to induce homebuyers and investors through false assurances and fraudulent representations. "It was further revealed during investigation that the accused public servants abused their official position to facilitate the illegal acts of the builder in violation of established norms and procedures...," it said.

Overall crime rate drops 6%; cybercrime up by 17%: NCRB

Deaths due to drug overdose saw a 50% increase in 2024 from the previous year's figures; T.N. records the most fatalities; 5,194 cases of offences 'against the state' registered, a rise of over 6%

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The overall crime rate in India declined in 2024 from the 2023 figure, but there was an increase of over 17% in cybercrime cases, show the Crime in India, 2024 report released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) on Wednesday.

A total of 1,01,928 cybercrime cases were registered in 2024 over 86,420 such cases in the previous year.

"During 2024, 72.6% of cybercrime cases registered were for the motive of fraud (73,987 out of 1,01,928 cases) followed by sexual exploitation with 3.1% (3,190 cases) and extortion with 2.5% (2,536 cases)," the report said.

The NCRB recorded 58.86 lakh cognisable crimes across the country in 2024, marking a 6% decline from the previous year's figure. Of these, 35.44 lakh cases were registered under the Indian Penal Code and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and 23.41 lakh cases under special and local laws. There were 5,194 cases of offences "against the state" registered in 2024 as against 4,873 in 2023, showing a rise of 6.6%.

"Out of 5,194 cases, 4,395 (84.6%) cases were registered under The Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, followed by 649 (12.5%) cases under The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act," the report said.

Crime against SC/ST

The report revealed that a total of 55,698 cases were registered for crimes against Scheduled Castes (SCs), showing a decrease of 3.6% over the 2023 figure of 57,789 cases. Crimes against Scheduled Tribes showed a sharp decline of 23.1%, dropping to 9,966 cases from 12,960 in 2023.

The NCRB released the Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India (ADSI), 2024 report according to which 1,70,746 suicides were recorded in 2024. Those associated with the agriculture sector, the unemployed, and daily wage workers accounted for a substantial share of suicidal deaths.

A total of 10,546 persons involved in the farming sector (consisting of 4,633 farmers/cultivators and 5,913 agricultural labourers) died by suicide in 2024, accounting for 6.2%.

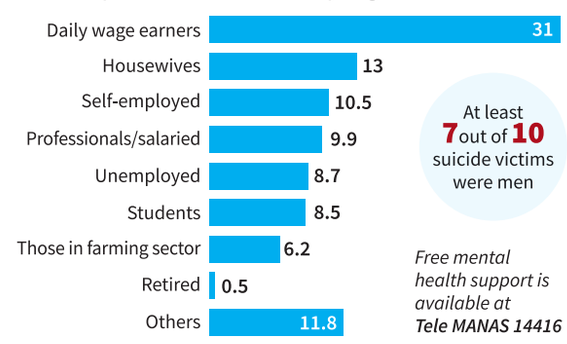
Out of 4,633 farmer/cultivator suicides, a total of 4,481 were by men and 152 by women, the report said. Around 31% of the total suicides were reported among the daily wagers, the report said. The number of unemployed people who died by suicide was 14,778 while the number of students and homemakers who ended their lives stood at 14,488 and 22,113, respectively.

Deaths due to drug overdose saw a 50% increase in 2024 from the previous year's figure. The report stated that 978 people died due to drug overdose in 2024, up from 650 deaths in 2023.

Tamil Nadu reported 313 deaths, the highest number of drug overdose deaths, followed by Punjab with 106, Madhya Pradesh 90, Rajasthan 69 and Mizoram 65, according to the NCRB data.

Grim numbers

As many as 1,70,746 persons died by suicide in 2024, according to figures from the National Crime Records Bureau. A look at the percentage distribution according to profession shows that nearly a third of them were daily wage earners



Ex-Prasar Bharati CEO Vempati named CBFC Chairperson

Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

Shashi Shekhar Vempati

Former Prasar Bharati CEO Shashi Shekhar Vempati has been appointed Chairperson of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). He replaces Prasoon Joshi, who has been named the Prasar Bharati Chairman.

Mr. Joshi, a screenwriter and lyricist, who has also worked in advertising, had been helming the CBFC since 2017, before his appointment to the public broadcaster on May 2.

Mr. Vempati had been Prasar Bharati CEO from 2017 to 2022, following which he served in various capacities at the University Grants Commission, television ratings agency BARC, and the Department of Science and Technology. More recently, he has been running AI4India, a forum that has held discussions on fostering a domestic AI ecosystem. He is also on the Board of BharatGen, an IIT Bombay-incubated initiative that is working on Indic language-focused AI models.

Censorship expansion

Mr. Joshi's tenure at the CBFC was characterised by a digitisation effort that culminated in the e-Cinepramaan system, used by censor board officials to process applications and hand out certificates. While he rarely discussed his role at the CBFC, film censorship expanded in key areas, such as mention of political personalities and scrutiny of religious themes in cinema. Hundreds of hours of footage were impacted by censorship from 2018 to 2022, a period during which cut lists were readily available. The CBFC shut off ready access to cut lists last year.

The Board faced court challenges in this period from the producers of Vijay-starrer *Jana Nayagan* and BJP MP Kangana Ranaut-starrer *Emergency*, with both accusing the CBFC of illegally withholding certificates even after examining committees had approved those films.

Centre mandates local committees to oversee and govern schools

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In a move to decentralise school governance and align with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the Ministry of Education has issued comprehensive new guidelines mandating the formation of school management committees (SMCs), and granting them financial and operational powers to oversee and govern schools.

Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan during the launch of school management committee guidelines in New Delhi on Wednesday. ANI

The guidelines, which supersede all previous instructions under schemes such as the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan and the Right to Education Act, were launched by Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan on Wednesday.

They require every school across the country – including secondary institutions up to Class 12 – to constitute an SMC within one month of the start of the academic year. "The SMC will replace the existing School Management Development Committees (SMDC) to create a unified, streamlined approach to school leadership," the guidelines said.

The new framework emphasises that education is a "shared responsibility". To ensure grassroots involvement, 75% of an SMC's members must be parents or guardians and 50% must be women. The remaining 25% will include elected local officials, teachers, alumni, and local experts such as Anganwadi workers, ASHA workers, and academicis.

"Furthermore, proportionate representation must be given to Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups, including SC, ST, OBC, and Children with Special Needs," the guidelines state.

The SMC is not just an advisory body but holds significant financial and operational power. "Committees are authorised to execute all school civil works costing up to ₹30 lakh. For projects exceeding this amount, SMCs will participate in the public tendering process (per CPWD/PWD manuals) to ensure quality and transparency," the guidelines said. The SMC will be responsible for reviewing the school budget, preventing financial irregularities, and maintaining accurate records of receipts and expenditures. They must lead drives to bring out-of-school children back into the mainstream and ensure the distribution of uniforms, textbooks, and scholarships.

India to host first Big Cat Summit in June; 95 countries set to participate

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

The inaugural International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) Summit, to be held here from June 1 to 3, is expected to adopt the first-ever global declaration on big cat conservation. Titled the 'Delhi Declaration', it will articulate shared priorities, strengthen transboundary cooperation, and promote a landscape-based approach for conserving big cats and their habitats.

Representatives from 95 countries are expected to participate, the Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate Change said on Wednesday.

The IBCA is an association of countries that host, or have itinerant populations of at least one of the seven 'big cats' – lions, tigers, leopards, snow leopards, cheetahs, jaguars, and pumas – and are committed to the conservation of these animals.

Call for action: The summit will be guided by the theme 'Save big cats, save humanity, save ecosystem'. K.R. DEEPAK

Collective action

There are 24 member countries, three observer countries, and several other 'range' countries in the alliance. Member countries are expected to coordinate action through programmes and activities aimed at improving the state of habitats, prey, and big cats, including big cat protection and conservation, innovation, research, development, and capacity building. They also share relevant information about big cat protection and conservation programmes.

Summit participants are likely to include heads of State/Government of member and observer countries, Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav said on Wednesday at an event to launch the summit website and unveil its logo. The summit will be guided by the theme 'Save big cats, save humanity, save ecosystem', and will bring together over 400 conservationists, policymakers, scientists, multilateral agencies, financial institutions, corporate leaders, and community representatives from across the globe.

Launched in 2023

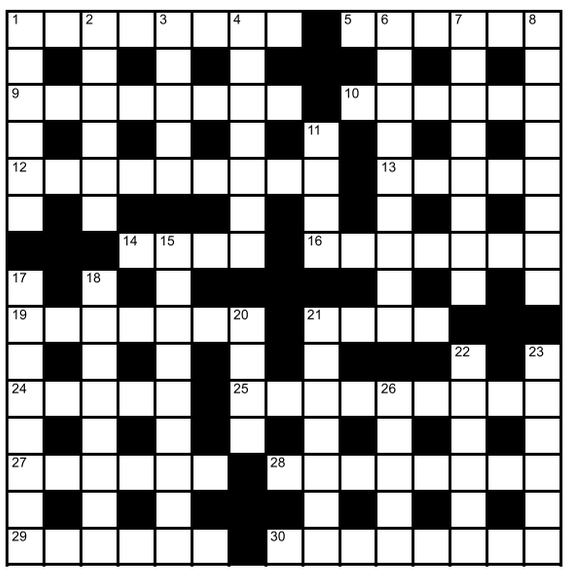
The IBCA, piloted and conceived by India, was officially launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2023. The alliance, Mr. Yadav said, reflects India's belief that conservation challenges must be addressed "collectively" through cooperation, knowledge sharing, and mutual support.

TH CROSSWORD + 14787

(set by KrisKross)

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

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 A little mate who's sick (8)
5 A designated driver is against drink? Makes sense! (4,2)
9 Hot babe swimming across river in casual dress (8)
10 Calendar info encapsulated in classic programming language (6)
12 Clear online estimate - around 10.1 (9)
13 Elected American representative ultimately busy (2,3)
14 Small wound in rabbit's tail (4)
16 Relative of Greek orphan girl (7)
19 & 26D Easily understood Byzantine old calendar describing origin of Universe (4,3, 5)
21 Song with an Indian beat (4)
24 Losing money, essentially quits drinking? Good call! (5)
25 Nosey character starting to peep into couple of clubs in US state (9)
27 Cast out from food store counter (6)
28 Engineer must shortly learn digital symbols (8)
29 Looking wise, I show off Latin lines (6)
30 Possibly in Chalukyas' era, districts in rebellion (1,4,3)

Down

1 After retirement, coach prepared a smaller group (6)
2 Senior woman champion quietly going after money (6)
3 Poorer son with frayed clothing (5)
4 One runs to explode medieval weapon (7)
6 Notable sailor about to be involved in home project (9)
7 Hampered without gold coin, not acting confident (8)
8 Head of Pathology authorised to collect fresh component of blood (8)
11 Some YouTuber - Gen-Z composer of music (4)
15 Perpetual tax overwhelms one supporting artist (9)
17 Best friend tense before sharing difficult goal (5,3)
18 Running out in the middle of practice lesson (8)
20 Use drug and perform exercise (4)
21 Network director, most lazy (7)
22 Transport these medicine bottles to hospital (6)
23 Nicely warmed egg, filling, good to eat (6)
26 See 19A

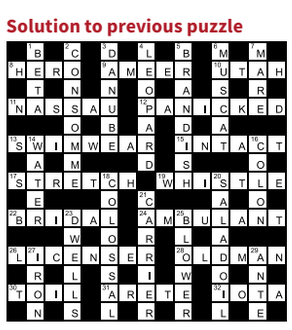
SUDOKU

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

No.SS6873 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Vishnu Sahasranamam

The easiest way to self-realisation is through devotion. In today's world where everyone is caught up in a whirlwind of daily mundaneness, even that becomes difficult. However, chanting the Vishnu Sahasranamam puts one on the correct path to achieving the spiritual goal.

In the 1960s, Kanchi Maha Periyava was camping in Ilayatrangudi, near Pudukkottai, home to the Brindavan of Sri Mahadevendra Saraswati, the 65th Pontiff of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam. Kanchi Maha Periyava always had tremendous respect for Sri Mahadevendra Saraswati. He decided to visit the Brindavan of Sri Mahadevendra Saraswati, meditate and then return for his *bitchai*. This meant he had to walk down a few steps down the road to reach the Brindavan. However, walking on the road would be tantamount to erosion of *acharam* (traditional norms). This norm is applicable to saints. It is also forbidden to have a bath (a cleansing ritual at other times) after visiting a Brindavan, as a way of circumventing the break with *acharam*.

Maha Periyava asked a couple of women to recite the Vishnu Sahasranamam as he walked down the road, and all the other devotees joined in. After completion of Adhishthana darshan, they returned to camp and Periyava had his *bitchai*. How did the *abacharam* (going against set norms) get negated? The explanation came from Maha Periyava himself. "When we chant Vishnu Sahasranamam or even listen to others reciting it, all faults (*doshas*) are overturned. Even a fall in the practice of prescribed norms is corrected by this. Vishnu Sahasranamam is an excellent protective armour for all." One should chant it every day.

INBRIEF

'HDFC Bank review finds no major governance concerns'

Law firms reviewing governance at HDFC Bank are set to report this month that they have not found any major lapses, two people with direct knowledge of the findings said, clearing the way for the reappointment of its CEO. India's largest private lender by assets called in Mumbai-based Trilegal and Wadia Ghandy & Co after Atanu Chakraborty resigned as CMD in March citing "incongruence" between his personal values and bank practices. He did not elaborate. The resignation was followed by a 13.81% drop in the bank's share price, or $16 billion in the stock's value and prompted a rare statement from the central bank seeking to allay investor and depositor concern about a lender deemed too big to fail. It also threw into doubt the lender's application at the central bank due May-end to reappoint CEO Sashidhar Jagdishan. REUTERS

SP Group $3 bn refinance: unit suffers debt downgrade

An Indian rating agency has downgraded a bond issued by Goswami Infratech, a Shapoorji Pallonji (SP) Group unit, citing delays in group-level fundraising versus earlier timelines and highlighting mounting refinancing risks. The real estate and civil engineering firm's non-convertible debentures were downgraded to B+, from BB-, CareEdge said on Wednesday. Shapoorji Pallonji Group did not immediately respond to a *Reuters* request for comment. Goswami Infratech's plan to raise between $2.8 billion and $3.1 billion over the past few months has been delayed, with the surge in rupee hedging costs playing a major role. The company has now planned to split its fresh fundraising between dollar and rupee bond issues, and would target the issues before the end of June, merchant bankers said. The firm raised $1.51 billion in June 2023 via this bond issue. REUTERS

Russia's share in Indian oil imports jumped in March

Outbreak of West Asian crisis hit India's Gulf oil supplies, making it turn to Russia; however, India is now getting Russian oil at a premium of 2.5% compared with a discount of 3.9% in 2025-26

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

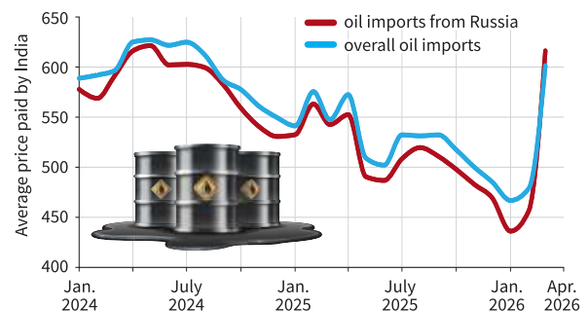
The West Asia crisis and the resultant supply constraints have meant that not only has Russia's share in India's oil imports jumped once again, but this time India is paying a substantial premium for Russian oil rather than the discount it was enjoying earlier.

An analysis by *The Hindu* of the latest data from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry shows that Russia's share in India's oil imports stood at 33.3% or one-third in March 2026, the first months after the West Asia crisis began. Simultaneously, the shares of the Gulf countries as well as the U.S. have fallen.

However, India is now getting Russian oil at a premium of 2.5% as compared with an average discount of 3.9% it had received earlier in 2025-26.

Pricey purchases

The West Asia crisis has resulted in the discount India enjoyed on Russian oil turning into a premium. (In $ per tonne)



Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Dynamic strategies

In the run-up to the West Asia crisis, India was in the process of cutting back on Russian oil in an effort to align with U.S. interests and push forward a trade deal with that country. In February, Russia's share had been 25% and in January, it had fallen to a 41-month low of 19%.

However, once the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran on February 28 and Iran retaliated by closing the crucial Strait of Hormuz, India had little choice but to look back to Russia as a major oil supplier. In fact, in early March, the U.S. Treasury Department, too, issued an order to "allow" India to buy Russian oil for a period of 30 days. While India has maintained throughout that it retains the autonomy to decide where it imports oil from and how much.

Russia dependence

The data shows India substantially cut back on the volume of its overall oil imports in March 2026, likely because about a third of India's crude oil supplies depended on the Strait of Hormuz.

Total oil imports came in at 15.8 million metric tonne (MMT), down nearly 23% over February, and 41% lower than in March last year. However, out of this, Russia's share jumped to 33.3% even as India's Gulf supplies fell sharply.

RIL refinery to shut for maintenance after Nayara restarts

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A general view of Reliance refinery at Jamnagar.

A part of Reliance Industries' 33 million tonne per annum refinery would be heading for planned maintenance shutdown after Nayara Energy's Vadinar refinery returns to operations, Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary at the Ministry of Petroleum Ministry told reporters on Wednesday.

"Right now, Nayara [Energy's] refinery is under shutdown which will come back mid of this month or before that, after that Reliance [refinery's planned maintenance] shutdown will start," the bureaucrat said.

Planned maintenance shutdowns are routine at refineries. They are undertaken to sort repair work, preserve life cycle of equipment and ensure safety during operations. It takes about four weeks for refineries to complete planned maintenance and return to operations.

Ms. Sharma elaborated that the government was seeking to ensure shutdown of refineries was regulated such that all of them do not shut down together.

"We in the Ministry try to ensure all the shutdowns do not happen at one time, and it is scattered so that the supply for domestic market is not affected," she stated while elaborating on maintenance shutdowns.

SEBI terms indices with over ₹20,000-cr. AUM as 'significant'

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) specified that a Benchmark or Index that mutual fund tracks is a 'significant index' if it has assets under management (AUM) worth beyond ₹20,000 crore.

In a circular, SEBI said the threshold would be tested every six months.

"It is specified a Benchmark or Index (including index of indices) based on listed securities shall be considered as 'Significant Indices', if the daily average cumulative AUM tracking the Benchmark or Index across schemes of Mutual Fund(s) exceeds ₹20,000 crore for each of past six months, ending on 30th June and 31st December each year". SEBI mentioned 48 indices including BSE 100 and BSE 500.

Zee sues Reliance-Disney over alleged music copyright breach

Reuters
NEW DELHI

India's Zee Entertainment has sued the Reliance-Disney joint venture, the country's biggest entertainment company, alleging it used Zee's copyrighted music after licence agreements expired, court documents show.

Zee is seeking $3 million in damages, alleging unauthorised use and exploitation of works from its music division on the Reliance-Disney streaming platform and some of its TV channels, according to previously unreported court papers seen by *Reuters*. The lawsuit, filed in New Delhi and reported by *Reuters* for the first time, marks the latest legal clash between Zee and the group formed from Reliance and Disney's $8.5 billion merger in 2024.

L&T bags up to 15,000-cr. order from JSW Steel

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Infrastructure major Larsen & Toubro (L&T) said it has received a 'mega' order worth ₹10,000-₹15,000 crore from JSW Steel.

As part of its strategic growth roadmap, JSW Steel is progressing towards expanding its crude steel processing capacity from 35 million tonne per annum (MTPA) to over 50 MTPA by 2031.

In line with this vision, L&T has been entrusted with the engineering, procurement and installation of critical process facilities, including blast furnaces and steel melt shops, mainly at JSW sites in Ballari, Karnataka and Paradip, Odisha, L&T said in a filing with the BSE.

'April E-PV sales rose 75% to 23,506 units'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Electric passenger vehicle (E-PV) sales in India grew by 75.1% year-on-year to 23,506 units in April, Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) said on Wednesday.

Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd. led the market with 8,543 units compared with 4,822 units in the same month last year, at a growth of 77.2%, as per FADA data.

Homegrown rival Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. came second with 5,413 units, up almost 64% followed by JSW MG Motor India with 5,006 units, a growth of 32.5%.

In the electric two-wheeler segment, FADA said total sales were at 1,48,740 units last month compared with 92,538 units in April last year, up 60.7%.

Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles led the market with 8,543 units.

TVS Motor Company was the segment leader with 37,683 units last month compared with 19,976 units in April 2025, up 88.6%.

Bajaj Auto Ltd. came second with 32,898 units against 19,162 units in April last year, a growth of 71.7%. Ather Energy came third with 27,034 units more than double last year.

NMDC raises iron ore prices by ₹200 per tonne

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

State-owned NMDC has increased iron ore prices by ₹200 a tonne in the latest revision effective May 6.

The new prices have been fixed at ₹5,500 per tonne for Baila Lump and ₹4,700 for the same quantity of Baila Fines, NMDC said in the revision, the second such this fiscal.

On April 5, NMDC, India's largest iron ore producer, had increased the price of Baila Lump by ₹500 per tonne to ₹5,300 and Baila Fines to ₹4,500 from ₹4,050 earlier. These are (FoR) freight on road/rail prices exclusive of royalty, DMF, NMEDT, cess, Forest Permit Fee, transit fee, GST, environmental cess and taxes.

To minimise AI's impact on jobs, ILO bats for lifelong learning

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Given the tumultuous trends reshaping labour markets across the world, lifelong learning needs to be a central pillar of governments' economic and social policies, the International Labour Organization said. Growing digitalisation, artificial intelligence (AI), green transition and demographic shifts were identified as some of the factors driving this shift.

In a report released in Geneva on Tuesday, the ILO emphasised that lifelong learning was about more than employability and productivity. "It underpins decent work, genuine innovation, active citizenship, and social inclusion, making it a cornerstone of any effective strategy for sustainable growth and development," the report noted.

Key to success: Lifelong learning is the bridge between today's jobs and tomorrow's opportunities, says Houngbo. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Lifelong learning is the bridge between today's jobs and tomorrow's opportunities, added ILO Director-General Gilbert F. Houngbo.

Strategic policy priority

ILO argues lifelong learning should be elevated as a strategic policy priority, not just as a tool to raise productivity and facilitate sustainable growth but also as a systemic enabler of personal and societal advancement, equity, and decent work in 21st century.

It flags a 'striking gap' in comprehensive, authoritative, up-to-date research that captures the full scope of lifelong learning.

TENDER NOTICE
GST & C.Ex Commissionerate
No.1, Goubert Avenue, Beach Road, Puducherry
Security Services
Tenders are invited through GeM portal for Hiring of security services for the period from 01.07.2026 to 30.06.2028 by GST & C.Ex Commissionerate No.1 Goubert Avenue Beach Road, Puducherry.
Interested Bidders may visit **https://gem.gov.in** and participate in the bidding process. GeM bid document No.
GEM/2026/B/7470754 dated 24.04.2026.
Bid end Date : 15.05.2026 (17:00 hrs)
Contact No. 0413-2330368
Applicants should have business / registered office in Puducherry.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
Salem Division
Office of the Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer
Electric Loco Shed, Erode
E-Tender Notice No. SA_A_RS_ED_OT_26_27_6,
Dated: 05.05.2026
Online tender is invited for the following work:

Tender No	SA_A_RS_ED_OT_26_27_6, Dated: 05.05.2026
Description of Work	**Works contract for Reconditioning of Smoothing Reactor (SL-30) of electric locomotives available at Electric Loco Shed, Southern Railway, Salem Division, Erode.**

All details regarding the tender are available at **https://www.ireps.gov.in**
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer / Rolling Stock / Erode
For and on behalf of the President of India

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS
NOTICE FOR INVITING EOI
No. Med/G/Dialysis/CLW/2026-2028, Dated - 27.04.2026. The undersigned invites applications from willing HCO's for Establishment and Management Haemodialysis unit at Kasturba Gandhi Hospital, CLW/Chittaranjan for the period of **Two Years**. The details are uploaded in website **www.clw.indianrailways.gov.in**. Interested applicants/ bidders are requested to submit their application in the format attached in (page-5) and submit in a sealed cover with superscription sealed envelope superscribed in bold letter **" EOI For Establishment And Management Of Haemodialysis Unit At Kasturba Gandhi Hospital, CLW/Chittaranjan"** and to be submitted to PCMO/G office on or before **13.00 hours on 01/06/2026**.
[PR4/340] **ACMS/A/CLW/Chittaranjan**
Like us on: www.facebook.com/clwrailways

MAHATRANSCO
Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Co. Ltd.
INVITATION FOR BID (IFB) (LOCAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING)
SRM e-Tender No. T-2628 /MSETCL/CO/Projects/Pre Tender (RFx No. 6000001508)
MSETCL invites offers by SRM e-tendering in TWO bid system (Techno-Commercial Bid and Price Bid) from the eligible registered bidders for the following work as detailed below.
"Construction of LILO on 132kV Dahanu-Ambesari line at 132kV Dapcheri Substation (Route Length- 12.536km) alongwith 2x132kV Line bays at 132kV Dapcheri Substation on turnkey basis, Dist. Palghar under Vashi Zone, MSETCL."
Interested bidders may obtain further information available on the website **https://srmetender.mahatransco.in**
The date of downloading of Bid documents available on the website is from 05.05.2026.
Sd/-
Chief Engineer (Projects), MSETCL

PROCLAMATION
REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED
(Section 82, Code of Criminal Procedure)
In the Court of the XI Additional City Civil & Sessions Judge for CBI Cases, Singaravelar Maaligai (Collectorate Building), Chennai – 1.
Calender Case No.07/2018
Split up from
C.C.No.06/2006
in
R.C.No.3/A/2004
SPE/CBI/ACB/Chennai
Whereas complaint has been made before me that **Mr.P.Balan** (A7 in Main case), S/o. Paramasivam, No.7/8, Parvathi Amman Street, State Bank Colony 2nd Street, Ezhil Nagar, Madhavaram Milk Colony, Madhavaram, Chennai - 600 051 aged about 65 years has committed the offence of Cheating the Bank in the matter of sanction of loan punishable under section 120-B r/w 420, 468 and 471 IPC and Sec.13(2) r/w 13(1) (d) of PC Act, 1988, and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said P.Balan cannot be found, and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said P.Balan has absconded.
Proclamation is hereby made that the said P.Balan is required to appear in person before the XI Additional City Civil & Sessions Court for CBI Cases, Singaravelar Maaligai, Chennai-1 to answer the said complaint on the 15th day of June, 2026 without fail.
Dated this the 13th day of March, 2026.
Sd./-
XI Addl. Spl. Judge for CBI Cases, Chennai.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
Chennai Division
Applications are invited by The Sr.Divisional Commercial Manager, Southern Railway, Chennai Division, Chennai-600 003 for and on behalf of The President of India for engagement of facilitators for issue of Unreserved Tickets through Automatic Ticket Vending Machine (ATVM) Installed in Stations over MAS Division (Locations) from Retired Railway Employees & General Public

Application Ref No	Name of Work	Location
M/C. 378/ATVM/2025	Application for appointment of ATVM facilitators over MAS Division	53 Locations over Chennai Division (List of locations are available in website)
Date and Time for Submission of application	On 26.05.2026 (Tuesday) between 10.00 hrs to 15.00 hrs	
Opening of application form	15:30 hrs on 26.05.2026 (Tuesday)	
Website address (for detailed information)	https://sr.indianrailways.gov.in/sr/notice /1777970095918_Notification for ATVM facilitator-050526.pdf	

If the date of receipt of applications and opening of Application happens to be declared as Holiday, the same will be on the next working day.
Divisional Railway Manager / Commercial / Chennai - 600 003

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
CHENNAI DIVISION (WORKS BRANCH)
E-TENDER NOTICE No. 14 / 2026, Dated: 05.05.2026

S. No	Item No	Description
1	MAS14OF26059E	Essential urgent works to eliminate deficiencies on Main line track including removal of Garbage, Rag Picking and Clearing of track between BBQ-ENR, KOK-WST, KOK-VPY in for a period of one year.
2	MAS14OF26060C	Essential urgent P.Way repair works to eliminate deficiencies on track between MSB-VPY section.
3	MAS14OF26061C	Removal of vegetation, jungle & bushes and weed control at VLK - AJJ in SSE/P.Way/AVD, TRL & KBT for the period of Two years
4	MAS14OF26062W	Reconditioning of CMS Crossings IN SITU by using RW-20 Translamatic Robotic Welding technology in ADEN/AJJ, KPD & JTJ sub divisions.
5	MAS14OF26063E	Providing service for Daily monitoring of Oscillations at floor level of the Cabs of nominated pair of trains running over SR.

Date and Time of Tender Opening :- 28.05.2026 @ 11.30 Hrs.
Complete details & Tender Document will be available at https://www.ireps.gov.in
Divisional Railway Manager / Works / Chennai - 03

PARIS

French aircraft carrier group moving into Red Sea, Gulf of Aden

AFP

France's Charles de Gaulle aircraft carrier group is moving into the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden as part of efforts by France and Britain to prepare for a future mission to help freedom of navigation on the Strait of Hormuz, France's military said on Wednesday. It said that the aircraft carrier group had crossed the Suez Canal. REUTERS

GENEVA

UN demands Israel 'immediately' release Gaza-bound flotilla activists

REUTERS

The United Nations on Wednesday called on Israel to immediately release two activists taken from a Gaza-bound flotilla, and demanded an investigation into "disturbing accounts" they had been severely mistreated. The flotilla set sail from France, Spain and Italy with the aim of breaking Israel's blockade of Gaza. AFP

GAZA CITY

Israeli strikes across Palestinian territory kill 5: Gaza health officials

AP

Gaza health officials said Israeli strikes killed five persons and wounded several others across the Palestinian territory on Wednesday. Despite an October ceasefire, Gaza remains gripped by daily violence as Israeli strikes continue, with both the military and Hamas accusing one another of violating the truce. AFP

JOHANNESBURG

Hantavirus strain capable of human transmission found

AFP

The *MV Hondius* cruise ship, carrying 150 people, remains stranded off Cape Verde after a hantavirus outbreak killed three. Authorities identified the Andes strain that can be transmitted between humans in rare cases. Spain plans to receive the vessel, while infected passengers receive treatment and isolation. AP

Iran is reviewing U.S. proposal; ties with India are flourishing: Baqaei

'We feel very close to the people of India; we are proud of the history of Iran-India relations, and the leaders of both nations are committed and eager to continue strengthening these good relations,' says Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson

INTERVIEW

Esmail Baqaei

Saurabh Shahi
Saurabh Shukla
TEHRAN

Iran, which defended its sovereignty against two nuclear armed countries is now a superpower, says Esmail Baqaei, the spokesperson of Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The U.S. and Israel started attacking Iran on February 28 and killed its Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. After 40 days of bombing, U.S. President Donald Trump announced a ceasefire on April 8, but tensions continue in the region. In an interview at the Ministry in Tehran, Mr. Baqaei said Iran is currently reviewing an American response to its peace proposal, and added that Iran's ties with India are "flourishing".

In a press conference in Tehran, when you were asked what means and support you have to counter the U.S., a super power, you responded by saying that Iran is also a superpower. Could you elaborate on this thought?

It is true that a nation which has demonstrated its determination and resilience in defending its sovereignty and dignity against two nuclear-armed regimes – in my view, that itself is proof that such a nation should be considered a superpower.

What is the current status of talks between the United States and Iran? There has been a lot of draft exchanges, but where do things stand today?

We are currently studying their latest proposal, which was sent in response to our 40-point proposal. It is under review, and once we complete our assessment of the document, we will submit our response to the Pakistani mediators.

Do you think the gap is too wide to be bridged, or is there still a possibility of reaching an understanding?

You have to consider the very difficult history of Iran-U.S. negotiations. It is true that while we were engaged in dialogue and a diplomatic process, they attacked us [In June 2025 and February 2026] – this reflects the deep level of mistrust between Iran and the U.S.

Also, knowing that the nuclear issue has been used as a pretext to exert pressure on Iran means that we need to invest significant time and energy in evaluating all aspects of any potential agreement. As I said, we are currently reviewing their proposals and suggestions, and we will see what happens next.

Donald Trump says Iran is internally divided, and it's unclear who is actually making decisions, with the IRGC saying one thing and the political leadership another. What is your response to these claims?

That is their problem. Perhaps they do not understand how things work in Iran. But we do – we know exactly what is happening here. Fundamentally, we will not be distracted by such misleading narratives coming from U.S. officials. We will remain focused on our national interests.

How do you see India-Iran relations? People in India would want to know whether Iran will impose any charges on Indian ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz?

We do not charge any country. What we are doing in the Strait of Hormuz is, as a coastal state, taking certain measures in accordance with international law to safeguard our national security and national interests against aggressors.

As for India-Iran relations, the ties between our countries are flourishing. We feel very close to the people of India. We are proud of the history of Iran-India relations. Both countries are members of the Non-Aligned Movement, and I believe the leaders of both nations are committed and eager to continue strengthening these good relations.

(Saurabh Shukla and Saurabh Shahi are senior editors with The Red Mike)

Israel strikes Beirut for the first time since ceasefire

Reuters
BEIRUT

Israel struck Beirut on Wednesday for the first time since agreeing to a ceasefire with Hezbollah last month, with Israel saying it targeted a commander of the militant group's elite Radwan force in the city's southern suburbs.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defence Minister Israel Katz announced the action in a joint statement. Israeli media reported that the commander was killed in the strike, but there was no immediate confirmation from the Israeli military or Hezbollah.

The Lebanon ceasefire has underpinned a broader U.S.-Iran truce, with a halt to Israeli strikes in Lebanon being a key Iranian demand. As Iran and the U.S. say they are drawing closer to a deal to halt their conflict, the strikes threaten the ceasefire that halted Israeli attacks on Beirut. Israeli troops have remained in areas south of the Litani River and strikes continued in southern Lebanon.

Iran ally Hezbollah has responded by firing and launching armed drones towards Israeli soldiers.

People gather at the site of an Israeli air strike that targeted Beirut's southern suburbs Haret Hreik neighbourhood on Wednesday. AFP

Israel earlier on Wednesday called for residents to evacuate several villages north of the Litani River, which could represent an expansion of Israel's zone of action.

Talks between Israel and Lebanon have continued, but have largely been at the ambassador level.

High-level meetings

Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam said on Wednesday that it was premature to talk of any high-level meeting between Lebanon and Israel.

Mr. Salam, in comments reported by Lebanon's *National News Agency* on Wednesday, said shoring up a ceasefire would be the basis for any new negotiations between Lebanese and Israeli government envoys in Washington.

Washington last month hosted two meetings between the Israeli and Lebanese ambassadors to the United States. Hezbollah strongly objects to the contacts.

Since Hezbollah triggered the war by opening fire in support of Iran on March 2, the Lebanese administration led by Mr. Salam and President Joseph Aoun has initiated Beirut's highest-level contacts with Israel in decades, reflecting deep divisions between the Shia Muslim group and its Lebanese opponents.

Mr. Salam said Lebanon was not seeking "normalisation with Israel, but rather achieving peace".

China's top envoy calls for a 'comprehensive ceasefire' in the Iran war

Associated Press
BEIJING

China's Foreign Minister on Wednesday called for a comprehensive ceasefire in the Iran war, in comments that could inject new energy into stalled efforts to end the two-month conflict between the United States and Iran.

Wang Yi said his country was "deeply distressed" by the conflict. He spoke after meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who was visiting Beijing for the first time since the war with the U.S. and Israel started on February 28.

China's close economic and political ties to Tehran give it a unique position of influence. The Trump administration is pressing China to use that relationship to urge the Islamic Republic to open the Strait of Hormuz.

Mr. Araghchi said that Tehran was looking forward to China's support for a "new post-war" regional framework.

Moscow snubs Kyiv's unilateral ceasefire, fires dozens of drones

Associated Press
KYIV

Russia fired dozens of drones at Ukraine in nighttime attacks, Ukrainian officials said on Wednesday, disregarding a unilateral ceasefire announced by Kyiv that began at midnight.

The Russian Defence Ministry claimed that Ukraine hadn't abided by its own ceasefire, saying that air defences shot down 53 Ukrainian drones over Russian regions.

CNN founder Ted Turner dead at 87

Agence France-Presse
NEW YORK

Ted Turner, the flamboyant U.S. entrepreneur who transformed television news with the creation of CNN in 1980, has died at the age of 87, the network said on Wednesday.

The moustached southerner, yachting enthusiast and philanthropist, whose empire also included sports clubs, had been suffering from the degenerative disease Lewy Body Dementia.

Cable News Network upended established broadcasting with its dedication to around-the-clock breaking news and shot to global recognition with its coverage of the Gulf War in 1990-91.

Ted Turner

The 24-hour network was the first in the United States to run non-stop news and quickly built a worldwide footprint.

Correspondents brought live coverage from major events ranging from the collapse of the Soviet Union to the Chinese crackdown on the Tiananmen Square protests. CNN's decision to keep reporters in Baghdad amid U.S. bombing on the Iraqi capital cemented the network's reputation as an indispensable source of breaking news.

"Ted is the giant on whose shoulders we stand, and we will all take a moment today to recognise him and his impact on our lives and the world," Mark Thompson, chairperson and CEO of CNN Worldwide, said in a statement.

"He was and always will be the presiding spirit of CNN."

CNN's success inspired the creation of other 24-hour news channels including Fox News by long-time Turner rival Rupert Murdoch, MSNBC and countless networks worldwide.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER WATER RESOURCES ZONE, BANSWARA

No:- CE/AS/BSW/2026-27/2926 Date :- 01/05/2026

INVITATION FOR BIDS
E-NIT No 01/2026-27

The work of Construction of Khodavela Anicut on Jakham River Village Khodavela GP Bharkundi Tehsil Dhariyawad District Pratpgarh approximate value 1465.58 Lakhs bids are invited from interested bidders upto 06:00 Pm on 25-05-2026. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in) of state, and www.waterresources.rajasthan.gov.in/wrd departmental website.

UBN NO. : WRD2627WLOB00060

Chief Engineer
Water Resources Zone
Banswara

DIPR/C/7892/2026

कार्यालय नगर निगम जयपुर

हवामहल के पीछे, पुराना पुलिस मुख्यालय, बडी चौपड, जयपुर

क्रमांक :– जसअ/2026/59 दिनांकः 01.05.2026

ई–निविदा सूचना क्रमांक :–01/2025–26

Cleaning of Roads of Nagar Nigam Jaipur Area through Truck Mounted Road Sweeping Machines कार्य हेतु पंजीकृत फर्म्स से ई–निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा प्रपत्र, विस्तृत सूचना एवं शर्ते आदि सम्पूर्ण विवरण वेबसाइट www.jaipurmc.org, www.sppp.raj.nic.in and www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in पर स्टेट पब्लिक प्रोक्यूरमेन्ट के UBN No. JMC2627GLOB00096 देखी जा सकती है।

उपायुक्त (गैराज)
नगर निगम जयपुर

राज.संवाद/सी/26/2043

PUNJAB STATE TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED,
Corporate Identity No. U40109PB2010SGC033814 www.pstcl.org
O/o: Dy. CE/Projects, Tele: 96461-04141, E-mail: se-projects@pstcl.org

Notice Inviting E-Tender

Enquiry No.	STQ-3077
Description	Construction of 1 no. 400kV ICT bay, 1 no. 220kV ICT bay, 1 no. 220 kV Bus coupler Bay and Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 1 No. 500 MVA 400/220/33 KV Autotransformer at 400KV Substation Dhanansu and 2 no. 220 kV line bays at 400 KV Substation Behman Jassa Singh.
Starting date of downloading/Publishing date	07.05.2026
Last date of downloading	04.06.2026 at 11:00 A.M.
Pre-Bid Meeting Date	21.05.2026 at 11:00 A.M.
Last Date & Time for receipt of tender	04.06.2026 upto 11:00 A.M.
Last Date & Time for Opening of tender	08.06.2026 at 03:00 P.M.

Detailed NIT/specification may be downloaded from PSTCL e-tendering website **www.eproc.punjab.gov.in**. Corrigendum, if any, will not be published in newspapers. As such the website may be visited regularly for updates.

Dy. CE/Projects,
PSTCL, Patiala.

1078/12/2026-27/11232

Rajasthan Olive Cultivation Limited

निविदा-सूचना

राजस्थान ऑलिव कल्टीवेशन लिमिटेड के विभिन्न जैतून फार्मो एवं सेंटर ऑफ एक्सीलेंस, बस्सी पर श्रमिक नियोजन हेतु सेवा प्रदाता ऐजेसी के चयन हेतु निम्नानुसार निविदा कार्यालय में आमंत्रित किये गये है। **UBN No. : OCL2627SLRC00004**

क्र. सं.	कार्य का नाम	निविदा की अनु. लागत राशि रु. लाख में	निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की अंतिम दिनांक	निविदा खोलने की दिनांक
1.	राजस्थान ऑलिव कल्टीवेशन लिमिटेड के विभिन्न जैतून फार्मो एवं सेंटर ऑफ एक्सीलेंस, बस्सी पर श्रमिक नियोजन हेतु सेवा प्रदाता ऐजेसी के चयन।	228.39	21.05.2026 प्रातः 11.00 बजे तक	22.05.2026 साय 4.00 बजे

निविदा दस्तावेंजो की जानकारी **https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** पर अथवा कार्यालय से ली जा सकती है।

राज.संवाद/सी/26/2067 चीफ ऑपरेशन ऑफिसर

E-mail.ID-sectcrb_2006@yahoo.co.in ; Tel/Fax – 0671-2301751/2302751
Government of Odisha
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, CUTTACK (R&B) CIRCLE, CUTTACK
('e' – PROCUREMENT NOTICE)
Bid Identification No.CCE.Ctc.(R&B)2/2026-27

1. The Chief Construction Engineer, Cuttack (R&B) Circle, Cuttack on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites on Percentage rate basis bid in double cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for Building works as mentioned below.
2. No. of work : 06 Nos.
3. Nature of work : Building Works.
4. Class of contractor : 'B', 'A' & Special Class
5. Tender Paper Cost : Rs.10000/- (Online)
6. Available of bid document in the web site : From 11.05.2026 to 17.30 Hours of 25.05.2026
7. Date of opening of bid : Dt. 26.05.2026 at 11.00 Hours.
8. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website https://tendersodisha.gov.in. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said web site.

Chief Engineer (Civil), Cuttack (R&B) Circle

34001/140/2627 OIPR-34001/34012/1/26-27/0006

Government of Odisha, **"e"- Procurement Notice**
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)
Bid Identification No. C.C.E.Dkl.(R&B) 01/2026-27

Letter No. 918 / Dt.28.04.2026 Email Id - sedklpwd@gmail.com

The Chief Construction Engineer, Dhenkanal (R&B) Circle, Dhenkanal on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites Percentage Rate bids in double cover system to be received in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for Building works as detailed below:

1. Name of the work : **Building works.**
2. No of works : **03 (Three) Nos**
3. Estimated Cost : **Rs.1.23 Crore to Rs.2.69 Crore (as given in column No.03 of table)**
4. Cost of tender paper : **Rs.10,000.00**
5. Class of contractor : **'B' Class & 'A' Class (as given in column No.07 of table)**
6. Period of Completion of work : **07 (Seven) to 08 (Eight)** calendar months **(as given in column No.08 of table)**
7. Date and time of availability of bid Document in the website : **From Dt.08.05.2026** to **5.00 P.M. of Dt.22.05.2026**
8. Date of opening of bid : **Dt.25.05.2026** at **11.00 A.M.**

The bidders have to participate in ONLINE biding only, further details can be seen from the e-Procurement Portal : **www.tendersodisha.gov.in**. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.

Chief Construction Engineer, Dhenkanal (R&B) Circle, Dhenkanal

34001/167/2627 OIPR-34001/34132/1/26-27/0003

Department of Water Resources, Government of Odisha
"e" Procurement Notice No.ACEDC-BBSR-01/2026-27

1. Name of the Works : **Total 07 (Seven) Nos. Drainage work.**
2. Estimated cost : **Rs.98.88 lakh to Rs. 489.85 lakh**
3. Period of Completion : **11 (Eleven) months**
4. Date and time of availability of bid document in the portal : **From 11.00 hours of Dt. 08.05.2026 to 18.00 hours of Dt. 22.05.2026**
5. Last date / time for receipt of bids in the portal : **18.00 hours of Dt. 22.05.2026**
6. Date of Opening of Technical Bid : **25.05.2026 at 11.00 hours**
7. Name and address of the Officer inviting Bid : **Additional Chief Engineer, Drainage Circle, Unit-8, Bhubaneswar-751012. e-mail Id :- sedrainagebbsr12@gmail.com.**
8. The update notification will be intimated to the participated bidders to their registered e-mail & to their registered mobile number through an autogenerated text message by e-procurement system. On such intimation, individual bidder needs to log in to their ID through DSC to know the uploaded summary, i.e. details of opening of financial bid, lottery date time, venue, acceptance of bid etc.

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal of Odisha Government **https://tendersodisha.gov.in**. All information, notices, addendum, corrigendum, cancellation notice etc. if required, will be published in this portal.

Additional Chief Engineer, Drainage Circle, Bhubaneswar

32001/149/2627 OIPR-32001/32375/1/26-27/0001

FOCUS ON SELF

Can't be distracted by how other teams are playing, says Malolan

SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

There will come a time when we start thinking about top-two, but for now, we are focused on the LSG game. We can see how the table is panning out, but we can't be distracted by what's happening with other teams — RCB spin-bowling coach Malolan Rangarajan on whether his side had shifted focus to making the Qualifier 1.

CRACKING THE CODE

'We have looked long and hard at how to play at Ekana Stadium'

SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

It's a tough place to come and play cricket, a nice fast pitch in a very big ground. You need to find the formula of how you are going to play here. Maybe we didn't do that in the last couple of games, but we have looked long and hard — Lucknow Super Giants assistant coach Lance Klusener on the Ekana Stadium.

INCREDIBLE SHOW

He's batting at a different level: Finch heaps praise on Samson

R.V. MOORTHY

Aaron Finch praised Sanju Samson's match-winning performance for Chennai Super Kings against Delhi Capitals, saying he had overcome the early challenges. "This is what you're traded for and he is the superstar who you've been crying out for. So, the fact that he's batting on a different level is great to see," Finch added.

UNDER THE PUMP

We would ideally want Kuldeep to be better than this: Badani

FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

Delhi Capitals head coach Hemang Badani, after the side's loss to Chennai Super Kings, said Kuldeep Yadav must improve if the team has to make the playoffs. "We would ideally want Kuldeep to be better than this, but we will rally around him. He's somebody who's been a part of this side for many years. He can turn this around".

Kishan and Klaasen shine as Sunrisers sink Kings, go top

The duo cashes in on 'butter-fingered' fielding by PBKS to hit half-centuries; the openers Abhishek, Head provide another sizzling start for the hosts, Connolly's ton in vain; skipper Cummins leads from the front as the visiting team's batters falter

IPL-19

Anirudh Velamuri
HYDERABAD

In a contest between two of the most devastating batting units in the IPL, the side that got the job done with the ball and on the field triumphed - a stark reminder of why the basics can never be forgotten no matter how much pomp and splendour become the norm.

A brilliant batting effort, helped in no small measure by Punjab Kings' benevolent butter fingers in the field, helped Sunrisers Hyderabad to 235, a total its bowling unit guarded with ferocity to ring in a 33-run victory at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, and top the table.

Put in to bat, Abhishek Sharma launched into Marco Jansen while Travis Head dismantled Arshdeep Singh with disdain, with the chatter of an unfavourable match-up reduced to a mere footnote.

Sunrisers skyrocketed past the 50-run mark in just 3.2 overs - their third fastest ever - before Lockie Ferguson broke through to remove Abhishek. Head fell to Yuzvendra Chahal's googly but not before pushing SRH past 70 in the PowerPlay for the seventh time this season, the most by any team.

And then, the misfielding 'virus' (as PBKS coach Ricky Ponting called it) struck.

Ishan Kishan and Heinrich Klaasen - stuttering on nine apiece - were granted reprieves by Cooper Connolly and Shashank Singh, respectively. Kishan particularly got off easy, with Ferguson shelling a chance and Prabhsimran botching a routine stumping. The pair expressed their gratitude with brisk half-centuries to set a 236-run target.

The PBKS chase anticlimactically unravelled before it could begin.

Priyansh Arya failed to get hold of a short delivery from Pat Cummins, Eshan Malinga completing a sharp catch in the deep. Nitish and Malinga then saw off Prabhsimaran Singh and Shreyas Iyer, respectively, with Cummins pouching both catches.

Connolly kept fighting, forging partnerships with Marcus Stoinis, Suryansh Shedge and Marco Jansen but it was in vain. His maiden T20 hundred, in the end, might have brought down the margin of defeat, but couldn't save the Kings from a worrying third loss on the trot.

The dazzlers: Klaasen and Cummins' experience came to the fore while Connolly's century was not enough for PBKS. NAGARA GOPAL

SCOREBOARD

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD
Abhishek Sharma c Shreyas b Ferguson 35 *(13b, 2x4, 4x6)*, Travis Head c Jansen b Chahal 38 *(19b, 3x4, 3x6)*, Ishan Kishan c Shedge b Arshdeep 55 *(32b, 2x4, 4x6)*, Heinrich Klaasen c Jansen b Vyshak 69 *(43b, 3x4, 4x6)*, Nitish Kumar (not out) 29 *(13b, 2x4, 2x6)*; Extras (b-2, lb-2, w-5): 9; Total (for four wkts. in 20 overs): 235.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-54 (Abhishek, 3.3 overs), 2-84 (Head, 6.4), 3-172 (Kishan, 14.4), 4-235 (Klaasen, 19.6).

KINGS BOWLING
Arshdeep 4-0-43-1, Jansen 4-0-61-0, Ferguson 4-0-41-1, Chahal 4-0-32-1, Vyshak 4-0-54-1.

PUNJAB KINGS
Priyansh Arya **(Impact Player for Chahal)** c Malinga b Cummins 1 *(3b)*, Prabhsimran Singh c Cummins b Nitish Kumar 3 *(4b)*, Cooper Connolly (not out) 107 *(59b, 7x4, 8x6)*, Shreyas Iyer c Cummins b Malinga 5 *(5b, 1x4)*, Marcus Stoinis c Kishan b Shivang 28 *(14b, 3x4, 2x6)*, Suryansh Shedge c Abhishek b Cummins 25 *(17b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Shashank Singh c Nitish Kumar b Sakib 4 *(3b, 1x4)*, Marco Jansen c Harsh b Shivang 19 *(16b, 1x6)*, V. Vyshak (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (nb-2, w-7): 9; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 202.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-4 (Priyansh, 0.6), 2-4 (Prabhsimran, 1.1), 3-23 (Shreyas, 3.2), 4-63 (Stoinis, 6.4), 5-110 (Shedge, 11.4), 6-119 (Shashank, 12.3), 7-187 (Jansen, 19.1).

SUNRISERS BOWLING
Cummins 4-0-34-2, Nitish Kumar 2-0-11-1, Malinga 4-0-36-1, Sakib 4-0-40-1, Shivang 4-0-45-2, Harsh **(Impact Player for Head)** 2-0-36-0.

Toss: Kings; **PoM:** Cummins.
Sunrisers won by 33 runs.

Next assignment

PBKS: May 11 vs. DC Dharamshala, 7.30 p.m.

SRH: May 12 vs.GT Ahmedabad, 7.30 p.m.

Ahmedabad to host final; no playoff game in Bengaluru

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

The BCCI on Wednesday announced that the IPL 2026 final will be played at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on May 31.

The Qualifier 1 will be held in Dharamshala on May 26, while New Chandigarh will play host to the Eliminator and Qualifier 2 on May 27 and 29 respectively, leaving Bengaluru completely out of the mix in the playoff schedule.

According to convention, the summit clash is played at the home of the reigning champion, which in this case is the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium (Royal Challengers Bengaluru).

"Bengaluru was originally designated to host the Final. However, owing to certain requirements from the local association and authorities that were beyond the scope of BCCI's established guidelines and protocols, the venue has been shifted and reassigned," an IPL media advisory stated.

KSCA disappointed

The Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) "expressed its disappointment", noting that the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium had hosted five league-stage games without glitch.

The Association said that its president Venkatesh Prasad was in touch with the BCCI.

"The IPL matches conducted in Bengaluru during the current season were widely appreciated for their smooth execution, crowd management, operational efficiency, and overall spectator experience, reaffirming KSCA's capability to successfully host marquee fixtures of such scale and importance," a KSCA statement read.

"Despite our preparedness and willingness to host the playoffs, we understand that the BCCI has taken a decision to allot these matches to other venues," the KSCA added.

The decision is similar to what transpired last year, when the final was moved from Kolkata – home of the then defending champion Kolkata Knight Riders – to Ahmedabad.

"Weather conditions and other parameters" had been cited as reasons for the change.

Earlier this season, the Karnataka State government and police, after much deliberation, granted permission for the conduct of IPL matches at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium.

The iconic venue, sidelined after the deadly stampede last year, hosted five league matches in April, with Raipur set to host RCB's other two "home" games on May 10 and 13.

In a departure from norm, the Qualifier 2 and final – conducted in a tight space of three days – will be held in different cities.

The games are usually held in the same city to ensure that the second team which makes the grade does not have to travel.

The playoff schedule: Qualifier 1: May 26, Dharamshala; **Eliminator:** May 27, New Chandigarh; **Qualifier 2:** May 29, New Chandigarh; **Final:** May 31, Ahmedabad.

Preferred venue: The Narendra Modi Stadium is set to host its fourth final in five seasons. FILE PHOTO: VIJAY SONEJI

Rampant RCB faces a tricky LSG challenge

In a spin: Digvesh, who hasn't been in the best form, will hope to turn things around soon. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

Points table

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
Sunrisers Hyderabad	11	7	4	0	14	0.737
Punjab Kings	10	6	3	1	13	0.571
Royal Challengers	9	6	3	0	12	1.420
Rajasthan Royals	10	6	4	0	12	0.510
Gujarat Titans	10	6	4	0	12	-0.147
Chennai Super Kings	10	5	5	0	10	0.151
Delhi Capitals	10	4	6	0	8	-0.949
Kolkata Knight Riders	9	3	5	1	7	-0.539
Mumbai Indians	10	3	7	0	6	-0.649
Lucknow Super Giants	9	2	7	0	4	-1.076

Today's match

LSG vs. RCB

Lucknow, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 7
LSG 2 | RCB 5

PREVIOUS MEETING
RCB won by **five wickets**, 2026

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 & JIOHOTSTAR

Aditya Padinjat
LUCKNOW

Royal Challengers Bengaluru faces a potential banana-skin in its playoff aspirations as it visits Lucknow Super Giants on Thursday. The hosts' hopes hang by a thread after six defeats in a row, but assistant coach Lance Klusener said it has a lot to play for still.

It has struggled as a batting group this year, with captain Rishabh Pant emblematic of an inconsistent season for the batters, which can partly be attributed to home conditions.

No other venue has afforded bowlers as much assistance as the "fantastic" Ekana wicket, especially with the new ball, setting the stage for a clash with RCB's red-hot pair of Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Josh Hazlewood.

LSG's best chance of success will likely come through its own impressive pace battery - including Mohammad Shami, Mohsin Khan, and Prince Yadav - despite a tough outing against Mumbai Indians.

It will look to expose an RCB middle-order that has wobbled at times, as typified by a collapse in its last outing against Gujarat Titans, and will be frustrated by its lack of consistent victories despite being second.

Spin-bowling coach Malolan Rangarajan said the team was focused on this match and that it was "not going to go far beyond that and not back either."

Jitesh Sharma, who starred last year with an unbeaten 85 from 33 balls, is under the scanner having looked short of rhythm for his 63 runs in seven outings at 112.50. But, Malolan threw his weight behind Jitesh, saying the team preferred to "look at the bigger picture."

"Jitesh hasn't started as well as he would or we would have liked. We've been supporting him, and he's a very sorted individual. It's not by chance he has played for the country, and he contributed for us last year," Malolan said.

RCB has dominated this fixture recently, winning three out of the last four meetings, underlining the scale of the challenge facing the home side if it is to keep its wafer-thin hopes of a playoff spot alive.

DC grapples with wide variance in home pitches

Vivek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

Comfort has eluded Delhi Capitals at home in IPL's 19th edition. The Axar Patel-led franchise has won just one out of five matches at the Arun Jaitley Stadium. On its visits to other venues, it has fared much better, notching up three wins in five games.

Contributing to the travails at home has been the large deviation in the nature of surfaces, hindering DC from cultivating a consistent style of play in its backyard. The last three matches in the national capital make for pertinent examples.

Having engaged in a run-fest against Punjab Kings on a featherbed where Shreyas Iyer's side chased down a record 265 on April 25, Capitals' duel against Royal Challengers Bengaluru just two days later swung to the other extreme.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Josh Hazlewood extracted swing and seam movement, reducing the host to eight for six inside four overs.

DC folded up for 75 and lost by nine wickets.

On Tuesday night, the strip in use was on the slower side. DC's batters couldn't adapt quickly enough, allowing Chennai Super Kings to register an eight-wicket victory.

DC head coach Hemang Badani conceded that the lack of homogeneity with the pitches at home wasn't ideal.

At the same time, the 49-year-old explicitly stated that the franchises didn't have a role in the preparation of pitches.

"We don't have any control over the surfaces. There is a clear mandate from the BCCI that it looks after the surfaces and it is the one which ensures that no local side benefits. You play on what is presented to you," Badani told reporters.

"Yes, it's been a bit of an up-and-down curve for us to understand what we are going to get in Delhi. I think the whole competition is quite neutral that way. But ideally, yes, you want to have some consistency"

Up against it: Things have been tough at home for DC coach Badani and captain Axar. R.V. MOORTHY

INBRIEF

Fans 'set the standards' at rocking Emirates: Arteta

Mikel Arteta said that Arsenal fans "set the standards" after the Gunners reached the Champions League final on Tuesday. Arteta said that his players fed off the fizzing atmosphere at the Emirates. "I think they set the standards and we tried to catch up with them immediately. It's so good after so many years to give that joy back to them and see that pride in their eyes."

Atletico boss Simeone feeling calm and peaceful

Atletico Madrid coach Diego Simeone said he was at peace and proud of how far his team had made it. "If we got knocked out, it's because our opponents deserved to get through," he said. "If you ask me how I feel, I feel calm and peaceful."

FIFA confirms ban for Argentina's Prestianni

FIFA, on Wednesday, confirmed a global ban for Gianluca Prestianni that will rule the Benfica winger out of two World Cup games in the USA if he is selected in Argentina's squad.

India's disappointing campaign at World TT ends

India's campaign at the World table tennis team championships ended with women's 3-1 loss to USA in round of 32 in London. The men too lost in a round of 32 clash against Austria on Tuesday.

The result: USA 3 bt India 1 (Sally Moyland bt Yashaswini Ghorpade 11-8, 11-8, 11-7; Jessica Reyes lost to Manika Batra 2-11, 8-11, 11-8, 4-11; Lily Zhang bt Diya Chitale 11-8, 11-7, 13-11; Sally bt Manika 10-12, 11-9, 11-3, 13-11).

New Delhi to host C'wealth TT in July-August

New Delhi will host 22nd Commonwealth table tennis championship between July 27 and August 2 which will see participation from 35 nations.

ENGAGEMENTS

Cricket: TNCA II div., multi-day semifinals, Egmore RC vs Bunts (Wahe Guru 'A'), UFCC (T. Nagar) vs Pristine (Jones Krish, turf), first day, 9 a.m.

Saka ends Arsenal's 20-year wait to reach Champions League final

The winger's strike late in the first half seals a narrow 1-0 second-leg win over Atletico Madrid for an aggregate 2-1 result in the semifinal

Clinical: Saka fires in from close range for Arsenal's winner. REUTERS

Gunners fire on all cylinders

Arsenal scales new heights during its semifinal win over Atletico

14 Arsenal set a new club record when it extended its unbeaten streak in the ongoing Champions League (CL) season to 14 matches

30 Having shut out Atletico at the Emirates Stadium, Gunners recorded their 30th clean sheet across competitions this season

41 By registering its 41st victory of the 2025-26 campaign, the current Arsenal squad equalled the club record for most wins in a season (previous: in 1970-71)

14 Saka has been directly involved in 14 goals in as many CL appearances at home

44 When the final kicks off on May 30, Arteta, at 44y 65d, will become the second youngest manager to lead Arsenal in a major European title decider. Terry Neill (38y 6d) is the youngest

Agence France-Presse
LONDON

Arsenal reached the Champions League final for the first time in 20 years as Bukayo Saka sealed a 1-0 win against Atletico Madrid on Tuesday.

Mikel Arteta's side settled the semifinal second leg with Saka's strike late in the first half at an ecstatic Emirates Stadium.

The Gunners, who drew 1-1 in the first leg in Madrid last week, held firm after Saka's goal to go through 2-1 on aggregate.

Arsenal will face Paris Saint-Germain or Bayern Munich in the final in Budapest on May 30.

It was a cathartic night for Arsenal, which is back in the Champions League final for the first time since losing 2-1 to Barcelona in its only previous appearance in the showpiece in 2006.

Even Arsene Wenger's 'Invincibles' – who won the club's last English title in an unbeaten top-flight campaign in 2004 – might have to bow to the current generation if they finish the job. Fittingly, it was Saka – the homegrown symbol of the Arteta era – who proved Arsenal's match-winner.

This was a more prosaic display but no-one with an affinity to Arsenal was bothered in the slightest.

Arsenal was nearly caught on the counter in a frenetic start when Julian Alvarez shot just wide before Giuliano Simeone's close-range effort deflected past the post.

But Arsenal recovered from those anxious moments to deliver a dominant spell that brought its 44th minute goal.

Viktor Gyokeres' clever run unhinged the Atletico defence and his cross reached Leandro Trossard inside the area.

Trossard wriggled into just enough space for a low drive that Jan Oblak weakly pushed out to Saka, who reacted quicker than his flat-footed markers to slot home from four yards.

Atletico tried to ruin the party in the second half, but Gabriel Magalhaes made a last-ditch tackle on Simeone to avert a certain goal before David Raya repelled Antoine Griezmann's blast.

The result (semifinal, second leg):

Arsenal 1 (Saka 44) bt Atletico 0 (Arsenal wins 2-1 on aggregate).

Hnamte own goal helps Punjab edge past Chennaiyin FC

ISL

Vivek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

In a game of few clear-cut chances, it seemed rather apt that Punjab FC's 1-0 win against Chennaiyin FC in the Indian Super League fixture on Wednesday was courtesy an own goal in the 84th minute.

In the endeavour to mark Suresh Meitei during a Punjab corner, Chennaiyin's Lalrinliana Hnamte had his back on goal, and was totally oblivious to Daniel Ramirez's cross hitting his body before going into the net.

On the rise: Punjab FC moved up to sixth in the standings with a victory at home. INSTAGRAM/INDIANSUPERLEAGUE

Crucial result

The result takes Punjab, which has 18 points after 10 matches, to sixth spot in the standings.

Chennaiyin continues to languish at 12th with nine points.

The host, which enjoyed 60% of the possession, was deserving of the victory after looking the more threatening of the two teams.

Ramirez, the attacking midfielder from Spain with a creative spark, orchestrated most of the attacks.

The first genuine opportunity came in the 11th minute when Ramirez teed up Bede Osuji on a platter, but the latter's shot was cleared off the goal-line by defender Pritam Kotal.

In the 25th minute, Ramirez again turned provider as he found Nsungusi Effiong on the left with a perfectly-weighted pass.

But Effiong didn't get a clear sight at goal much to the credit of Chennaiyin goalkeeper Mohammad Nawaz, who charged forward and narrowed the angle for the Punjab striker.

Just a minute later, Chennaiyin had one of its rare openings when Irfan Yadwad's pass found Hnamte in a superb position inside the box.

He squandered the initiative, however, with a heavy first touch.

Indian compound men's team narrowly misses bronze

ARCHERY

Sports Bureau

The Indian compound men's team, comprising Ojas Deotale, Sahil Jadhav and Kushal Dalal, narrowly missed a bronze medal after losing to China at the Archery World Cup Stage-2 in Shanghai on Wednesday.

The teams were tied 234-234, forcing a shoot-off. As the tie-breaker ended 30-30, China, which shot two Xs against India's one, was declared the winner in a battle for the bronze.

The results:

Recurve: Qualification: Individual: Men: B. Dhiraj (seventh, 679), Tarundeep Rai (29th, 661), Yashdeep Bhoge (54th, 653), Atanu Das (67th, 643); **Women:** Ankita Bhakat (10th, 652), Kumkum Mohod (11th, 651), Deepika Kumari (14th, 651), Simranjeet Kaur (15th, 648).

Team: India: Men (eighth, 1993), Women (fourth, 1954), Mixed (sixth, 1331).

Elimination: Men: First round: Tarundeep Rai bt Mukhammadkodir Ergashev (Uzb) 6-2, Atanu Das lost to Mohd. Mishad Prodhan (Ban) 3-7, Yashdeep Bhoge bt Diego Conde Collar (Spn) 7-1, B. Dhiraj got byes (in first two rounds).

Compound: Elimination: Team: Men: India (Ojas Deotale, Sahil Jadhav, Kushal Dalal) got a bye (first round), bt Germany 238-230 (second round), bt Chinese Taipei 233-231 (quarterfinal), lost to USA 234-235 (semifinal), lost to China 234-234 (30-30*, Chinese archers shot closer to the centre).

Women: India (Aditi Swami, Pragati, V. Jyothi Surekha) bt Slovenia 228-227 (first round), lost to Türkiye 227-233 (quarterfinal).

Gukesh sends out a massive message by beating Sindarov

CHESS

Press Trust of India
WARSAW

Reigning world champion D. Gukesh on Wednesday sent out a massive message to chess buffs across the globe by beating his challenger for the world crown, Javokhir Sindarov of Uzbekistan in the fifth round of the Super Rapid and Blitz, a part of the Grand Chess Tour, here.

Gukesh had earlier walked out of the main competition of the Grand Chess Tour, citing his form and to focus more on training ahead of his World Championship title defence.

Statement win: Gukesh wrapped up the win against Sindarov in 52 moves. FLICKR/GRANDCHESSTOUR

In full swing

He was, however, in full swing as he matched Sindarov move for move in a rapid encounter. The Uzbek Grandmaster had earlier dismissed claims that this was an important clash ahead of the World Championship match but his play clearly showed he was under some pressure.

Interestingly enough, Gukesh and Sindarov both lost their previous games coming into this round. Gukesh was outdone by Radoslav Wojtashek of Poland while Sindarov lost to tournament leader Wesley So of the United States.

So leads with eight points from five games, having won three and drawn two. With each victory worth two points in the rapid games, Wesley is now trailed by compatriot Hans Moke Niemann who is having a great run on seven points.

Gukesh is on five points and is not too far behind with as many as four rapid and 18 blitz games remaining in the tournament that offers a dynamic format.

Guntas to lead at Queen Sirikit Cup

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

A three-member Indian team led by 2025 Ladies Order of Merit winner Guntas Kaur Sandhu will participate in the prestigious Queen Sirikit Cup golf later this month.

The event from May 12-15, officially the Asia-Pacific Amateur Ladies Golf Team Championship, will be held at Bogor, Indonesia with 15 countries participating including Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand and defending champion Korea.

Besides the 15-year-old Chandigarh-based Guntas, Haryana's Ceerat Kang and Delhi's Keya Badugu are the others in the team named by the Indian Golf Union on Wednesday.

The Queen Sirikit Cup is considered one of the top amateur competitions in golf.

TNCA LEAGUE

Kovai Knights wins fifth division league title

CHENNAI: A. Vishvajith's 106 (123b, 12x4) and left-arm spinner R. Rohith Ram's six for 31 helped Kovai Knights defeat Prasad CC by 185 runs in the TNCA fifth division league championship final.

In the fourth division championship match, Chatnath RC defeated TSR MSC by eight wickets.

Vishvajith (Kovai Knights, 106); Rohith (Kovai Knights, 6/31); Kowsigan (Kovai Knights, 126 n.o.); Raghu Raman (Vijay's RC, 3/11 including hat-trick); Prahaladh (Minerva, 7/45); Naveen (Sumangali Homes, 5/31).

The scores:

IV: Championship: TSR MSC 109 in 36.1 overs (Shanmugasundararaja 32, D. Govindaraj 43, S. Vasanth Saravanan 5/33, S. Harish 3/22) lost to Chatnath 113/2 in 22.3 overs (B. Rahul 42 n.o., M. Sivanesh 30).

Championship play-offs: Royapettah 175 in 48.3 overs (L.B. Naveen Balaji 64, G. Selvakumar 3/39, S. Harish 3/51, Kanishka C. Arvind 3/42) lost to Chatnath 176/3 in 40 overs (M. Thiyagarajan 83 n.o., A. Aarif 43 n.o., M. Sivanesh 32).

Relegation: Unicorn 117 in 38.5 overs (C.S. Mithun 31, A. Tharun 32, S.P. Sundara Raghu Raman 3/11 including a hat-trick, V.G. Deenadayalan 3/27) lost to Vijay's RC 118/9 in 39.1 overs (K.S. Navaneeth 44).

Relegation play-off: Sumangali Homes 218/9 in 50 overs (Mayank Das 45, S. Harish Kumar 46, K. Karthikeyan 36, P. Naveen Kumar 31 n.o., M. Raja 4/46) bt Vijay's RC 181 in 44.1 overs (Sakthivel 47, M. Balamurugan 35, P. Naveen Kumar 5/31, G. Babu 3/49).

V: Championship: Kovai Knights 286/7 in 50 overs (A. Vishvajith 106, G.S. Kowsigan 33, Nitish Venugopal 43, I. Ananth 47 n.o., A. Prabhakaran 4/95) bt Prasad 101 in 20.5 overs (J. Jenish 32, Vansh N. Mehta 34, R. Venkatesh 4/23, R. Rohith Ram 6/31).

Championship play-offs: Ethiraj 185 in 49.2 overs (S. Ashwanth Reddy 50, S. Karthik 52, R. Venkatesh 4/58, K. Narasimhan 4/32) lost to Kovai Knights 191/2 in 21.1 overs (G.S. Kowsigan 126 n.o.).

Saravanan (Chatnath, 5/33); Sathish (Gandhi, 5/44).

Youth Centre 144 in 45.2 overs (S. Kaushik Babu 34, Ramesh Thangaraj 3/49) lost to Prasad 148/6 in 33.3 overs (K. Jenish 84 n.o.).

VI: Championship: Gandhi 237/8 in 30 overs (R. Sathish Kumar 89, G. Naveen Kumar 50, S. Krishna Kumar 3/73) bt Grand Prix 213/7 in 30 overs (R. Elango 65, Abdul Malik 63 n.o., R. Sathish Kumar 3/50).

Championship play-offs: Grand Prix 197 in 29.5 overs (M. Chandrabose 46, S. Padmanaban 48, M.R. Prahaladh 7/45) bt Minerva 126 in 26.3 (P. Naveen 32, K. Pradeepak Kumar 3/18, Arun Buvanesh 3/32, M. Maheshwaran 3/19).

Gandhi 218/7 in 30 overs (R. Sathish Kumar 39, A. Guru Prasad 55 n.o.) bt TFU 172 in 27.4 overs (H. Tholkappiyan 31, R. Sathish Kumar 5/44).

LIVE TELECAST

IPL: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.

Europa League: Sony Sports Ten 1, 2 & LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Friday)

Conference League: Sony Sports Ten 3, 5 & LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Friday)

Can Wolvaardt 2.0 take the Proteas to the promised land?

For a batter who relies on old-school technique to amass runs, the recent series triumph against India showed her in a different avatar. It could augur well for South Africa in England

GETTY IMAGES

P.K. Ajith Kumar

Laura Wolvaardt 4, India 1.

That could very well have been the scoreline in the recent five-match T20I series in South Africa. The only match India won was the one in which Wolvaardt failed to reach 20.

That was in the fourth T20I at Johannesburg, in which she was out for 18. That was the game in which Deepti Sharma regained her touch as one of the premier all-rounders in the women's game, claiming five wickets after making an unbeaten 36 off 26 balls. The visitors won by 14 runs, but the South Africans had already clinched the series.

The rubber had been decided in the previous match, which was also played at the Wanderers. And that game produced one of the best knocks in women's cricket of late. Wolvaardt's 115 off 53 balls was a masterclass in T20 batting.

The 27-year-old's third hundred in the format helped her team get past the target set by India - 192 - with 3.3 overs remaining. It was the highest successful chase for South Africa. It was Wolvaardt's third T20I hundred, and it was her fastest - off 47 balls. All those records matter, yes.

The way she lorded over the Indian attack, right from the start, mattered too. She, and her opening partner, Sune Luus gave Harmanpreet Kaur's women no chance despite putting on the board what was a challenging total. While the former played the supporting role admirably with a 42-ball 64 not out, the current one destroyed the Indian bowlers; she was generous enough to give a couple of chances, but this was, of course, a series that would not be exactly remembered for India's fielding; even some of its best fielders, like Jemimah Rodrigues, fumbled.

Wolvaardt, of course, made India pay for those lapses. And she did it with some spectacular shots, like she did all through the series. She began by sending Renuka past the midwicket boundary off the first ball of the innings. The swing bowler was later swung for a couple of big sixes on the on-side.

The innings, in particular, showcased how increasingly aggressive Wolvaardt is becoming as a top-order batter. She has always been admired for her elegant batting - her cover drive is pure art - and the way she could anchor her team's innings, or the way she could pace her knock. And talking of her cover drive, Australian great Meg Lanning had once famously replied to an ICC tweet asking fans who had the best cover drive of the generation.

Usual suspects

The international cricket body had put out pictures of some usual suspects: Virat Kohli, Kane Williamson, Joe Root and Babar Azam. Those were lovely pictures, too, of all the men playing one of the most classical, aesthetically pleasing shots in the game. The images looked especially lovelier as the players were all in their whites.

The picture Lanning posted of Wolvaardt had the South African in yellow and green - because she hadn't played a Test yet and there sadly are far too few games for women in the longest - and greatest - format. But, that image still brought out the beauty of the lady's cover drive. Come to think of it, there is no gender to the sheer art of batting. Just think of Smriti Mandhana; she is as stylish as a male left-hander.

Women's cricket needs entertainers like Smriti and Wolvaardt. The game may have taken off in a big way in India - the ODI World Cup victory could not have been timed better - the WPL and The Hundred may be bringing in new fans, but it is still evolving. There is potential for the sport to grow further. And for that, superstars like Wolvaardt can be handy.

She could inspire a lot more young girls in her country. Women's cricket had received a major boost when the team reached the final of the T20 World Cup in 2023 at home. South Africa went down to the invincible Australia in the final.

All-rounder Marizanne Kapp had told this writer back then how much it meant to become the first senior South African team - male or female - to reach a World Cup final. "The support we received at the World Cup from the crowds was amazing," she said. "But, still you won't be remembered for playing the semifinals, you will be remembered for winning World Cups. We can't get stuck on us reaching the final."

Well, three years later, South African women are still stuck there. They played the final of the 2024 T20 World Cup against New Zealand and then the 2025 ODI World Cup final against India.

In last November's final at the DY Patil Stadium, the host had asked the South Africans to chase at nearly six an over. Not an easy task in a final in front of a full house, but as long as Wolvaardt was there, they had hope. She was dismissed for a 98-ball 101 in the 42nd over. Once the opener went, the remaining three wickets fell quickly.

Former India captain Shubhangi Kulkarni rates that innings very highly. "I thought Wolvaardt played brilliantly in the final against India and South Africa was very much in the game when she was at the wicket," she tells *The Hindu*. "She showed great temperament, which I think is her best quality. Under pressure, in crucial roles, in major tournaments, she has been able to perform well."

She had performed alright in the semifinal against England at Guwahati. It was her 169 off 143 balls - she got out off the last ball of the 48th over - that helped South Africa set a far too big total that denied the Englishwomen a third straight final.

Wolvaardt finished the World Cup as its leading scorer, with 571 runs, 137 more than the second-placed Smriti. Apart from two hundreds, she had also hit three fifties and had an average of 71.37.

That World Cup had begun disastrously for Wolvaardt and South Africa though. At the Barsapara Cricket Stadium, the same venue as the semifinal, against the same team, England, she was out in the second over, her leading edge ending up as a return catch to left-arm spinner Linsey Smith. The South African innings lasted just four balls more than a T20I innings, and totalled 69.

After England chased down that score in just 14.1 overs, Wolvaardt addressed the media. One recalls how calmly she took on the questions from the reporters on that October evening. "We are a much, much better side than 69 all out," she had said. "We spent a lot of time in these conditions in the last couple of months, so definitely wouldn't put it on the wicket."

That was a captain talking.

She sounded confident that her team could bounce back despite a poor start and it was such a long tournament, with every team getting seven games in the league stage. South Africa indeed bounced back. And Wolvaardt led from the front.

"She has been an excellent captain," says Shubhangi. "She is a leader, and has shown a lot of maturity."

The Pune-based veteran rates Wolvaardt as one of the best batters of all time in women's cricket. "She is technically correct and is a classical batter, and I was really surprised she was not bought by any franchise at the inaugural WPL in 2023 (she came in as a replacement for Gujarat Giants' Beth Mooney, who was injured in the opening game of the tournament)," she says. "She plays proper cricketing shots and is good across formats."

Wolvaardt has played just four Tests, though. She has a hundred and fifty from them. She averages a remarkable 51.30 in ODIs. No current player has a better number. She has 5695 runs in the format, with 13 hundreds and 40 fifties. In T20Is, apart from the three hundreds, she has 16 fifties.

Yes, some of those came against India in the recent series, in which her scores read 51, 54, 115, 18, 92 not out. She could not have timed those innings better, either: the T20 World Cup in England is just five weeks away. Wolvaardt will be determined to make a statement in the group of death. She will do that with flair, you can bet.

THE GIST

- Women's cricket needs entertainers like Smriti and Wolvaardt. The game may have taken off in a big way in India – the ODI World Cup victory could not have been timed better
- There is potential for the sport to grow further. And for that, superstars like Wolvaardt can be handy. She could inspire a lot more young girls in her country
- Her scores against India read 51, 54, 115, 18, 92 not out. She could not have timed those innings better, either: the T20 World Cup in England is just five weeks away.

Invasive species may be the wrong enemy in a changing subcontinent

India supports roughly 500 million cattle and other livestock, one of the largest such populations in the world, placing heavy grazing pressure on forests and the commons; in such conditions, 'palatable' species are suppressed while thorny, chemically defended, disturbance-tolerant plants persist

Suprabha Seshan

Across India, campaigns against invasive alien species (IAS) are gathering administrative and judicial force. Authorities now identify, map, classify, and remove species deemed ecological threats.

In the last year alone, India's English-language press has carried sustained coverage of ecological-loss studies, State eradication drives, and human-wildlife conflicts linked to such species. What was once a niche scientific concern has become a visible public issue and priority.

A recent Tamil Nadu court order even portrayed *Prosopis juliflora* shrubs as a near-Statewide threat. Government submissions have reported its clearance from 517 villages across 32 districts while the academic literature has recorded the species across the State. The plants *Lantana camara* and *Senna spectabilis* face similar campaigns elsewhere in India.

The prevailing assumption is simple: remove the invasive species and ecological recovery will follow.

Before accepting that, however, one must first ask: what condition was the landscape in before these species spread, and what conditions now sustain them?

Three patterns emerge from the evidence.

India uses 35-40 million tonnes of urea per year and atmospheric nitrogen deposition now adds 10-30 kg per hectare annually across many regions. Woody nitrogen-fixing species such as *Senna spectabilis* (shown) benefit from such altered conditions. PHILIPP WEIGELL (CC BY)

Physical changes usually came first

Throughout India, native ecological communities had already been transformed before invasive plants became dominant.

Colonial forestry, plantation expansion, and settlement removed vast tracts of forest cover. Millions of hectares were converted to tea, coffee, rubber, teak, and eucalyptus plantations. Diverse habitats gave way to simplified commercial landscapes, with lasting effects on soil biology, shade regimes, and water cycles. Logging, roads, mining, fire suppression, and chemical agriculture fragmented habitats further.

In places like Wayanad, forest edges had already degraded before species like *L. camara* spread into them. Biodiversity and its supporting conditions had already been decimated.

Removing a species alone can't restore what came before. Without functioning ecological relationships, more clearing creates new vacancies, often the very conditions in which another invasive species, or the same one, can quickly return.

P. juliflora was introduced to India in 1877 as part of a misguided ecological experiment. At first seeded from the air, it spread through the guts of cattle that browsed its pods. Then came the 'Green Revolution' and the wider post-independent agricultural intensification. Canals expanded. Borewells multiplied. Fertilizer use surged.

As a result, waterlogging and seepage increased in some regions, depleted aquifers in others, and productivity began to decline on abandoned lands. *P. juliflora* is a deep-rooted phreatophyte that can exploit such altered water and soil regimes. In parts of Tamil Nadu, researchers have linked its surge to irrigation-related moisture conditions.

In other words, the plant was present for decades – what changed was the landscape around it.

Climate change, nutrient loading, land-use change, freshwater disruption, biodiversity loss, and chemical pollution are reshaping ecosystems worldwide. These are largely the effects of a globalised industrial culture pushing rapid urbanisation and infrastructure expansion.

Over three decades, India's urban governance footprint has roughly doubled, marking a systemic expansion of fragmented, high-disturbance landscapes that extend far beyond city boundaries into peri-urban and rural ecologies.

India also supports roughly 500 million cattle and other livestock – one of the largest such populations in the world – placing continuous and heavy grazing pressure on forests and the commons. In such conditions, 'palatable' species are repeatedly suppressed while thorny, chemically defended, disturbance-tolerant plants such as *L. camara* persist or even expand.

Studies have revealed increasing woody cover across many open landscapes worldwide, partly associated with rising atmospheric carbon and other interacting factors. Fertilizer inputs remain high – India alone uses 35-40 million tonnes of urea per year – and atmospheric nitrogen deposition now adds 10-30 kg per hectare annually across many regions. Woody nitrogen-fixing species such as *S. spectabilis* and *P. juliflora* benefit from such altered conditions.

A deeper invasion

Chemical pesticides have further altered soils and microbial networks. Over time, they can disrupt genes, reduce resilience, intensify pest cycles, and weaken the ecological foundations on which productivity itself depends.

These changes were driven less by individual choice than by policies, infrastructure, and economic systems designed to maximise production at scale. The result: food production must continue yet the same hydrological, chemical, and atmospheric systems that increase output are also exhausting the land and degrading ecosystems now slated for restoration.

When multiple factors shift together, plant communities reorganise. *P. juliflora* growth is part of wider hydrological and chemical change across the subcontinent. Similar dynamics may apply, in differing ways, to other IAS. These plants may function as ecological first responders – species whose physiology suits rapid changes in landscape conditions.

Given time, other species follow these pioneer species. In the early stages, many may be exotic and fast-moving. Eventually, native species may also re-establish themselves. However, such ecological succession does not guarantee a return to earlier ecological states. As the underlying conditions continue to shift, new ecological assemblages are likely to emerge among the species able to thrive within them.

Life is conditional

Evolutionary and palaeoecological evidence suggests that the world's native biomes developed under very different climatic and nutrient regimes. Grasslands expanded during drier phases of history while rainforests arose and diversified in warmer, wetter conditions. Many species can't easily tolerate the nutrient-rich soils, altered climate or hydrologically changed landscapes of the present.

Some IAS species may also perform compensatory ecological roles. They can accumulate heavy metals, nitrogen, and carbon in biomass, provide cover for smaller wildlife in disturbed landscapes, create conditions into which other species later enter, provide windbreaks, and bind soil. There are, of course, real consequences. Dense thickets of invasive plants can reduce accessible forage for elephants and other herbivores in forests such as the Western Ghats. But these effects unfold in landscapes already altered by logging, plantations, and nutrient enrichment.

Conservation efforts that target only the visible plant thus risk misdiagnosing the problem. It is easier to count acres of IAS removed than to measure shifts in moisture regimes or soil chemistry. Removal alone does not address the underlying drivers. Restoration requires that we read the land comprehensively, understand its history and interacting processes, and work with the ecological and human communities that remain.

What it will take

This does not mean certain species should never be removed but that restoration is difficult and requires attention to ecological processes and biodiversity. It is local, patient, and continuous. Large-scale mechanical removal brings complications of its own. While clearing vast acreages may serve a burgeoning biomass economy, there is little proof that it supports ecological recovery, which needs time.

Fears that invasive species will take over often accompany business opportunities for earthmovers and new employment schemes. A villain, it seems, can animate an economy faster than restoration can.

Communities and practitioners embedded in these habitats are often best placed to undertake careful removal where it makes ecological and cultural sense. Success, however, remains uncertain and can only be judged over years. Restoration should proceed with least harm, phased planting, intergenerational care, and meaningful human livelihoods.

Otherwise, India risks spending much of its conservation energy removing plants that are symptoms of a wider civilisational transformation that it has yet to confront.

(Suprabha Seshan lives and works at the Gurukula Botanical Sanctuary in Wayanad district, Kerala. suprabha.seshan@gmail.com)

A staff member rests as children play games at a RedClaw AI promotion booth set up outside a shopping mall in Beijing on March 28. AP

Expanding AI gets its biggest testing ground in China

Associated Press

On a recent weekday, around 50 people gathered outside the headquarters of a Chinese mobile Internet company, waiting to get help with installing an artificial intelligence (AI) assistant.

The scene in Beijing, China's capital, was repeated for days at several events and was also seen in the southern technology hub Shenzhen in March, as engineers helped crowds trying to set up the popular AI "agent" OpenClaw on their laptops. "I'm worried about falling behind in technological developments," said Sun Lei, a 41-year-old human resources manager at the Cheetah event. She said she hoped the tool might help her source and screen resumes across various recruitment platforms.

More than a year after OpenAI's Chinese rival DeepSeek stunned the world with its advanced AI model, China has become a testing ground for mass use of AI tools. Chinese people and businesses have rapidly embraced AI for all sorts of things, from booking and planning travel, ordering food and hailing rides. Of its 1.4 billion population, more than 600 million were using generative AI as of December, a 142% increase from a year earlier, according to a report by the government-controlled China Internet Network Information Centre.

More than 600 million people in China were using generative AI as of December 2025, a 142% increase from a year earlier

With the recent surge in the use of "agentic" AI like OpenClaw, the consumption of data by AI models has also risen. Measured in what computer scientists call tokens, or units of data such as part of a word, the weekly share used by Chinese AI models has recently surpassed U.S. models, according to OpenRouter, an AI "gateway platform" that tracks data and enforces security across different AI models. "The (AI) competition is clearly shifting from models to ecosystems," said Lizzi Lee, a fellow at the Asia Society Policy Institute's Center for China Analysis focused on economics and technology. "Chinese users are basically acting as real-time testers at scale."

Chinese technology companies like Tencent, Alibaba and Baidu are also racing to commercialise AI. Tencent integrated OpenClaw into WeChat, China's own "super-app" which is a messaging tool that can also be used to order food and make payments.

OpenClaw, originally created by Austrian software developer Peter Steinberger last year, won quick and enthusiastic use thanks to its ability to use various tools to complete complicated tasks. Zhao Yikang, a Chinese college student in Macao, uses OpenClaw in both his studies and daily life. "AI can understand things in a second," Zhao said. "You just need to act as a commander and tell it what to do."

Preparing to start a photo services business after graduation, Zhao asked AI to build a company website. Within 10 minutes, it had generated a fully functional site for less than 5 yuan (₹70).

Chinese companies increasingly are setting internal targets for boosting use of AI to improve efficiency, said Janet Tang, a partner & managing director focused on technology at consultancy AlixPartners.

There are "a lot of application scenarios," said Wang Xiaogang, co-founder of the Chinese AI software company SenseTime and chairman of ACE Robotics. "The industry is developing very fast and the people, they are very open and they're eager to try the AI in a lot of scenarios."

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THE SCIENCE QUIZ

Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in

Chemistries of the surface and the bulk

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1

The _____ of an atom is equal to the number of atoms bonded to it. In a clump of atoms, those on the surface will have a lower value than those in the bulk, since the surface offers fewer neighbouring atoms. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 2

In a liquid, every atom or molecule is pulled equally in all directions by its neighbours. But on the surface, atoms/molecules have neighbours only on one 'side', so these particles exist in a state of constant stress. What is the resulting force called, which also allows some insects to walk on water?

QUESTION 3

It is slightly easier for molecules to escape from smaller droplets. Called the Gibbs-Thomson effect, this is because the X of smaller droplets is higher. The effect is the reason ice cream left in the freezer becomes more grainy over time. Name X, which is a form of pressure.

QUESTION 4

Inside a metal, many electrons are not confined to their atoms but are free to flow around, like a fluid. If you disturb this fluid, it can slosh back and forth. These collective oscillations in the fluid are called what? The name comes from the technical term 'plasma oscillation'.

QUESTION 5

It is possible for the surface of a material to start melting before the bulk does even if it is heated uniformly. This is because the material can cool by allowing what to form on its surface? It is the reason a gold nanoparticle melts far below the temperature at which a gold ring melts.

Visual: Name the brilliant effect on display here. A form of iridescence, it is entirely due to features on the surface of the oyster shell. BROCKEN INAGLORY (CC BY-SA)

Answers to May 5 quiz:

1. Drugs to block the final step in acid secretion – **Ans: Proton-pump inhibitors**
2. Drugs that work by blocking the COX enzymes – **Ans: NSAIDs**
3. WHO system that gives non-brand names to drugs – **Ans: International Nonproprietary Names (INN)**
4. Expansion of 'ARB' – **Ans: Angiotensin II receptor blockers**
5. Copy of a biologic made by another manufacturer – **Ans: Biosimilar**

Visual: **Beta-lactam ring**

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Cost of EU plan to phase out Chinese tech for the bloc

432.83 in $ billion. EU proposals to tighten cybersecurity by phasing out equipment from Chinese suppliers risk costing the bloc over $400 billion in the next five years, China's Chamber of Commerce to the EU said. REUTERS

Teaching hospital doctors dismissed by A.P. government

51 Andhra Pradesh Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav said the government has permanently dismissed 51 doctors serving under the Director of Medical Education over "unauthorised absence from duties". The move is part of a crackdown on negligence in the State's health care system. PTI

Amount to be spent by Musk on SpaceX AI chip project in Texas

55 in $ billion. Elon Musk's SpaceX plans to invest at least $55 billion to build semiconductor manufacturing facility in Texas, according to a public notice, producing chips for AI, robotics and data centres in space. He said the facility would be run jointly by his firm Tesla and his rocket company SpaceX. AFP

Saplings to be planted by Delhi Forest Dept. in the Central Ridge

1.5 in lakh. The Delhi Forest Department will launch a plantation project in the Central Ridge to transform around 10 acres of degraded forest land into a dense native forest ecosystem. They will plant nearly 1 lakh to 1.5 lakh saplings at a density of 3-5 saplings per square metre. PTI

Number of skeletal remains recovered from mass grave site

249 The number of skeletal remains recovered at the alleged mass grave site in Chemmani reached 249 during the third phase of excavation work ordered by a court, according to a human rights lawyer. PTI

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When does a CM cease to hold office?

Can a Governor remove a Chief Minister? What does 'pleasure of the Governor' mean? When is a floor test required? What happens after the Assembly's tenure ends? Can election results be challenged in court?

EXPLAINER

Aaratrika Bhaumik

The story so far:

A day after the Trinamool Congress lost the West Bengal elections to the BJP, party chairperson Mamata Banerjee on May 5 said she would not resign as Chief Minister, alleging that the verdict was the result of a "conspiracy" rather than the people's mandate. Addressing a press conference, Ms. Banerjee claimed the elections had not been conducted fairly and accused the BJP of misusing central forces to "forcibly capture" booths and influence the outcome. She added that the party would challenge the results and continue its political fight.

Can a Governor remove a CM?

Article 164(1) of the Constitution provides that "the Chief Minister shall be appointed by the Governor and the other Ministers shall be appointed by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister, and the Ministers shall hold office during the pleasure of the Governor." On a literal reading of the provision, therefore, the Governor appears to possess the authority to remove a CM from office. However, members of the Constituent Assembly had cautioned that such a provision could potentially lend itself to an arbitrary exercise of gubernatorial discretion.

Constituent Assembly member Mohammad Ismail Khan had moved an amendment to the provision (then Article 144 of the Draft Constitution) proposing that the phrase "during the pleasure" be replaced with the words "so long as they enjoy the confidence of the Legislative Assembly of the State." He contended that once the constitutional scheme envisaged the Governor as a nominee of the

A woman walks past banners of Mamata Banerjee, on Wednesday, in Kolkata. PTI

President, the Constitution ought to have made it explicit that the Council of Ministers would hold office not at the Governor's pleasure, but only so long as it continued to enjoy the confidence of the Legislative Assembly.

Addressing this concern, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution, affirmed that the Council of Ministers shall hold office only so long as it enjoys the confidence of the majority. "The reason why we have not so expressly stated it," he explained, "is because it has not been stated in that fashion or in those terms in any of the Constitutions which lay down a parliamentary system of government."

Over the years, the Supreme Court has also interpreted the Governor's powers as flowing primarily from the "aid and advice" of the Council of Ministers. In *A.G. Perarivalan v. State Through Superintendent of Police* (2022), the apex court observed that the "Governor" is "but a shorthand expression for the State government". While recognising the Governor as "the formal head and sole repository of the executive power", the court held that the office is ordinarily bound by the aid and advice of the State's Council of Ministers.

When is a floor test required?

If a Governor asks a Chief Minister to step down and invites another candidate for the post while the tenure of the Legislative Assembly is still on, there has to be a floor test – a constitutional mechanism used to determine whether the executive enjoys the confidence of the legislature. Under this process, the Chief Minister must prove majority support in the House. Failure to do so requires the CM to resign.

If no party or coalition can form a stable government, President's Rule under Article 356 may be imposed as a measure of last resort.

What happens after the Assembly's tenure ends?

Article 172 of the Constitution deals with the duration of a State Legislative Assembly and stipulates that, "unless sooner dissolved", an Assembly "shall continue for five years from the date appointed for its first meeting and no longer, and the expiration of the said period of five years shall operate as a dissolution of the Assembly."

According to the Election Commission, the current West Bengal Assembly commenced its term on May 8, 2021, and is set to expire on May 7. Thereafter, the Governor will have to initiate the process for constituting a new Assembly.

What happens next?

According to former Lok Sabha Secretary-General P.D.T. Achary, a formal resignation following defeat in an Assembly election is largely a matter of convention. "Even if Ms. Banerjee does not resign, it would make no material difference. The tenure of the present Assembly ends on May 7, and with its dissolution, she will automatically cease to hold office as Chief Minister," he said.

He, however, pointed out that an election petition may be filed before the Calcutta High Court within 45 days from the declaration of the results of the concerned candidate. Section 100 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 enumerates the grounds on which the election of a candidate may be challenged and declared void, including corrupt practices by the candidate and non-compliance with statutory provisions by the returning officer, among other grounds. He noted that a writ petition may be maintainable where the challenge concerns the integrity of the electoral process itself, including allegations of arbitrary voter deletions during the special intensive revision of electoral rolls in West Bengal.

"Large-scale deletion of voters in an election constitutes a violation of fundamental rights and can therefore be challenged through a writ petition," he said.

THE GIST

- Though Article 164 states that the Council of Ministers holds office "during the pleasure of the Governor", this is not absolute; in practice, a Chief Minister can continue only so long as they enjoy the confidence of the Legislative Assembly.
- The majority of a Chief Minister is determined through a floor test in the House, and if they fail to prove support, they must resign.

What is Karnataka's new gig worker grievance system?

What gap does Karnataka's new system address? How will the welfare fee be used?

Shilpa Elizabeth

The story so far:

On May 1, 2026 – International Workers' Day – the Karnataka government announced the operationalisation of a specialised grievance redressal mechanism for platform-based gig workers in the State. Claimed to be the first government-backed grievance handling mechanism for gig workers in India, it allows workers to officially lodge complaints through the Integrated Public Grievance Redressal System (IPGRS), the State's centralised digital platform for addressing citizen grievances related to government schemes.

How does the system work?

Platform-based gig workers can now officially lodge grievances, including those related to pay, working conditions, and platform-specific disputes, via the IPGRS.

Under the Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Act, every aggregator platform must constitute an Internal Dispute Resolution Committee (IDRC). Grievances filed on the IPGRS will be automatically routed to the respective platform's IDRC. Upon receiving a complaint, the IDRC is expected to attempt resolution within 15 working days, and is allowed up to 45 days to issue a final order. Any party aggrieved by the final decision can escalate the matter to the Karnataka Gig Workers Welfare Board within 30 days.

What concerns can a gig worker raise?

Gig workers can raise complaints related to suspension, blocking, or deactivation of accounts, termination from the platform, reduction or withholding of payments, unfair penalties, discrimination, unsafe working conditions, or other violations of rights guaranteed under the Act.

What gap does it address?

While many platforms have internal grievance redressal mechanisms, these systems exist outside a formal dispute resolution framework. As a result, gig workers have often reported a lack of resolution to their grievances. Many have complained that platforms quite often turn a blind eye to the workers' woes.

The Karnataka government's move seeks to bring more structure and transparency into the process and ensure legal recourse for these workers outside the formal economy. Gig workers can now officially lodge grievances through the portal, which will then be routed to the respective platform's IDRC. The government, as a central facilitator, will monitor the process.

Why is the mechanism being implemented now?

The Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Act, 2025, was officially notified in September 2025.

In March 2026, Karnataka became the first Indian State to notify the Rules to enact the law for gig workers. The grievance-redressal mechanism for gig workers in the State forms a crucial part of the Act. It is considered a major deterrent that would hinder arbitrary terminations or account deactivation of gig workers and address their concerns.

What are the other key developments related to the Act?

In January 2026, the Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers Welfare Development Board was constituted to implement welfare measures.

Platforms have been mandated to furnish details of both the company and their gig workers – including name, age, phone number, Aadhaar number, UAN, and bank account details – to the Board. This data will be integrated into the Board's portal.

According to the government, so far, around 12 platforms/aggregators have provided details of 12 lakh active gig workers in the State.

However, given that several workers are associated with multiple platforms, the numbers could contain overlaps. This is expected to be sorted once the government comes up with unique IDs for each worker.

In February, the government announced that 1% of every transaction will be collected from aggregator platforms to provide social security benefits to platform-based gig workers.

What will the welfare fee be used for?

The welfare fee will go to the Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers' Fund to provide social security and welfare benefits to platform-based gig workers in the State.

According to government officials, schemes for gig workers, depending on the platform they work for, are being developed and will be put forward for deliberation at the next board meeting. The schemes being considered include life insurance, accidental benefit, disability benefit, medical benefit, maternity benefit, and old-age protection, depending on the nature of gig work.

THE GIST

- Karnataka has operationalised a government-backed grievance redressal mechanism for platform-based gig workers, allowing them to lodge complaints through the IPGRS, which is routed to platform IDRCs for resolution.
- The move aims to bring structure, transparency, and legal recourse to gig workers, addressing issues such as pay, working conditions, and arbitrary account deactivation.

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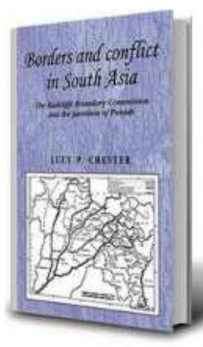
GETTY IMAGES



Geography, data, and disagreement in drawing India's Partition boundaries

The division of the country in 1947 was as much a failure of geographical certainty as it was a political compromise; the Boundary Commission struggled with contested maps, unclear data, and competing demands of territorial contiguity and demographic realities

Charuta Ghadyalpatil

Oskar Spate, one of the only geographers associated with the Punjab Boundary Commission in India, regularly wrote in his private journals about the fundamental conflict between the political demand for Pakistan and the geographical realities of its implementation. Spate was hired by the Ahmadiyya community to help prepare their claims for the Boundary Commission, and while he did prepare extensive maps and documents for them – and for the Muslim League – his unease anticipated a key strand of tension between geography and political reality that the Boundary Commission had to contend with throughout its tenure.

This tension is explored in greater detail in *Mapping Partition: Politics, Territory and the End of Empire in India and Pakistan* (Wiley) by Hannah Fitzpatrick. The book studies the role and mobilisation (or lack thereof) of geographical knowledge and expertise for the process of partitioning. It begins by tracing the evolution of a colonial archive of geographical knowledge on the Indian empire as represented in maps, census figures, gazetteers, ethnological reports, and atlases. Fitzpatrick argues that this knowledge was closely tied to colonial rule long before it was used in the partition of the subcontinent.

The book examines several different boundary proposals submitted to the Punjab Boundary Commission to highlight how the Commission's terms of reference, which required territorially contiguous religious majorities, often required solutions that put geographical realities in direct competition with demographic and political imperatives. For instance, solutions like enclaves or protected corridors could address the need to have demographically homogenous territories, but not the requirement of territorial contiguity; while contiguous boundaries often left large sections of Muslim and non-Muslim populations stranded, leaving large-scale population transfers as the only viable option. Part of the difficulty, as Spate himself noted, was precisely that the Boundary Commission sought to apply a geographical and territorial solution for a conflict that was, at its core, political.

An additional problem was the lack of clarity over what constituted accurate data. In *Borders and Conflict in South Asia: The Radcliffe Boundary Line and the Partition of Punjab* (Manchester University Press), Lucy Chester notes that the Commission's mandate required it to take into consideration "other factors" while delimiting a boundary, but what these other factors meant was only vaguely defined. The ambiguity led to varying interpretations of what data was to be given precedence and the weight and value to attach to each of these, making it virtually impossible to agree on one boundary line. Indeed, when the final boundary award was announced by Sir Cyril Radcliffe, the Commission's chair, both Congress and Muslim League leaders lamented that the Commission hadn't taken into consideration the "right" factors in fixing a boundary.

Additionally, access to official Survey of India maps had been greatly restricted since World War II, meaning each delegation seemingly prepared its own maps. These maps, which displayed the wide disagreements over questions of space and territory that the Commission had to navigate, ranged from conflicting depictions of living patterns, documents on socio-economic resources, the Railways, or Punjab's canal network. Thus, while it was clear that geographical knowledge was crucial to the making of the boundary, what precisely constituted useful knowledge and its accuracy was much less clear.

Similar concerns over the credibility of data marked the partition process in Bengal, which was also impacted by the regional topography in unique ways. Willem van Schendel's *The Bengal Borderland: Beyond Nation and State in South Asia* (Anthem South Asian Studies) studies how the Radcliffe Line came together as a "patchwork border", as complicated by the era's politics as it was disrupted by geography. As van Schendel shows, not only did the Bengal Boundary Commission have to work without updated maps, it also had to contend with unique topographical features like shifting rivers and deltaic tidal islands of the Sundarbans. In several sections where maps were found to be inaccurate or simply absent, the Commission had no prior reference point upon which it could base its boundary award.

Even as India and Pakistan both accepted the Radcliffe Award as the final boundary, what it meant on the ground was unclear. Consequently, as van Schendel notes, the demarcation of a boundary was less a question for geographical or boundary-making expertise, but more a problem for local bureaucracies and governments to settle. What makes *The Bengal Borderland* particularly interesting is its focus on the decades after 1947, when the boundary was translated from a line on paper to one on the ground - and the long-lasting impact this territorial engineering had on the region's inhabitants.

If Fitzpatrick and Chester show how geographical expertise was limited and, more to the point, deeply contested, *The Bengal Borderland* offers a glimpse into how geography acted on boundary-making efforts. Ultimately, as the books show, what was at stake wasn't the application of cartography or geographical practice to society, but deciding which vision of space would become real.

(Charuta Ghadyalpatil is a PhD researcher in the Department of Geography at Durham University)

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

A quiz on birthdays, war scenarios, and everything else that happened on May 7

Mohammed Hidhayat

QUESTION 1
The first inauguration of _____ as President of the largest country in the world (as per land area) took place on this day in 2000. The former intelligence officer continues to lead the nation to this day. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 2
Today marks the birthday of an Indian polymath who wrote and composed the national anthems of two countries, possibly influenced a third as well. Name him.

QUESTION 3
Started as a radio repair business, this modest firm went on to pioneer major innovations in consumer electronics. Name the iconic Japanese company established on this day in 1946.

QUESTION 4
On May 7, 1954, French forces were defeated by Vietnamese troops at Dien Bien Phu. The battle was part of which war?

QUESTION 5
Which composer premiered his Ninth Symphony in Vienna on May 7, 1824? The performance was conducted by Michael Umlauf because of concerns about the composer's hearing loss.

QUESTION 6
Nazi Germany signed an unconditional surrender on May 8, 1945, bringing the Second World War in Europe to an end. However, an earlier surrender document signed the previous day was rejected by the Soviet Union. Why?

QUESTION 7
On May 7, 1999, the U.S.-led NATO accidentally bombed the embassy of which country in Belgrade?

QUESTION 8
Which parliamentary confrontation beginning May 7, 1940, directly led to Winston Churchill replacing Neville Chamberlain as Britain's PM?

Visual Question
Heads of key neutralist nations of the Non-Aligned Movement at a meeting in 1960. Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru is seen on the left. Identify the leader on the far right, who was born on May 7, 1892, and was a long-time communist head of a Balkan federation.
THE HINDU ARCHIVES

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. TVK candidate Seenivasa Sethupathy defeated DMK leader K.R. Periyakaruppan in the Tiruppattur Assembly seat by one vote. Which Vijay movie, directed by A.R. Murugadoss, popularised the power of a single vote? **Ans: Sarkar**
2. This man directed Vijay's first film in a leading role and also gave him the title of 'Ilaya Thalapathy (young commander)'. Name him. **Ans: Vijay's father, S.A. Chandrasekhar**
3. Vijay played triple roles in a film directed by Atlee. Name it. **Ans: Mersal**
4. The film Thamizhan launched the career of a famous Bollywood actor. In it, Vijay's character spreads awareness about the law to the common man. Name the Bollywood actor and name Vijay's character, which is also the name of another Tamil actor. **Ans: Priyanka Chopra, Surya**
5. This film's tagline annoyed Jayalalithaa. What was the name of the film, and what was the tagline? **Ans: Thalaiva; time to lead**
Visual: This is a poster of a Vijay film that remains unreleased. Name the film which was stalled due to intense CBFC disputes. **Ans: Jana Nayagan**
Early Birds: Sunil Madhavan | K.N. Viswanathan | Tamanjit Bisla | Arpit kullu | Erfanally Oosmany

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

"Did you watch the men's final?"

"No, I didn't bother to watch it. I don't like Pete Sampras. But I knew from the beginning that he could win the event standing on his head."

"Standing on his head?"

"When you say that someone can do something standing on his head, it means he can do it very easily. He can...."

"...he can do it blindfolded."

"Exactly! Here's an example. Shyam is an excellent dentist. He can remove that rotten tooth of yours standing on his head."

"Mohan said he could pass the TOEFL test standing on his head. How does that sound?"

"Excellent. Sujatha is great with computers. She can write programmes standing on her head."

"Talking about Sujatha, what was she complaining about the other day?"

"She apparently got stood up by Ramesh and she...."

"...Ramesh stood her up? Why? Was he measuring her height?"

"No! No! You see, when you say that somebody 'stood you up', it means that some person made an appointment with you and failed to turn up. And it usually...."

"...in other words, you can be stood up by anybody?"

"Not exactly! You are usually stood up by your boyfriend or girlfriend. Or someone very close to you."

"In other words, the boyfriend or girlfriend doesn't show up for the date."

"Exactly! Here is an example. When Jyothi stood him up for the fifth time, I think Chander got the message."

"Sekhar stood up Shyamala because he wanted to play cricket with his friends. How does that sound?"

"Great! But I would say that it's not cricket!"

"I have never been stood up by anyone."

"You've never had the courage to ask anyone to go out with you!"

"That's not true! I've asked...."

"...let's not get into an argument!"

"O.K. O.K! Have you changed your mind about buying a car? Don't you...."

"...no, I haven't. I am going to stand pat on the issue."

"Stand pat on the issue! I've never heard that expression before."

"When you say you are going to 'stand pat on something', it means that you are going to stick firmly to your position or opinion."

"I see. Ramdas believes that some of our senior cricket players have made tons of money through illegal means. He has stood pat on this issue for the past two years."

"Dilip decided not to get married when he was twenty one. He has stood pat on the decision for the past seven years."

"I think I understand how the expression is used now. So you are pat on your decision about not buying a car."

"I guess you could say that. Unless of course, I spot a stand-out which I can buy at a very low price."

"What does it mean? Something very special?"

"Exactly! When you refer to a person or a thing as being a 'stand-out', it means that you think that the person or thing is something extraordinary."

"In other words, it stands apart from the rest of the things."

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Word of the day

Kibosh:
stop from happening or developing

Synonyms: hinder, delay, obstruct

Usage: *A sudden storm put the kibosh on our beach picnic.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/kibosh

International Phonetic Alphabet: /kɪbɒʃ/

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