FRIDAY
May 8, 2026
CHENNAI
CITY EDITION
24 Pages ₹ 5.00

THE HINDU

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

Vol. 149 • No. 109
Regd. TN/ARD/110/2024-2026
RNI No. 1001/1957

To subscribe,
give a missed call at
9828331787
or scan QR code

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna

CHENNAI, IDHU UNGALUKKANA
REVOLUTION

Today…
Lives have tightened.
Homes have shrunk into pigeonholes.
Between concrete, traffic and pollution
peace slipped away.
The city kept expanding.
But our lives kept shrinking.
Less laughter. Less play. Less living.

But what if…
Space came back?
Green found its way home?
Children had room to run again?
And families… had time to just be?

This isn't just an upgrade.
This is reclaiming what the city took away.
This is a revolution where life expands again.

THIS IS CASAGRAND HIGHCITY ON ORR

LAUNCHING **CASAGRAND HIGHCITY** BANG ON ORR

LUXURIOUS 2 & 3 BHK APTS. FROM JUST ₹49L - ₹67L*

[THIS PRICE IS FOR FIRST 25 BOOKINGS ONLY]

MASTER CRAFTED BY A GLOBAL VISIONARY
- 41-acre mega township
- Designed by Mr. Wong Chiu Man (WOW Architects, Singapore)
- Unfolding into 22-floor towers and 4,000+ homes

WHERE LIFE IS RULED BY NATURE
- 28 acres of open space
- 22-acre lush greenery that includes 10-acre nature zones
- One-of-a-kind 3.5-acre tropical forest

EXPANSIVE HOMES THAT MAKE A STATEMENT
- 73% carpet area efficiency & uninterrupted scenic views
- Convertible balconies with 3x light & ventilation
- American designed CP & sanitary fittings

WHY HIGHCITY IS CHENNAI'S REVOLUTION

SPORTING AMBITION TAKES ROOT & RISES
- India's largest 5-acre sports clubhouse
- 35+ sports courts built to global standards
- Lifetime premium membership for residents

THE APEX OF BLISS & LEISURE
- 163 world-class amenities with 25+ exclusive for kids
- 21,000 sft. resort-style aquatic paradise with 3 swimming pools including an olympic-size
- Lavish 1.3-acre recreational clubhouse

A FULFILLING ECOSYSTEM
- Casagrand International School within the community
- Co-working spaces, EV charging, car wash bay & more
- Casagrand curated community events, festivals and social experiences

CREDAI

THE REVOLUTIONARY LOCATION

THE ONLY PLACE CONNECTED TO ANNA NAGAR, T. NAGAR & ADYAR WITHIN **40 MINS**

CASAGRAND HIGHCITY

- PORUR 30 MINS
- VADAPALANI 35 MINS
- ANNA NAGAR 40 MINS
- AIRPORT 15 MINS
- PALLAVARAM 20 MINS
- KATHIPARA 35 MINS
- T. NAGAR 40 MINS
- SHOLINGANALLUR 30 MINS
- VELACHERY 30 MINS
- ADYAR 40 MINS

THE REVOLUTIONARY PRICE

PRICED BEST AMONG THE NEIGHBOURHOODS

TAMBARAM MARKET PRICE	PALLAVARAM MARKET PRICE	PORUR MARKET PRICE	VELACHERY MARKET PRICE
₹7000/SFT.	₹8000/SFT.	₹9000/SFT.	₹10000/SFT.

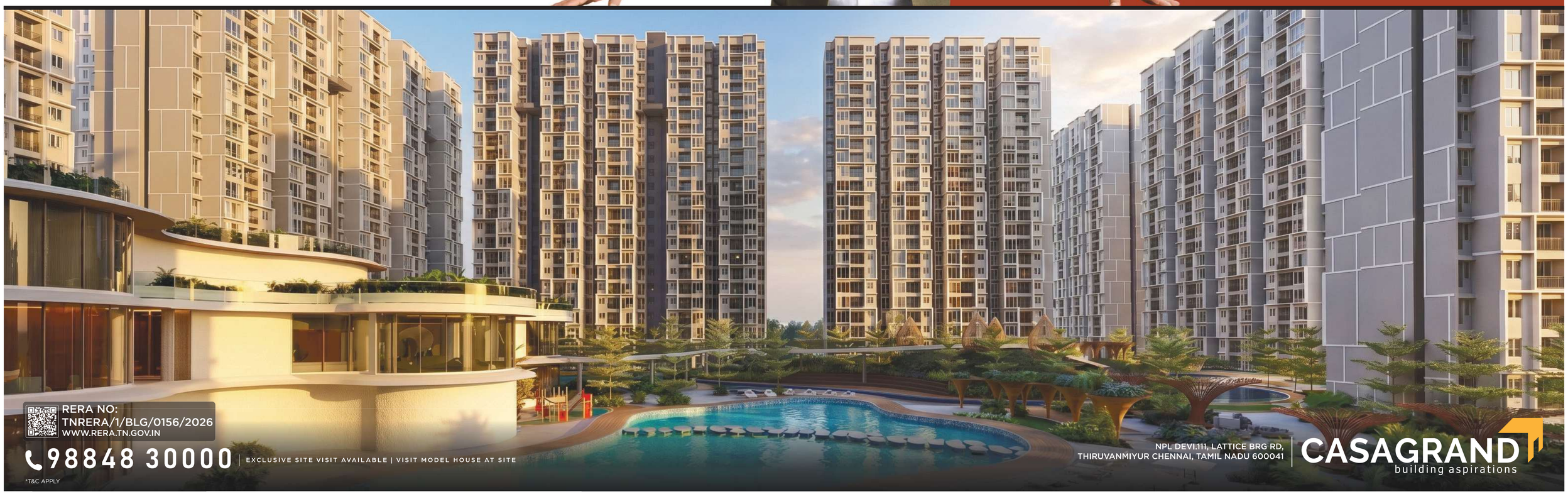
HIGHCITY LAUNCH PRICE	EARLY BIRD PRICE		
~~₹3899/SFT.~~	₹3699/SFT. (FIRST 25 BOOKINGS)	₹3799/SFT. (26 - 50 BOOKINGS)	₹3899/SFT. (51 - 100 BOOKINGS)

***BOOK TODAY, TO AVAIL THE BEST EARLY BIRD PRICE!**

TYPE	SIZE	LAUNCH PRICE	EARLY BIRD PRICE
2 BHK	1109 SFT.	~~₹54L~~	₹49L
3 BHK	1284 - 1636 SFT.	~~₹57L - ₹70L~~	₹55L - ₹67L

PHASE-I TOTAL UNITS: 1099 | SOLD: 329 | AVAILABLE: 770

HANDOVER IN 36 MONTHS



RERA NO: TNRERA/1/BLG/0156/2026
WWW.RERA.TN.GOV.IN

98848 30000 | EXCLUSIVE SITE VISIT AVAILABLE | VISIT MODEL HOUSE AT SITE

*T&C APPLY

NPL DEVI.111, LATTICE BRG RD, THIRUVANMIYUR CHENNAI, TAMIL NADU 600041

CASAGRAND building aspirations

LAUNCHING | CASAGRAND HIGHCITY | BANG ON ORR

LUXURIOUS 2 & 3 BHK APTS. FROM JUST ₹49L - ₹67L*

SWIMMING POOL

ENTERTAINMENT & FEATURES

SPORTS
Cricket practice net, multipurpose court, half basketball court,pickle ball court, badminton court, woodland fitness, fitness recharge pod & active loop

KIDS
Rock climbing wall, toddler play area Little pine play arena, sunbeam pavilion, hidden wonderland, adventure play lawn play pavilion, hilltop play zone & more...

SWIMMING POOL
Adult swimming pool (25m lap), kid's splash pool, kid's shallow play pool, jacuzzi leisure pool, lazy pool, dancing waters, island cabana, poolside meditation deck, poolside patio, in-water loungers, aqua trail & more...

ENTERTAINMENT
Sunken lawn, lantern court with BBQ pods, party pavilion, makers' market, the pop-up plaza & riverside nook

FEATURES
Multipurpose lawn, bus bay with halt zone, drop off plaza, elevated family deck, sky nest, treetop walk, senior citizen alcove, mirror pool, water feature with boulders & more...

THEMED GARDENS
Foliage court, community gardens, fragrant grove, woodland meadows, herb, spice & edible garden

163 REVOLUTIONARY AMENITIES

CLUBHOUSE AMENITIES

ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENIENCE
Central atrium with seating, double height banquet hall, serene lounge, multipurpose hall, mini theatre, learning centre, reading pods, scholar's lounge, reading nook, business centre & more...

KIDS PLAY AREA & CRECHE
Rainbow ball pool, soft fall mounds, explorers toy wall, cribs, mini trampoline, pause & play court, little artists' corner, magnetic dart board, mini basketball hoop, velcro wall, little builders' zone & more...

INDOOR GAMES ROOM
Video gaming console, air hockey, foosball, snooker, table tennis, VR duo & subsoccer tablet

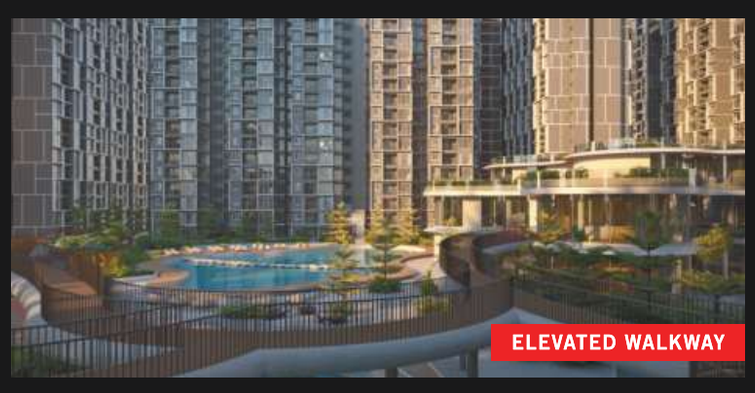
FEATURES & FACILITIES
Convenience store, FMS room & association room, guest room, car washing bay & car charging bays

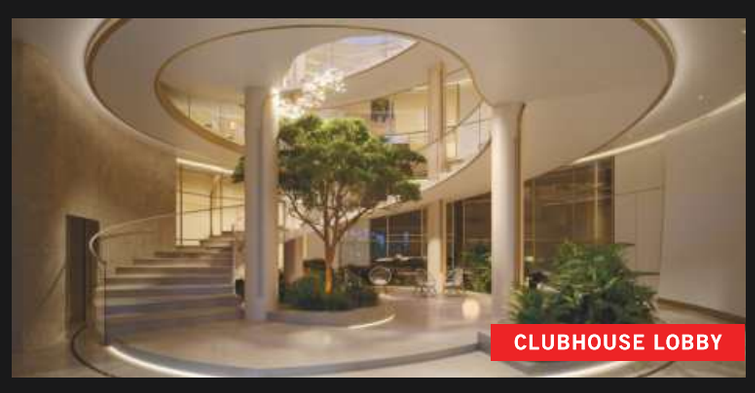
ROOFTOP
Sky deck, skyline café, zen terrace, vista seater & pebble lounge

& 50+ IN THE SPORTS CLUB

SCAN TO EXPERIENCE VIRTUAL WALKTHROUGH

RECREATIONAL CLUBHOUSE


ELEVATED WALKWAY


CLUBHOUSE LOBBY

INDIA'S REVOLUTIONARY SPORTS CLUBHOUSE

- India's largest sports club on 5 acres, designed for 12 different sports
- 50+ amenities for wellness & an active lifetsyle
- 35+ sports courts built to global standards
- Lifetime premium membership for residents
- Exclusive sports courts for futsal (7-a side), badminton & pickleball
- Elite recreational sports like bowling alley, squash, tennis, basketball & box cricket
- Indoor gaming zones with billiard, table tennis, board games
- Spa & wellness zone with a gym, sauna, steam, salon, therapy rooms & jacuzzi

- Water retreats for every age with an indoor, Olympic-size, kids pool & a pool bar
- Curated dining experience with a restaurant, juice bar, sports bar & refreshment corner
- Rooftop cabanas & sky bar for elevated leisure
- Signature lounges for relaxation, recreation & socialising
- Elegant celebration venues with banquet hall, pre-function area and leisure lawn
- Convenience amenities like guest suites, business centre, medical centre & more
- Vibrant community spaces like viewing gallery, courtyard garden & central plaza

WHY CASAGRAND?

*T&C APPLY

No.1 Ranked in Chennai for last 8 years*
Top 2 Ranked in South India
Top 7 Ranked in India
22+ years of Trust & Legacy
7000+ Homes sold in FY'24 – 25
6 Cities Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, Coimbatore & Dubai

2 months Guaranteed rental
6 months Guaranteed resale
7 years Warranty
10 years Maintenance by us
2000+ Quality checks
On-time Delivery of projects

CREDAI

98848 30000
EXCLUSIVE SITE VISIT AVAILABLE | VISIT MODEL HOUSE AT SITE

RERA NO: TNRERA/1/BLG/0156/2026
WWW.RERA.TN.GOV.IN

NPL DEVI.111, LATTICE BRG RD, THIRUVANMIYUR CHENNAI-600041

CASAGRAND building aspirations

*Based on CBRE report 2024

Casagrand Premier Builder Limited is proposing, subject to receipt of requisite approvals, market conditions and other considerations, to make an initial public offer of its equity shares and has filed a draft red herring prospectus ("**DRHP**") with the Securities and Exchange Board of India ("**SEBI**"). The DRHP is available on the website of our Company, at www.casagrand.co.in, the SEBI at www.sebi.gov.in as well as on the websites of the book running lead managers Motilal Oswal Investment Advisors Limited and DAM Capital Advisors Limited at www.motilaloswalgroup.com and www.damcapital.in respectively, and the websites of the stock exchange(s) at www.nseindia.com and www.bseindia.com, respectively. Any potential investor should note that investment in equity shares involves a high degree of risk and for details relating to such risk, see "Risk Factors" of the RHP, when available. Potential investors should not rely on the DRHP filed with SEBI for making any investment decision.

The Equity Shares have not been and will not be registered under the U.S. Securities Act of 1933, as amended ("U.S. Securities Act") or any other applicable law of the United States and, unless so registered, may not be offered or sold within the United States except pursuant to an exemption from, or in a transaction not subject to, the registration requirements of the U.S. Securities Act and applicable state securities laws. Accordingly, the Equity Shares are being offered and sold outside the United States in "offshore transactions" as defined in and in compliance with Regulation S under the U.S. Securities Act and the applicable laws of the jurisdiction where those offers and sales occur.

FRIDAY
May 8, 2026
CHENNAI
CITY EDITION
24 Pages ₹ 5.00

THE HINDU

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

Vol. 149 • No. 109
Regd. TN/ARD/110/2024-2026
RNI No. 1001/1957

To subscribe, give a missed call at 9828331787 or scan QR code

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna

CABINET EXPANSION
Nitish's son among 32 new Ministers in Bihar
NEWS » PAGE 11

RECOVERY ROAD
One year since Sindoor, two schools bear the scars
NEWS » PAGE 10

STRAIT TUSSLE
Iran denies ship attack amid Trump's warning
WORLD » PAGE 14

PARLEY
Do abortion laws need a revamp?
Should the law be amended for minor victims of rape?
OPINION » PAGE 9

THE ARCHITECT
Marsh sizzles in LSG's win against RCB
SPORT » PAGE 15

Suvendu aide killing: fake numbers used for vehicles

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

Vehicles with fake number plates were used to target and kill Chandranath Rath, personal assistant to Suvendu Adhikari, the outgoing Leader of the Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly, late on Wednesday night, according to the West Bengal police. A Special Investigation Team has been formed to probe the attack, and forensic experts have visited the scene of the crime in North 24 Parganas district.

Alleging that Rath was killed in a targeted attack by hired assassins who had recced the location for a week before carrying out the murder, Mr. Adhikari, who visited the aide's family on Thursday, called for the death penalty for the killers.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 12

Cong. high command to choose Kerala CM

AICC observers Ajay Maken and Mukul Wasnik arrive for the meeting with Congress MLAs-elect in Thiruvananthapuram on Thursday. PTI

S.R. Praveen
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

MLAs-elect of the Congress in Kerala, who met in Thiruvananthapuram on Thursday, passed a resolution authorising the party high command to choose the next Chief Minister, even as the three leaders in contention were involved in hectic parleys to shore up support.

While All India Congress Committee (AICC) observers Mukul Wasnik and Ajay Maken, and the party's Kerala in-charge Deepa Dasmunsi, held one-on-one meetings with the 63 MLAs-elect, a majority of the United Democratic Front (UDF) allies are understood to be favouring outgoing Leader of the Opposition V.D. Satheesan.

The report of the meetings will be handed over to the high command and a decision will be arrived at soon, the observers told media after the meeting.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10
PINARAYI'S PROMISE
» PAGE 7

DMK explores backing rival AIADMK in hung T.N. House

Left parties and Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi hold the key in government formation; Governor tells Vijay that his TVK, the single largest party with 107 MLAs-elect, has not established a majority

B. Kolappan
CHENNAI

The post-election political climate in Tamil Nadu turned upside down on Thursday after the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) leadership began toying with the idea of extending outside support to its arch-rival, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) – a prospect unthinkable even a few days ago.

Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar invited Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) president C. Joseph Vijay on Thursday and "explained that the requisite majority support in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, essential for forming the government, has not been established", the Lok Bhavan said.

Outgoing Tamil Nadu CM M.K. Stalin (third from right) at a meet of the DMK's MLAs-elect in Chennai on Thursday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

A meeting of the MLAs-elect of the DMK here empowered party president and outgoing Chief Minister M.K. Stalin to take an appropriate decision in light of the fractured electoral verdict, which failed to give any single party a majority.

"As the State is not ready for another election, our objective is to ensure a stable government. At the same time, we are under compulsion to prevent communal forces that could disturb Dravidian ideals from gaining a foothold," a resolution adopted at the meeting said.

While Mr. Vijay and senior party leaders have reached out to the DMK's allies – the Communist Party of India, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) with two seats each – Mr. Stalin is learnt to have broached the idea of backing an AIADMK-led government with these three parties.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10
MORE REPORTS ON
» PAGES 6 & 11

Priority for formation of a stable govt.

NEW DELHI
The Tamil Nadu Governor's insistence that the TVK must prove majority is based on the principle that a Governor's priority is formation of a stable government, lest there is a breakdown of constitutional machinery. » PAGE 11

NEARBY

EPS saddened by Stalin's poll defeat: Anbalagan

PUDUCHERRY
AIADMK MLA-elect A. Anbalagan has said party chief Edappadi K. Palaniswami was 'saddened' by the defeat of outgoing CM M.K. Stalin in the Kolathur constituency in the Assembly election. » PAGE 6

SI and history sheeter injured in exchange of fire

THOOTHUKUDI
A 36-year-old history sheeter was shot and apprehended on Thursday, after he allegedly opened fire on a police officer while attempting escape at Kaniyalan Puthur village. The officer was injured. » PAGE 6

FRIDAY REVIEW » 4 PAGES

INBRIEF

Over 42,000 registrations received for TNEA 2026 so far

A total of 42,156 applications have been received till Thursday from students seeking admission under the Tamil Nadu Engineering Admissions (TNEA) 2026 since the portal opened on May 3, a press release from the Directorate of Technical Education said. Out of them, 10,423 candidates had completed the payment of necessary fees for the admission process, and 3,352 of them had completed uploading their certificates.

Sri Nithyakalyana Perumal Temple car festival held

The annual car festival of the Sri Nithyakalyana Perumal Temple was held at Thiruvidanthai on East Coast Road on Thursday morning as part of the *Chithirai Peruvizh*a, the *brahmotsavam*. The *utsava* idols of Sri Nithyakalyana Perumal along with Sridevi and Sri Bhudevi were brought out on procession by 10 a.m. A large number of local residents participated in the festival.

Metrowater steps up crackdown on sewage dumping in waterways, storm-water drains

It recently seized 2 vehicles for decanting sewage into storm-water drains in Adayalampattu and K.K. Nagar. Residents of Nolambur and Mogappair call for improving vigilance, particularly during night time. Local bodies and district administrations have also been asked to intensify surveillance

WATER WATCH

K. Lakshmi
CHENNAI

As part of its efforts to reduce pollution in the city's waterways, the Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (CMWSSB) has intensified its drive against unauthorised dumping of sewage on open lands and in waterbodies.

The CMWSSB recently seized two vehicles for illegally decanting sewage into the storm-water drain network in Adayalampattu and on R.K. Shanmugam Salai in K.K. Nagar. According to the CMWSSB, the sewage lorries were seized by the Area XI and Area X officials during night inspections. The seized vehicles were parked at the Nolambur sewage pumping station and K.K. Nagar water distribution station. Action is being initiated against the operators along with the police.

Checking pollution: The CMWSSB has initiated action against vehicles that were found releasing sewage into waterways such as the Buckingham Canal and the Cooum. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Officials said one of the vehicles was a water lorry, which was operated under a previous contract with the CMWSSB. The water agency has initiated action against vehicles that were found releasing sewage into waterways such as the Buckingham Canal, the Cooum, and the Virugambakkam-Arumbakkam Canal.

"We plan to step up vigilance in peripheral areas to prevent unauthorised release of sewage into storm-water drains and waterways. The CMWSSB has already deployed squads and installed surveillance cameras at vulnerable points in Areas 3, 7, 11, 14, and 15," an official said. Residents of Nolambur and Mogappair said vigilance should be increased along waterways, particularly during night time.

Balaji Srinivasan, resident of Mogappair West, said the storm-water drain network along the service lane of Chennai Bypass Road continued to carry sewage. "This is a recurring issue despite repeated complaints being raised with the authorities. The CMWSSB must increase surveillance and GPS tracking of lorries," he added.

The CMWSSB said it had written to the local bodies in added areas and district administration to step up vigilance and have also requested the residents' welfare associations to inform them about instances of sewage being let into storm-water drains.

The Septage Management Regulations and Operative Guidelines has mandated that only registered operators are allowed to remove sewage from the septic tanks in houses and commercial establishments. The CMWSSB has issued licences, which have a validity of two years, to nearly 509 sewage lorries. It also tracks the GPS equipment installed in registered lorries.

Officials said on an average, nearly 1,537 trips were being operated daily to decant sewage collected from the fringes of the city to 13 points spread across the city, including Nesapakkam and Perungudi. A decanting fee of ₹150 is collected per trip, and the licence is provided for a fee of ₹2,000 as per the septage management guidelines.

In 4 months, T.N. records 2.63 lakh dog bites, 17 rabies deaths

Serena Josephine M.
CHENNAI

The numbers tell a troubling story in Tamil Nadu this year. In just four months of 2026, the State has recorded 2.63 lakh dog bite cases and 17 deaths from rabies, a substantial share of last year's 6.25 lakh bites and half of last year's 34 deaths.

Data from the Directorate of Public Health (DPH) and Preventive Medicine show 62,000 dog bite cases, each in January and February, rising to 71,000 in March, and dipping slightly to 68,000 in April. Dog bites continue to be a growing concern across the State, with Chennai, Salem, Tiruchi, and Dindigul among the districts reporting higher numbers. There have been repeated calls for sustained measures to control the stray dog population, strengthen Animal Birth Control (ABC) programme, and improve rabies vaccination coverage among dogs.

A. Somasundaram, Director of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, said cases had marginally increased in the State.

With the stray dog population on the rise, experts say ABC measures and vaccination of dogs remain a challenge.

"There is no specific treatment or medication for rabies, and it is 100% fatal. This is a challenge. The only tool to prevent rabies is vaccination," he said. Awareness on anti-rabies vaccination is better and compliance has improved, he added.

"The Health Department focuses on proper wound washing, administration of Anti-Rabies Vaccine, and rabies immunoglobulin based on the categorisation of bites. Wound washing plays a crucial role," he said.

With the stray dog population on the rise, experts say ABC measures and vaccination of dogs against rabies continue to be challenging. "Veterinarians, with the help of local bodies, need to vaccinate dogs, while ABC measures should be undertaken by local bodies," an official said.

Defaulter tracing

On its part, the DPH is intensifying defaulter tracing. "We are tracking people who take the first dose of the vaccine to ensure that they complete the course. There also needs to be greater awareness on safeguarding children and not leaving them unattended outdoors. Many believe nothing will happen if pet dogs bite but it is important to understand that anti-rabies vaccination is required," Dr. Somasundaram said.

S. Chandrasekar, professor and head, Department of Medicine, Government Stanley Medical College Hospital, also stressed the need to protect children, who are more vulnerable. "No animal bite should be ignored. Prevention is key. It is important to go to the nearest health facility and get vaccinated. In Category III bites (transdermal bites or scratches, licks on broken skin), rabies immunoglobulin should be administered," he said.

Man held for filming woman in bathroom

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Guindy police have arrested Mullainathan, 31, of Thiruthuraipoondi in Tiruvarur district for allegedly filming a woman in a bathroom at a house in the locality.

The police said a 23-year-old woman lodged a complaint after the man allegedly filmed her with a mobile phone through the bathroom window in the early hours of Wednesday. After she noticed him, she confronted him and snatched his phone. The man later fled the spot. Later, when the woman checked near the bathroom, she found another mobile phone, allegedly kept there by the suspect.

'There is potential for India and Sri Lanka to work together in higher education'

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

There is immense potential for India and Sri Lanka to work together in higher education, research, skill development, and technology-driven innovation, which would benefit our youth, said Ganesanathan Geathiswaran, Deputy High Commissioner, Sri Lanka Deputy High Commission, on Thursday in Chennai at the third edition of the Tamil Nadu Higher Education Summit 2026.

The day-long summit themed 'Empowering the Future Workforce: AI, AVGC & Industry 4.0 in Academia' discussed the global impact of artificial intelligence, necessity of industry-academia collaborations, emerging technological disruptions, and the evolving start-up ecosystem. It was organised by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) Tamil Nadu State Council.

Speaking at the summit, Ashok G. Verghese, co-chairman, FICCI TN State Council and pro-chancellor, Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science, said: "The future of higher education cannot be shaped by old models in a rapidly evolving world. Now, we must move faster and work together, the future of the workforce demands more than degrees. It requires digital skills, creativity, problem solving, and communications."

The FICCI Industry Collaboration Award-Excellence in Global Aviation Training Standards was presented to Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science and Orient Flights Private Limited. The FICCI Industry Collaboration Award-Emerging Technologies and Innovation was given to the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras, and the FICCI Industry Collaboration Award-Excellence in Quantum Computing and Advance Technologies was presented to IIT-M and IBM. G.S.K. Velu, Chairman, FICCI Tamil Nadu State council and CMD, Trivitron Healthcare and Neuberg Diagnostics Group, also spoke.

CLASSIFIEDS MART

TO ADVERTISE VISIT
www.thehinduads.com
CALL: 044-28576300 ▪ TOLL FREE: 1800 102 4161
or Contact your nearest Authorised space sellers

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, BARKATHUNISA Aliyar, W/o. Shaik Mohammed, Date of Birth: 07.10.1974, residing at Old No.2/83, New No.2/1181, MGR Street, Perumbakkam, Chengalpattu District, Chennai–600 100, shall henceforth be known as Barakath Nisha Shaik Mohammed.

I, PRABHA Ranganathan, w/o S. Ranganathan, born on 13/01/1946 , residing at Old No. 5/2, New No.7, Corporation Colony, Kodambakkam, Chennai 24, shall henceforth be known as Mala Ranganathan.

I, KAREEMA Bi Jani Basha, W/o. Jani Basha, Age 83, DOB: 20/05/1947, Residing At No.15/5, Jaffarbek Street, Krishnapuram, Gingee, Viluppuram, Tamilnadu- 604202, shall hence forth be known as KAREEMA BEE JANI BASHA. -Kareema Bi Jani Basha.

I, MEENASCHI A (Aadhaar No. 3311 4590 5010) W/o. Arunmozhi, aged about 68 years, born on 02.06.1957, residing at No.A5/2, 2nd Street, Vetri Nagar, Sangarapuram, Sittalapakkam, Tambaram, Chennai, Tamilnadu – 600 126, declare that "Meenaschi A", "Meenatchi" and "V Meenakshi" are one and the same person for all purposes. The above mentioned are my names and the correct name is "MEENASCHI A" (as per Aadhaar Card)

OLD AGE HOME

PALLIATIVE CARE at your home Trained Nurses, 24/7, Dr., Physio visits, Lab tests 1800–313–1883 tikotra.com/seniors

PREMA'S NURSING and Elderly Care. Contact: 98405 60072

SITUATION VACANT

BPO

REQD IMMEDIATE Joiners Process Manager – Min 2yrs Exp in Real Estate Only. (Any Degree) Quality Analyst – Min 1yr Exp in Quality. Telecaller's – Freshers & Experience in Tele Sales Graduates, Good Communication Skills in English/Hindi/ Tamil. Attractive Sal's and Incentives. WFO & Location – Velachery Call / WhatsApp: 7358271271 / 9789990909

FINANCE

ACCOUNTS MANAGER Qualifd& Exp. Professional (Stay provided), Personal Assistant Should be willing to travel.Office@ Melmaruvathur 9629497729

WANTED EXP. Accountant with Tally. Apply immediately Ramyaa Electro Gear (P) Ltd, Thirumudivakkam. Email: ramyaaelectro2012@gmail.com.

GENERAL

ARCHITECT INTERIOR Designer Required urgently for an interior Decoration FirmSpectra Interiors 9884059549

MNC RQRS Team Heads Pay 1Lac abv. Prfrbl 40+ VRS Rtd Hswvs. 9361390356

SR. CITIZENS Rtd Govt & Pvt, VRS 50 – 65 with Sal Upto 75K 9094044010

HIRING TELESALES for Corporate – Team Lead / Senior Executive – Min 1+yrs exp. CTC– 4L to 8Lac. Good English Communication Must. 9751600021

WANTED STORE and Purchase Officer, Sales Manager. Call: 7338802357

INDIA'S LEADING Company VRS/Retd/ NRI/IT/H/W Earn Pride Income 50K 9840094845 C.Sekar RBI(RTD) Age 78yrs

HIRING LEADERSHIP Role & Team Handling HNI/ NRI/ Fin.Consultant/CA/ Housewife.Ct: 9884449155, 6382474983

MARKETING

FEMALE TELECALLER To speak: Tamil, Telugu, Hindi & English 0– 3yrs Exp. Office @ Anna Nagar. 9384698449

MEDICAL

WANTED 1. Receptionist Any Degree Good communication & computer knowledge Experience in Hospitality preferred Salary: 25K 2. Pharmacist D/B. Pharm 3. Staff Nurse DGNM / B.Sc Location: Psymed Hospital, Shenoy Ngr. Ct: 9840975917

TECHNICAL

WANTED SITE Supervisor civil Diploma Min.2/3yrs experience. 9840046901

To advertise in
Classifieds Special
Contact: **T Muni Babu @** 98407 95023
Toll Free @ 1800 102 4161

REAL ESTATE

HOME FINANCE

SECURED / UNSECURED, Business loans, Mortgage Loans & Housing loans. Kevisha Consultancy: 9080834838

JOINT DEVELOPMENT

CONSTRUCTION WORK Undertaking, Invite Joint Venture Ard Chn 6384663333

SELLING

FACTORIES & SITES

CHENNAI RUNNING Cement Factry Sale 5.26Acr 600T/Day Capcity 9884088660

RESIDENTIAL FLAT – NEW

KODAMBAKKAM NEAR Metro Station & Ram Theatre New Apt Project. Premium Quality Architect Designed Exclusive Homes Pls Call 88925 90802&Visit

KODAMBAKKAM PARANGUSAPURAM St 2BHK– 955sft. Ct : 9551331234/9444064567

THORAIPAKKAM NEW Customizable 2/3/ 4 BHK Flat for Sale : 78100 25909

PUZUTHIVAKKAM NEW Customizable 1/2 BHK Flat for Sale : 78100 25909

RAMAPURAM NEW Customizable 2/3 BHK flat for sale. Contact: 78100 25909

ALWARTHIRUNAGAR NEW 2 / 3 BHK for sale. Contact: 78100 25909

VALASARAVAKKAM 1657SF 13th Flr EF 3BHK Op Metro 2CCP 2.10Cr 9884999233

RESIDENTIAL FLAT – NEW

HARRINGTON RD 3BHK 1stFlr Brand New 2.50Cr. includng Regist. 9710156179

RESIDENTIAL FLAT – RESALE

PAMMAL 2BHK 1072 SFT East Facing. Gated Rs.75L (Nego) Owner:9962005832

ALWARPET ULTRA Luxury Flat 4BHK 3CCP Prime location– sale; 9444434835.

K.K.NAGAR 3BHK Flat 1800sft 1st Flr Rs.2 75Cr. 9952991536/ 8778222718

RESIDENTIAL FLAT – RESALE

PALLAVARAM OLYMPIA Grande GST Rd-Facing 2.5BHK 1stFlr 1325sf:9445574192

ECR, MUTTUKADU Luxurious 2BHK 1350 sqft Fully Furnished UDS 710 sqft seaside approved. Gated Community, Car Park, Lift, Full Power backup, Gym. East & North Facing. Next to Altis Oceanique 9789522759

RESIDENTIAL HOUSE

KOVUR L–1900SFT B–2600sf 1.65Cr Kovur L:3600sf B:4000sf 3Cr 8190867178

NUNGAMBAKKAM IND Bungalow 6 Bed-Rooms 5510sf(L) 5162sf(B) 9884539008

VILLA SURAPET Kadirvedu Vellammal Collage, 1300 BUA, Ct: 9790866310

ECR KANATHUR, Independent Bungalow, G + 2 floors. Kevisha: 9080834838

CHROMPET, 9454 Sft Plot, 7500 Sft Buildings, 23 Rooms Ladies Hostel. 5.5 Cr. CT: 9840706301 / 8754455086

CHROMEPET NR Radial Rd 4BHK New Ind House stilt+3Flr 2.75Cr. 8778222718

RESIDENTIAL LAND

MANNIVAKKAM APPROVED plot, Very near to Kilambakkam bus terminus. Price Rs.4500 per sft. Ct: 9710097123

KUTTHAMPAKKAM NEAR New Bus Stand 1000sqft CMDA Plot 45Lac 98408 05512

ECR CASURINA–DRIVE 7.5 Grounds for sale. Contact: 9444434835

KILPAUK NR.EGA Theatre 10.5Gr Land 40Ft Rd SouthEast Corner 9382189002

MADHAVARAM 6 Grounds Plots. 200 Mtrs from Murari Hospital Metro & St. Sebastian Church, Fast Developing Residential Area.Nego. Ph. 8252900900

COONOOR, OLIVE Heights Near Sims Park Bedford Plot sizes from 10 cents to 23 cents. Well maintained Gated Community. 9789522759.

NEELANKARAI, CORNICHE 4 Grds Prime Location Gated Community Before Lanson Toyota Showroom Seaside. RERA & CMDA Appd. No Brokers. 9789522759

ECR MAHABALIPURAM Poonjeri, Rainbow 2 grds Approved plots. Gated Community East facing Near Four points Sheraton/ Arun Excello Ziva. Brokers Excuse. 9789522759

ECR PALAVAKAM Premium Villa Plots CMDA&RERA Appd Gated Community GEM Terra Realty: 9566063456, 9841067863

GUDUVANCHERI KUTHANUR On Road 5400 Sqft (3Villa Plots) Rdy to Construct. No Broker 9381081899, 9994194859

RENTAL

ACCOMMODATION WANTED – COMMERCIAL

LEADING MNC Req 25000 – 50000Sft Shed on BTS within 25km Radius from Redhills to Gummidipoondi 7200151226

COMMERCIAL

ANNANAGAR 2ND Avenue 1stflr 800sft furnish showroom Availbl.9444356220

RENTAL / COMMERCIAL
Perungudi - Nehru Nagar, 7690sqft, Independent Building, Fully Furnished, Centrally Air conditioned, 100 Work Stations, Fire Exit, 7 Cabins, 2 Conference Hall, Power Backup, CCTV, Servo Stabilizer, Server Room, Car / 2wheeler Parking.
Ct: 9840028833

NOLAMBUR 700SFT Commercial Office Space for Rent 50K Adv 5L 9941954999

MEDAVAKKAM ON Rd Ragamalika Phase–1, 1st Floor 1216&1463 Sft, Lift, Office/Showroom Space Rent:9597088298

CHETPET MCNICHOLS Rd 100 sft each I & II fls. 94441 66156, 97103 98622

ASHOK NAGAR Main Rd 4thAve F. Furnd,2000sft 2ndFlr 40WorkStn 9841483939

VALASARAVAKAM ARCOTRD 1st&GrdFlr 3000sft,2ndFlr2000 sft, CCP:7299916660

IRUNGATTUKOTTAI 2750SF G+2 suits Bank, Garments, Jewelry CT:9551366695

PURASAIVAKKAM 2500SF 1st Flr suits Bank,Jewel S/R with Lift 9551366695

AVAILABLE 1.5 Acre vacant land with 60 HP power 2 km from Tirumalpur railway station. Ct: 7639621000

FACTORIES & SITES

AVAILABLE 12000 Sq ft warehouse with 60 HP power & 3 ton EOT crane at Papprabakkam village, 2 km from Hyundai Glovis. Ct: 7639621000

AVAILABLE 7200 Sq ft brand new warehouse with 5 ton EOT brackets at Papprabakkam village 2 km from Hyundai Glovis. Ct: 7639621000

TIMESHARE

OOTY STERLING Fern Hill – May 12th to 19th for 4 Adults Ct: 9840093132

RESIDENTIAL

BESANT NAGAR

INDEPENDENT 3BHK House for Rent in Besant Nagar. Contact: 9150415886

OMR

OMR NR IT Hub 3BHK 1800sft Rent 50K to 1Lac CCP 9952991536/ 8778222718

Government of Karnataka
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
6th Floor, 2nd Stage, M.S. Building,
Ambedkar Veedhi, Bangalore-560 001.

No. ED/12/KVV/2026 **Date: 06.05.2026**

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION
Selection to the Post of Vice-Chancellor of Kannada University, Hampi

Invitation of application for the post of Vice-Chancellor of Kannada University, Hampi
The Department of Higher Education, Govt of Karnataka invites Applications from eligible Professors/Educationists for the post of Vice-Chancellor of Kannada University, Hampi in accordance with the provisions of Section 13(2) of the Kannada University Act, 1991. Applications should be submitted within 20 days from the date of this notification to "The Secretary to Government, Dept of Higher Education, 6th Floor, Multi-Storeyed Building, Bengaluru – 560001". Email: **kannadaunivc2026@gmail.com.** The detailed application form and other details are available on Higher Education Department website **https://hed.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Secretary to Government
Department of Higher Education

DIPR/CP/552/Zen/2026-27

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
(CONSTRUCTION / ROAD SAFETY PROJECTS)
E-Tender Notice No. CAO-CN-RSP-ROB-2-2026,
DATED: 04.05.2026

For and on behalf of The President of India, The Deputy Chief Engineer, Construction, Road Safety Projects, Southern Railway, Egmore, Chennai 600 008 invites e-tender for the following work(s) as per Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) in our portal **www.ireps.gov.in.** The tenderers/Contractors intending to apply for the tender needs to get enrolled in the portal **www.ireps.gov.in** and only online tenders will be accepted.

Sl. No.	Name of the work
1	**Tender No: CAO-CN-RSP-ROB-2-2026** **1. MAS Division - AJJ - JTJ** section- Proposed 1 x 7.0 x 3.6m RCC Pre-cast box subway at km 145/200-300 in lieu of existing LC No: 61 between Latteri and Kavanur stations (Air Push Method) **2. MAS Division -** Proposed 1 x 7.7 x 4.0m Pre-cast RCC box subway in lieu of existing LC No: 70 at km 165/400-500 between Valathoor and Melpatti stations (Air Push Method) **3. MAS Division - AJJ - JTJ** section - Proposed 1 x 7.70 x 3.6m Pre-cast RCC box subway at km 166/900 in lieu of existing LC No: 71 at km 167/0-100 between Valathoor and Melpatti stations (Air Push Method) **4. MAS Division - AJJ - JTJ** section - Proposed 1 x 7.00m x 3.66m RCC Pre-cast box subway in lieu of existing LC No: 74 at km 172/300-400 between Melpatti and Pachchakuppam stations (Air Push Method); Cash Value (₹) : **178712668**; Closing Date and Time: **27.05.2026 at 15.00 hrs.**
2	**Tender No: CAO-CN-RSP-ROB-03-2026** Proposed 2 Lane Road Over Bridge in lieu of LC No.376 along with LUS at Km 455/800-900,1 x 42.0m steel Bow string girder between Vellanur and Pudukottai Stations.; Cash Value (₹) : **115951223**; Closing Date and Time: **27.05.2026 at 15.00 hrs.**
3	**Tender No: CAO-CN-RSP-ROB-04-2026** Proposed Road Over Bridge in lieu of Exg. LC No.16 at km19/100 1 x 44m EFF span steel Composite Girder near Pasur Railway Station Yard.; Cash Value (₹) : **104992855**; Closing Date and Time: **27.05.2026 at15.00 hrs.**
4	**Tender No: CAO-CN-RSP-ROB-05-2026** SALEM DIVISION - Proposed Construction of Road Over Bridge at Rly.km 7/100-200 in Lieu of Existing LC no. 4 at KM 6/800-900 between Coimabatore North and Karamadai Stations in Coimbatore - Mettupalayam Section) along with Pedestrian Subway.; Cash Value (₹) : **211877669**; Closing Date and Time: **27.05.2026 at 15.00 hrs.**
5	**Tender No: CAO-CN-RSP-ROB-6-2026** MDU Division - VPT - MEJ section - Proposed Construction of Road Over Bridge in lieu of existing LC No: 424 at km 565/100-200 with 1x42m clear span steel bowstring girder between Sattur and Nalli station along with limited use subway.; Cash Value (₹) : **148066898**; Closing Date and Time: **27.05.2026 at 15.00 hrs.**

For further details, please refer to website portal **www.ireps.gov.in** or contact Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, Construction, Road Safety Projects, Southern Railway, E.V.R. High Road, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008.

Deputy Chief Engineer, Construction,
Road Safety Projects, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008.

INBRIEF

GCC acts on complaints from Meenakshi Nagar in Porur

Nearly a month after residents flagged stalled civic works in Meenakshi Nagar, Porur, authorities carried out partial restoration works on Thursday. Residents had complained on April 10 about open trenches and safety risks due to lack of proper barricades. Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) said that necessary action had been taken, including completion of stormwater drain works in the locality.

Structure erected for polls removed weeks after voting

Following complaints from the public, the civic officials on Thursday removed a stage erected for the election in front of a hardware shop in M.G.R Nagar. Residents said that the stage on K.K. Salai was left unattended for weeks. Later in the day, Greater Chennai Corporation confirmed that the encroachments in the area had been removed.

Corporation carries out stray cattle raid in Arumbakkam

GCC carried out a cattle raid in Arumbakkam after locals complained of stray cattle menace near Chennai Middle School in Jai Nagar.

Phase-I of Guindy Eco-Park to be completed by Oct. 2026

A pathway with compacted mud, a bicycle track, parking space, and amenities for visitors are among the works to be carried out at a cost of ₹37.85 crore by the State Horticulture Department

ECO WATCH

Deepa H. Ramakrishnan
CHENNAI

The Department of Horticulture and Plantation Crops is in the process of transforming one of the most famous landmarks in the city - the Guindy Race Course.

The place where horses and their jockeys made or broke fortunes is quietly shaping into an eco-park that even while under construction is an isle of peace and quiet amid the city's hustle and bustle.

New waterbodies

The first phase of the project is being carried out on the 118-acre land, where the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) has created four ponds and deepened two lakes.

It has also created bioswales, which are channels that allow the flow of rainwater that will be filtered by plants and natural vegetation throughout the boundary of the park. These are meant to let the water percolate into the ground and also prevent flooding in the locality.

Work apace: The first phase of the project is being carried out on the 118-acre Guindy Race Course land, where the GCC has created four ponds and deepened two lakes. S.R. RAGHUNATHAN

"A viewing point from the highest spot at the centre will be created from where the entire park would be visible. A bridge is being constructed to reach the man-made island inside the other lake. There are three islands inside the waterbodies," explained a source associated with the project.

Among the other features planned in the first phase are a pathway with compacted mud, a bicycle track, parking space and visitor amenities on about 25 acres of land that is expected to be completed by October this year at a cost of ₹37.85 crore, explained a source in the department.

Tree planting

Avenue tree planting has been carried out along internal pathways, with 495 trees planted across a 2.5-kilometre stretch. The plantations include native and ornamental species such as *Magizham, Shenbagham, Nagalingam, Kadambam, Punnai, Pungan, Naval,* and Tabebuia.

In addition to tree planting, bund strengthening around water bodies and the establishment of a nursery for plant propagation have been initiated. The park also has a nursery selling seeds, saplings and plants, and gardening needs at affordable prices. The nursery also sells herbal plants and seedlings of vegetable plants.

In the upcoming phases, the project envisages the development of herbal gardens highlighting traditional Siddha medicinal plants, offering educational opportunities on indigenous knowledge systems.

Waterfront landscapes will form an integral part of the park experience. Natural lake edges, wetlands, and bird habitat islands are planned to create thriving ecosystems within the park, while also providing serene spaces for visitors to relax and observe nature.

Government seeks postponement of DGP empanelment committee meeting

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

The appointment of a regular Director General of Police (DGP) and Head of the Police Force in the Tamil Nadu police is set to be delayed further. The State government has written to the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) requesting postponement of the Empanelment Committee Meeting (ECM) which was scheduled in Delhi on May 11. In a communication sent to the UPSC, the State said the presence of the Chief Secretary and the Home Secretary in the State was absolutely essential in the next few days.

Political developments

Apparently referring to the ongoing political developments, a top official requested UPSC to postpone the meeting to some other date, preferably in the last week of May.

The present DGP/HoPF Sandeep Rai Rathore, who was appointed by the Election Commission of India replacing G. Venkatraman who was in-charge of the post, would continue to head the force till a UPSC-empanelled chief of police is appointed as per the Supreme Court guidelines in the Prakash Singh case, police sources said on Thursday. The ECM convened by UPSC is led by its chairman, the Union Home Secretary, the DGP of one of the Central Armed Paramilitary Forces (not belonging to the Tamil Nadu cadre), the Chief Secretary and Home Secretary of the State concerned. This is the third time that the ECM is being postponed. First it was convened on March 20, and was deferred due to administrative reasons, and then on April 23 since it was polling day for the Assembly election.

The DGP-rank officers who would be considered for empanelment in the order of seniority are Seema Agrawal, Rajeev Kumar and Sandeep Rai Rathore followed by K. Vannia Perumal, Mahesh Kumar Aggarwal, G. Venkatraman and others. Ms. Agrawal is due to retire from service next month, the sources said.

Work to construct additional permanent DPCs in Tiruvallur nears completion

Farmers said the DPCs in the area need a drying machine.

Deepa H. Ramakrishnan
CHENNAI

Work to construct additional direct procurement centres (DPCs) for paddy is nearing completion in Tiruvallur district, which already has over 30 permanent DPCs. Each centre will have a warehouse to store 2,000 bags at a time, an open space with cement flooring to pack the bags, a weighing machine, and a winnowing machine to remove impurities.

"The Agriculture department and the District Rural Development Agency is constructing the permanent DPCs. Farmers want DPCs in all the 700-odd revenue villages. We are prioritising villages where more farmers bring in a higher quantity of paddy for the permanent centres. More permanent DPCs would be constructed in a phased manner," said District Collector M. Prathap.

"Since the safety of the paddy procured is of utmost importance, it has been our practice to have seasonal DPCs in government buildings like panchayat offices, SHG buildings, community halls, and godowns belonging to other departments. When the DPCs are opened, we also make plans for transporting the paddy to mills and large warehouses," he added.

M. Venkatesan, a farmer from Krishnasamudram in Tiruttani, said that opening a new DPC in their area was a welcome move. "The storage space, however, needs to be expanded. It can only store 2,000 bags. But the farmers here sell 950-1,000 bags a day. We need more space to pack the bags as well. A drying machine would do well at DPCs since moisture content is an issue at all the centres. Currently, paddy has to be sent to the hulling mills to be dried," he said.

Thanigaivel Kalathi, a farmer, said a new DPC constructed at the other end of Cooum village was 3 km away from where the majority of fields were located.

"Local politicians chose that spot as it is closer to their lands," he claimed.

Police step up security at Marina beach over possible TVK protests

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The city police tightened security around Marina beach and adjoining areas on Thursday, cordoning-off key entry and exit points with iron barricades following reports that supporters of the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) could gather there to stage protests over the delay in the formation of a new government.

At least 50 police personnel and six patrol vehicles were deployed along Loop Road off Kamarajar Salai, while barricades were placed on roads leading to the beach. In the forenoon, the police dispersed small groups that had gathered near the area and asked the public to vacate the spot.

The TVK secured a victory in 108 of the 234 Assembly constituencies, and emerged as the single largest party in the Assembly election held on April 23.

Although party president C. Joseph Vijay submitted a list of 112 MLAs, including five from the Congress, to Governor Rajendra Viswanath Arlekar on Wednesday, he is yet to be invited to form the new government.

Law and order

A senior police officer said security had been strengthened at the beach area to prevent gatherings and ensure that there were no law and order issues.

CINEMA ❖ ARTS ❖ EVENTS

MUSIC DANCE DRAMA

The Music Academy Madras
Today: From 6.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. At the Kasturi Srinivasan Hall – Narayanatirtha Compositions – Dr. Sumithra Vasudev (Vocal), Dr. Usha Rajagopalan (Violin), B. Ganapathyraman (Mridangam) – Programme under the endowment instituted by Late Sri. P. Obul Reddy & Smt. P. Gnanamba.

Sri Thyaga Brahma Gana Sabha (Regd) Vanimahal, Ph: 28152166
Today 6.30pm at Vani Mahal Komal Theatres presents Sivasankari's short stories on stage "SIVASANKARI", Dramatization & Direction by Ms. Dharini Komal. All are welcome.

Rukmini Trust, 24992672
Today 6.15pm Varalakshmi Anandkumar, M. Vijay, Adharsh Devarajan. Ragasudha Hall.

MISCELLANEOUS

To advertise visit
www.thehinduads.com
☎ 044-28576300
☎ Toll Free
1800 102 4161

MISCELLANEOUS

RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDYUT PRASARAN NIGAM LIMITED
Notice Inviting Bid
Bid for Purchase of Silicon rubber hosed composite insulators (400 kV Suspension (120KN- 2074 Nos.) under BN-9018002603 (UBN: VPN2627GLOB00309) is invited from interested bidders up to 04:00 PM on 29.05.2026.
Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal **(http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in)** of the state; and **http://energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvpnl** departmental website.
Raj.Samwad/C/26/2235 RRVPN/TR-7547/2026
Superintending Engineer (Contracts-I), Jaipur

KSEB KERALA STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED - TENDER NOTICE
O/o The Chief Engineer, (S.C.M) & C.S.C, Vydyuthi Bhavanam, Thiruvananthapuram.
GeM Bid No. GEM/2026/B/7355025, Dtd: 19.03.2026, PAC: Rs. 3,92,95,640/-, Last Date: 20.05.2026, 4.00 pm.
GeM Bid No. GEM/2026/B/7354688, Dtd: 19.03.2026, PAC: Rs. 1,40,21,100/-, Last Date: 20.05.2026, 4.00 pm.
E-Tender ID No. 2026_KSEB_848551_1, PAC: Rs. 2,46,88,100/-, Last Date: 20.05.2026, 03.00 pm.
E-Tender ID No. 2026_KSEB_849176_1, PAC: Rs. 8,97,42,000/-, Last Date: 27.05.2026, 03.00 pm.
E-Tender ID No. 2026_KSEB_848774_1, PAC: Rs. 3,79,37,520/-, Last Date: 25.05.2026, 05.00 pm.
E-Tender ID No. 2026_KSEB_848755_1, PAC: Rs. 2,45,64,650/-, Last Date: 03.06.2026, 04.30 pm.
E-Tender ID No. 2026_KSEB_849052_1, PAC: Rs. 28,26,88,200/-, Last Date: 12.06.2026, 04.00 pm.
Visit www.etenders.kerala.gov.in and www.kseb.in
Ref : PR/MC1/E611 - E-tender/2026

Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited
(Wholly owned Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
(CIN: U04010KA2002SGC030438)
NOTIFICATION INVITING TENDER (Through KPP Portal)
BESCOM invites Tender for the following work: Tender Enquiry No: **BESCOM/2026-27/EL/WORK_INDENT1081.** Description of work: **"Automation of NON DAS Feeders in BMAZ area, BESCOM".** Availability of Bid document: **On or after 13.05.2026.** The detailed notification can be obtained from the Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.
Sd/- The General Manager (DAS), BICC-1, 17th Cross, 24th Main, HSR Layout 2nd Sector, Bengaluru-560102.
For Electricity related complaints call: 1912
Download BESCOM Mithra Mobile APP

F.No.A.-2024/1/2024-E-IV
Government of India
Ministry of Jal Shakti
Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation
******
VACANCY NOTICE
EXTENSION OF LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION
The vacancy notice published in the Employment News edition dated 21-27 March 2026 for filling the following four (04) posts in the Mahadayi PRAWAH on a deputation basis (including short-term contract) by this office is hereby revised. **The last date for submission of duly filled applications, which was 04.05.2026, has been further extended by 30 days from the date of publication of this vacancy notice in the Employment News.**

S. No.	Name of the post	Pay Scale	No. of Posts.
1.	Member (Environmental Issues)	Level-14 (Rs.144200-218200)	01
2.	Member (Hydrology)	Level-14 (Rs.144200- 218200)	01
3.	Member (Monitoring and Regulation)	Level-14 (Rs.144200- 218200)	01
4.	Director (Finance)	Level-13 (Rs.123100-215900)	01

2. All other terms and conditions of the previous vacancy notice shall remain unchanged. The interested candidates who have not yet applied may submit their applications as per the procedure mentioned in the detailed vacancy notice available on the official website: **jalshakti-dowr.gov.in.** and **dopt.gov.in.**
(Sameer Kumar Munda)
Under Secretary to the Govt. of India
Tel: 011-23716252
Email: use4-mowr@nic.in

INTEREST IS INVITED FROM ARCHITECT FIRMS
Interest is invited from well established firm of Architects / Architect for design and support for an Office-cum-Commercial Building, conforming to regulations. Prime location in MG Road, Bengaluru with Ground area of 30,000 sq. ft.
Response is requested by 20 May 2026.
[All rights are reserved]
To be sent to :
ssrinivasaraghavan@simpson.co.in

TELANGANA FOODS
(GOVT. OF TG ENTERPRISE) (An ISO 22000:2018 Certified Company)
ROAD No.14, IDA, NACHARAM, HYDERABAD 500076. T.G., INDIA.
Email: projects.tsfoods@gmail.com, Website: http://tfoods.telangana.gov.in
Ref. No. TF/Projects/AMEP2/1278/2026-27 **TENDER NOTIFICATION** **Date: 07/05/2026**
Telangana Foods invites E-Tender for Procurement of Additional Machineries like 01) Belt Conveyors, 02) Full Automatic Packaging Machines, 03) Pneumatic Conveying systems, 04) Elevator (Lift) and 05) Epoxy flooring to GAIN Plant for Technical specification go through Tender schedule. **Bids Submission Closing Date & Time: 15/05/2026 at 1.00 PM.** Note: Full Tender Notification & Tender Schedule with Terms & Conditions, Specifications, etc. can be downloaded from Website: **http://tender.eprocurement.gov.in** from **08/05/2026** at 2.00 PM onwards.
DIPR R.O. No. : 108-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/2026-27, Date: 07-05-2026.
Sd/-
Managing Director

JODHPUR VIDYUT VITARAN NIGAM LIMITED
(MATERIAL MANAGEMENT & CONTRACT WING) NEW POWER HOUSE, INDUSTRIAL AREA, JODHPUR-342003 PHONE: (0291) 2742223, FAX: (0291) 2746539
SHORT TERM E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
Short Term E-Procurement Tender is invited for Hiring of Trolley Mounted Lifter having capacity 1 Ton and 2 Ton for to and fro transportation of Distribution Transformer etc on 24 hours basis under TN-2154 (UBN JVV2627SLOB00050).
Details regarding Quantity, Tender cost, Earnest Money, Schedule date of tender opening for aforesaid tenders are available on our website at **energy.rajasthan.gov.in/jdvvnl** and also at **http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in.**
Raj.Samwad/C/26/2238 **SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (MM&C)**
बिजली संबंधी शिकायतों के लिए टोल फ्री नम्बर 1800 180 6045

कार्यालय मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी, टोंक
ई निविदा सूचना 01/2026-27
कार्यालय मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी, टोंक की ओर से मानव संसाधन की सेवाओ के उपापन हेतु सक्षम आपुर्तिकर्ताओं से दर संविदा करने हेतु ई-निविदा आंमत्रित की जाती है। निविदा प्रपत्र मय पूर्ण विवरण वेबसाईट http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in एवं http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in पर उपलब्ध है।
NIB CODE:- MHS2627A0450
UBIN NO - MHS2627SLRC00603
DIPR/C/7820/2026
मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी, टोंक

MAHATRANSCO
Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Co. Ltd.
INVITATION FOR BID (IFB) (LOCAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING)
SRM e-Tender No. T-2635/MSETCL/CO/Projects/Pre Tender (RFx No. 6000001513)
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. "Balanced work of Construction 400kV D/C line from LILO on 400kV Waluj-Bhusawal line Circuit-II to 400kV Thaptitanda Substation (Route Length- 22.43km) under Ch. Sambhajinagar Zone."
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

INBRIEF

BIS seizes toys and packs of balloons without ISI mark

A team of officials from the Bureau of Indian Standards, Chennai Branch Office, seized about 3,000 toys and nearly 2,870 packs of balloons without the ISI mark during a raid in the city on Wednesday. A press release said the raids were conducted at three establishments in Sowcarpet – Ambika Stores and Mahaveer Enterprises in Narayana Mudali Street and Shetrapal Impex in Rattan Bazar. The team found the firms storing and selling toys and related products in violation of the Quality Control Orders. The operation was carried out with C1 Flower Bazaar Police Station. S.D. Dayanand, Senior Director and Head, BIS Chennai Branch Office, said the ISI mark signified conformity to Indian Standards and protected consumers from substandard products.

Text & Context and Health

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carry explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (May 8, Friday), the following articles are available:

- Scope of legal fiction in party mergers **newsth.live/1Vdyd5/legalfiction**
- Why are fathers missing in reproductive health interventions in India **newsth.live/fathershealth**

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.

Southern Railway replaces 11 manned level crossings with subways, overbridges

This aims to prevent unauthorised crossing of tracks and improve operational efficiency of trains. The ₹100-crore work includes construction of subways at Wallajah Road, Latteri, and Jolarpettai

TRACK TALES

R. Srikanth
CHENNAI

Southern Railway eliminated 11 manual level crossings in the city and completed works to eliminate 12 others in the outskirts during the financial year 2025-26.

To prevent unauthorised crossing of tracks and improve operational efficiency of trains, Southern Railway replaced the level crossings with subways, road overbridges (ROBs), and road under bridges (RUBs).

A senior official with the Chennai Division of Southern Railway said 11 of them had been converted into safe zones through the construction of seven subways, three ROBs, and one RUB, at a cost of over ₹100 crore.

The Radha Nagar subway at the Chromepet railway station led to the closure of level crossing no. 27, easing traffic flow from Radha Nagar to GST Road.

Easing congestion: The Radha Nagar subway at the Chromepet railway station led to the closure of level crossing no. 27, easing traffic flow from Radha Nagar to GST Road. FILE PHOTO

Subways have been constructed at Wallajah Road, Latteri, and Jolarpettai, along with ROBs at Sitheri and Othivakkam yard.

Commuters' demands

Meanwhile, the commuters are demanding the construction of a subway and an RUB at Pattabhiram and Avadi railway stations.

Gopalakrishnan, a resident of Pattabhiram, pointed out the need for a subway at Pattabhiram railway station, as commuters faced difficulties in accessing the ROB that was built to replace level crossing no. 10. They had to climb more than 50 steps to safely cross from South Bazaar to CTH Road, he said.

Social activist T. Sadagopan also wanted an RUB to be constructed to replace the level crossing no. 8 near Avadi railway station. He said an RUB would ease access to the Nehru Bazaar located to the south of the railway station and Avadi bus terminus to the north.

Protective measure: The advisory suggests distributing cooling supplies, such as wet towels and handheld fans, to residents.

Centre calls for steps to safeguard shelter residents from heat

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

As heatwave conditions intensify, the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has issued an advisory to the States and Union Territories to protect vulnerable people staying in shelters under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM).

In a communication dated April 30, the Ministry said temperatures had already risen sharply in many regions and were expected to worsen in the coming weeks.

The advisory was addressed to the Mission Directors of the DAY-NULM in States and Union Territories implementing the Shelter for Urban Homeless component.

The Ministry directed urban local bodies (ULBs) and shelter management agencies (SMAs) to take immediate steps to ensure the safety and well-being of shelter residents during extreme heat conditions.

The advisory called for adequate and regular supply of potable drinking water, clean water for bathing, and oral rehydration solution packets and salted drinks. Authorities were told to ensure that the shelters had functional fans, water dispensers, and other cooling facilities.

The advisory also suggested setting up water points, with access to cold water, for residents. To reduce health risks during summer, the Ministry directed local bodies to undertake fogging and sanitation measures to control mosquitoes and prevent vector-borne diseases.

The advisory stressed the need for prompt maintenance of ventilation systems, fans, drinking water supply, and other cooling systems to improve airflow. It also asked shelter authorities to conduct regular awareness sessions on heat safety, symptoms of heat-related illnesses, and hydration practices. It suggested distributing cooling supplies, such as wet towels and handheld fans, to residents.

As part of emergency preparedness measures, ULBs and SMAs were asked to form city-level rescue teams equipped with adequate personnel and vehicles. Helplines should also be activated to receive distress calls, the advisory said. The Ministry further directed that all shelters be geo-tagged, with their coordinates being displayed on various portals, to improve accessibility during emergencies.

The advisory called for training shelter staff to identify signs of heat-related illnesses and implement response protocols. They should be designated to monitor shelter conditions and enforce heatwave procedures, it said.

Sanitation workers struggle amid soaring temperature

R. Aishwaryaa
CHENNAI

While political negotiations and alliance talks continue in air-conditioned rooms, sanitation workers employed by the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) work on the streets amid soaring temperatures.

The concerns raised by the workers are not new. They had highlighted issues related to drinking water access, toilet facilities, food quality, and heat exposure and submitted several petitions to the GCC in the last two years, but in vain.

Perumal, 50, a sanitation worker with Urbaser Sumeet, a private company to which the GCC outsourced solid waste management, said: "At the waste collection and transfer yard in Kotturpuram, a dining hall was recently set up. It is shaded, so we no longer have to sit on dusty roads. There are no air-conditioned seating facilities such as the one set up in Saidapet for gig workers," he said.

"The GCC provides us with pongal and rice, but the quantity is not sufficient and lately, the quality too has worsened, so I carry food from home. Water is supplied through tanker lorries, but the containers appear rusted. Sometimes, while on duty, residents offer us tea or buttermilk, which gives us temporary relief. The GCC's plan to distribute buttermilk for us has not yet begun," he said.

However, S. Lakshmi, a National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM) staff sanitation worker in Ambattur zone, said buttermilk distribution had begun there. "The main issue is that many workers get exhausted because of the heat. Officials ask those who feel unwell to return home, and tell the rest of us to complete their work," she said.

She also alleged that water supply remained inadequate. "Only a few water cans are kept at the zonal office. They are insufficient for the nearly 200 workers in this area," she added.

Thirumaleshwari, a sanitation worker in Royapuram zone, said that on Wednesday, her blood pressure increased due to prolonged exposure to the sun.

"This has been an issue for over five years. No matter what the weather is, we have to continue working. There is no other option," she said.

Uncomfortable uniforms were another major concern. Mr. Perumal said the fabric of their uniforms blocked airflow. "The rubber gloves also make our palms sweat excessively, making it difficult to work," he added.

K. Bharathi of the Left Trade Union Centre and the Uzhaippor Urimai Iyakkam said the uniforms had been designed without consulting workers.

Man swaps ATM card, dupes senior citizen of ₹42,000 in Perambur

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

A 69-year-old man was duped of ₹42,000 after a stranger allegedly swapped his ATM card for a dummy card at a kiosk in Perambur on Wednesday morning.

The incident took place when the victim, Rajendran, a retired CMDA employee of Perambur, visited an ATM on Paper Mills Road to withdraw cash. According to the police, an unidentified man inside the kiosk offered him assistance to operate the machine.

The suspect allegedly said the transaction had failed and returned the ATM card to Rajendran before leaving the premises. Rajendran returned home unaware that the suspect had taken his original card.

A few minutes later, he received mobile phone alerts indicating that ₹42,000 had been withdrawn from his bank account through four separate transactions.

On verifying the card, he discovered that it was fake and that his card had been stolen.

Based on a complaint lodged by Rajendran, the Sembium police registered a case and launched an investigation. The police are examining the CCTV footage of the ATM centre to trace the suspect.

Timings
CHENNAI

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
SUNDAY, MAY. 10		
RISE	05:46	SET 18:26
RISE	00:40	SET 12:31

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.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2026
All rights reserved.

THE HINDU

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

THE HINDU IN SCHOOL PRESENTS SCHOOL BUZZ

A Newspaper exclusively curated for School Students

DISHA 2026

Acharya Mahashraman Terapanth Jain Public School, Madhavaram, celebrated their 7th Annual Day, DISHA 2026, at Raja Annamalai Mandram. The programme was graced by Chief Guest Sri. Sunil J. Singhi, Chairman, National Traders' Welfare Board, Government of India, along with Special Guest Sri. Rajesh Chandan, Chairman, JITO Chennai Chapter Foundation, and Guest of Honour Sri. Ajith Kumar Chordia, President, Rajasthan Association, Tamil Nadu, in the presence of school committee members. The celebration, themed "Saptha Utsav," marked seven years of the school's journey, showcasing milestones, growth, and vision through well-coordinated performances, concluding with a finale dance conveying a message of peace.

AKSHARABHYASAM POOJA

Maharishi Vidya Mandir Sr. Sec. School, Choolai, organised a grand Mass Aksharabhyasam Pooja at Sri Kanyaka Parameswari Temple, Choolai, marking the initiation of Pre-KG and LKG students into learning. The ceremony began with a sacred homam, invoking divine blessings, followed by rituals guiding children through their first writing steps. Hon. Correspondent Sri. T. V. Rama Kumar garu, Devasthanam Member Sri. Desu Lakshmi Narayana garu, Hon. Office Member & Correspondent of Aided Schools Sri. Soleti Lokaian Sudarsanam garu, Hon. Finance Member Sri. C. R. Kishore Babu garu, and Hon. College Member Sri. Chinni Balaji garu graced the occasion and blessed the children.

ANNUAL DAY CELEBRATED

Pon Vidyashram Senior Secondary School, Velachery, celebrated their 18th Annual Day at the Anna Centenary Auditorium, Kotturpuram, Chennai, with enthusiasm. The event, themed "Wings of Change – Honoring Her Power," showcased students' talents through vibrant cultural performances. The programme was presided over by Chairman Shri. M. K. Rajagopalan, who presented awards to student toppers and teacher achievers. Chief Guest Mr. V. Nandakumar, IRS, Commissioner of Income Tax, and Guest of Honour Dr. Jerusha Irene, Assistant Professor, Loyola College, appreciated the school's commitment to holistic education and empowerment, concluding on a note of pride.

For Subscription related queries, please contact Subramaniam P:
Handphone:+91 98408 98088 | Email: subramaniam.p@thehindu.co.in

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

1ST DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Prof. Joyce Ponniah
(W/o Mr. Crossley Ponniah)
21.08.1930 - 08.05.2025
Retd Professor of History
Sir Theagaraya College, Chennai
We miss you every moment in our life. Your presence continues to surround us. You are in our hearts forever.
Remembered by Daughter and family

IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES
To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:
044-28576300
from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.
Toll Free 1800 102 4161
from 10.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m.
For Placing Advertisements Online
log on to
www.thehinduads.com

DONATE EYES GIFT SIGHT

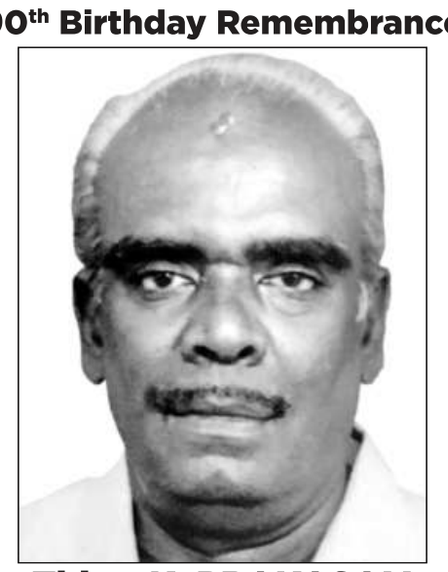
DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

5th YEAR DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Stephen Arulraj Edward
27.12.1956 - 08.05.2021
Retd. Tata Consultancy Services
You are always in our hearts forever.
We are remembering you everyday, every hour, every minute.
Fondly remembered by
Wife: **Margaret Stephen**
Son: **Victor Jayakumar Edward**

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

90th Birthday Remembrance



Thiru. K. PRAKASAM
(Retd. Deputy Head Cashier and Cricketer SBI)
Parvatham
Viji & Elango Gopi & Aarti
Grandchildren

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

Objective of NDPS Act can be achieved only by carrying out structural reforms, says HC

Justice B. Pugalendhi says the investigation in cases under the NDPS Act should mandatorily include financial investigation into the proceeds of crime and the forfeiture of illegal properties

B. Tilak Chandar
MADURAI

Unless structural reforms are introduced in investigation, data integration, inter-agency coordination, and institutional capacity, the objective of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act cannot be effectively achieved, the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court has said while issuing suggestions in this regard to authorities.

The court said a substantial number of cases originated from Madurai, Theni, and Dindigul districts. Approximately over 50% of the cases reported in Tamil Nadu were from these districts. Justice B. Pugalendhi said the investigation in cases under the NDPS Act should mandatorily include financial investigation into the proceeds of crime and the forfeiture of illegal properties under Chapter V-A of the NDPS Act and should not be confined merely to seizure and arrest.

The court said financial investigation should extend to both commercial and intermediate quantities of narcotic and psychotropic substances. The authorities should, in appropriate cases, initiate proceedings under Chapter V-A of the NDPS Act for identification, attachment, and forfeiture of the illegally acquired properties.

Dedicated manpower should be provided for intelligence processing and tracking the online networks of drug traffickers, the court said.

The Director General of Police should issue comprehensive standing instructions mandating financial profiling of accused persons, systematic asset tracing, and effective coordination with banks and financial institutions, the court said.

The State should strengthen specialised agencies such as NIB-CID by filling vacancies on priority, augmenting sanctioned strength commensurate with workload, and ensuring that adequately equipped and functional units are established across the districts and major urban centres. Dedicated manpower should be provided for intelligence processing and tracking the online networks of drug traffickers, the court said.

The court said a structured coordination mechanism should be developed with Village Administrative Officers in Madurai, Theni and Dindigul districts in respect of accused persons hailing from these districts but residing in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Odisha. A comprehensive database should be created, and their movements should be kept under continuous watch.

A dedicated dashboard for the NIB-CID reflecting the number of cases registered and status of investigations should be designed by the State Crime Records Bureau. A separate platform should be created within the CCTNS platform to enable real-time access to case data, accused details, and investigation status of NDPS cases, the court said.

The court said every case registered should be automatically and contemporaneously reflected in the CCTNS system and brought to the notice of the NIB-CID unit, so as to ensure coordinated monitoring, intelligence sharing, and appropriate intervention.

The court said law enforcement agencies in the State should strengthen inter-State coordination with law enforcement agencies of neighbouring and source States through structured intelligence-sharing mechanisms.

New plant species discovered in southern Eastern Ghats, named after Annamalai varsity founder

Deepa H. Ramakrishnan
CHENNAI

Two botany students from Annamalai University in Chidambaram and their guide have discovered a new plant species in the grape family. Found in the southern Eastern Ghats of Tamil Nadu, in Villupuram district, during a climb up the 290-foot-tall Sanjeevi hill for documenting plants, the species has been named *Cyphostemma annamalaii* after the founder of the university, Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiyar.

The species named after Annamalai Chettiyar.

Phytochemical analysis

"It has a different morphology from others in allied species. For instance, *Cyphostemma setosum*, an allied species, starts with a single leaf and ends with three leaves, and has an ovate-shaped fruit that is red. The petals are greenish-white on the top half, then becoming reddish brown. It also has medicinal properties and is used to treat stomach ulcers, and is antidiabetic and antimicrobial. Whereas *Cyphostemma annamalaii* is a climber with a round fruit that is yellow. The petals of the flowers are white or yellow. It starts with three leaves and ends with three leaves. The phytochemical analysis of the plant is nearing completion," explained S. Akash, who, along with another PhD scholar, K. Manikandan, found the climber with its distinct leaves and fruit. They are presently pursuing their PhDs under A. Rajesh of the Department of Medicinal Botany, Siddha Medical College, Palayamkottai.

L. Mullainathan, a professor and HOD of Botany at Annamalai University, explained that the family *Vitaceae Juss*, commonly known as the grape family, comprises over 1,000 species belonging to 20 genera, of which *Cyphostemma* is the second largest genus, consisting of nearly 250 species. It is found in tropical and subtropical regions. "The students found the plant at an elevation of 86m in that tropical dry forest in Panaimalaipettai," he added.

Mr. Manikandan said that the plant was growing in open, scrubby vegetation. It had a tuberous root and climbed by utilising surrounding vegetation for support.

287 species

"Over a period of one year, we documented 287 species found on the hill. Locals use a lot of these plants. Some are used for fodder and others for medicinal purposes. They also collect wood for fuel and honey from the tall trees inside the dense forest area. It is also a sacred grove and has two temples – one attributed to Perumal, which is located inside a cave, and another, a Shivan temple. We saw animals including snakes such as the king cobra, porcupines, garden lizards, butterflies, and eagles. There are no steps leading to the temples," he added.

Mr. Rajesh explained that the species was officially published in the journal *Phytotaxa* in March 2026. "The herbarium with the dried plants has been submitted to St. Joseph's College in Tiruchi and to the Botanical Survey of India in Coimbatore. This find has been reviewed by experts in Vitaceae, which means *Cyphostemma annamalaii* is indeed a new species. Even locals do not have a name for it."

Rangasamy resigns as CM; set for a new term

The Hindu Bureau
PUDUCHERRY

Four days after the National Democratic Alliance retained power for the second consecutive term in Puducherry, Chief Minister N. Rangasamy, on Thursday, tendered his resignation to Lieutenant Governor K. Kailashnathan at Lok Niwas in Puducherry.

He met Mr. Kailashnathan around noon to handover his resignation letter for the Lt. Governor to proceed with the next government formation.

Shortly after submitting the resignation, Mr. Rangasamy told media persons outside Lok Niwas that the letter staking claim to form the next government will be submitted to the Lt. Governor very soon. In the 2026 Assembly elections, the NDA had won 18 out of the 30 seats.

While Chief Minister's All India N.R. Congress (AINRC) has won 12 seats, the other constituents of NDA – the Bharatiya Janata Party secured four, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) and the Latchiya Jananayaga Katchi (LJK) have won one seat each in the 30 member Legislative Assembly in the Union Territory.

CORRIGENDUM-05 FOR TENDER NOTICE NO.: CON/2026/FEB/03 DATED. 28-02-2026
Corrigendum No. 05 for Tender Notice No. CON/2026/FEB/03, dated: 28-02-2026 against Tender No. CE-CON-FT-EPC-2026-04 has been published. For details please visit in website www.ireps.gov.in.
CE/Con/LMG Project, Maligaon
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Construction Organization
Serving Customers With A Smile

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE
Tender No.– टीआरडी/सोन/ई.टी./26–27/1
1. Name of work with its location: Provision of portals at VPDA yard and MOG Yard in place of TTC in the jurisdiction of SSP depot. 2. Approx. cost of the works: Rs 1,85,03,422/- 3. Earnest Money to be deposited: Rs 3,70,100/- 4. Date & time for submission of e-tender and opening of e-tender: Opening of e-tenders on 29.05.2026 at 12.00 Hrs. in the office of the Sr. Divl. Electrical Engineer (TRD), DRM Office, E.C. Railway, Sonpur. 5. Website particulars and notice board location where complete details of e-tender can be seen: Website: http://www.ireps.gov.in Notice Board: DRM Office Campus, E. C. Railway, Sonpur.
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRD
East Central Railway/Sonpur
PR/0184/SEE/TRD/T/26-27/28

INTEGRAL COACH FACTORY, CHENNAI-38
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
INTEGRAL COACH FACTORY (ICF), CHENNAI, a leading manufacturer of passenger coaches, MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA invites.
Expressions of interest from organizations for Design, Manufacture, Supply, Installation and Proving out of Fixtures and Tools required for the manufacture of Railway coaches. Firms having design capability alone, manufacturing capability alone or both design manufacturing capability are invited to respond.
Organizations willing to participate may furnish their Expression of Interest (EOI) for taking up the above work, giving their company profile with details of their CAD infrastructure, Design expertise and customer base and send on or before 25.05.2026 to-
CHIEF DESIGN ENGINEER / MECHANICAL
INTEGRAL COACH FACTORY, CHENNAI - 600 038.
Phone / Fax No. 044-26261872
E-mail : cdemicf@gmail.com
For details pleae refer to website https://icf.indianrailways.gov.in/-Tender Information - Expression of Interest
AME/Design

Rajasthan State Road Development And Construction Corporation Ltd., JAIPUR
No. : NIT/2026-27/577 - 98 Date : 06/05/2026
निविदा सूचना/2026-27
निम्नलिखित कार्यों के लिए केन्द्र / राज्य सरकार के अभियांत्रिकी विभागों एवं उनके अधिकृत संगठनों में पंजीकृत एवं अनुभवी संवेदकों से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में ई-प्रोक्यूरमेन्ट प्रक्रिया हेतु ऑनलाइन निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती है :-

कार्य का विवरण	कार्य की कुल अनुमानित लागत(रु.)	निविदा सूचना संख्या
Renewal / Strengthening of Road at Various Places in Rajasthan.		
UBN: (1) RRC2627WLOB00085 (2) RRC2627WLOB00087 (3) RRC2627WLOB00090	8557.36 Lakh	ई-058/26-27
UBN: (1) RRC2627WLOB00093 (2) RRC2627WLOB00091 (3) RRC2627WLOB00086	10429.15 Lakh	ई-059/26-27
UBN: (1) RRC2627WLOB00094 (2) RRC2627WLOB00095 (3) RRC2627WLOB00097	18471.27 Lakh	अल्पकालीन ई-060/26-27
UBN: (1) RRC2627WLOB00098 (2) RRC2627WLOB00088 (3) RRC2627WLOB00092 (4) RRC2627WLOB00081	4581.42 Lakh	ई-061/26-27
UBN: (1)RRC2627WLOB00104	1854.50 Lakh	ई-064/26-27

निविदा से सम्बन्धित प्रपत्र में निविदा शुल्क, धरोहर राशि, डाउनलोड करने व खोलने की तारीख सहित सम्पूर्ण विवरण एवं संशोधन वेबसाईट: http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rajasthan.nic.in तथा http://pwd.rajasthan.gov.in/rsrdc पर देखा जा सकता है। इच्छुक संवेदकों को अपने डिजिटल हस्ताक्षर के माध्यम से वेबसाईट http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in पर रजिस्टर्ड करवाना आवश्यक है।
महाप्रबंधक

THE HINDU
Air Surcharge as applicable:
New Delhi - Rs. 15/-;
Port Blair - Rs. 20/-

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE
No. DNR/S&T/Sig/2026/4 Danapur, Dtd. 05.05.2026 Divisional Railway Manager (Signal & Telecom), East Central Railway, Danapur Division, for and on behalf of President of India invites tenders on web portal www.ireps.gov.in for the following work:1. Name of work with its location: Rehabilitation and reliability improvement of S&T gears in Danapur Division. 2. Approximate cost of work: Rs. 66286856.98/- 3. Earnest Money: Rs. 1325700.00/- 4. Last Date & Time of Submission: Up to 15.00 hrs. on 26.05.2026. 5.Opening of tender: 15.00 hrs. on 26.05.2026. 6. Website particulars where detail of the work and criteria can be seen: www.ireps.gov.in 7. Address of the office from where detail information can be obtained: Sr. Divnl. Signal & Telecommunication Engineer, East Central Railway, Danapur. Note: Any corrigendum if required will be uploaded on above website before 14 days.
Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer
East Central Railway, Danapur
PR/0181/DNR/S&T/T/26-27/32

KOCHI METRO RAIL LIMITED
(A joint venture company of Govt. of India & Govt. of Kerala)
4th Floor, JLN Stadium Metro Station, Kaloor, Ernakulam-682017
Ph: 0484-2846700
E-TENDER
E-Tender cum Auction Notice for Property Development and Lease of part of building at Edapally Metro Station
Tender ID 2026_KMRL_848855_1
Bid submission end date : 16.05.2026
Tender documents can be downloaded from www.etenders.kerala.gov.in / www.kochimetro.org
Further corrigendum & addendum will be published only on website

IDEMI
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
INSTITUTE FOR DESIGN OF ELECTRICAL MEASURING INSTRUMENTS, MUMBAI
वैद्युतिक मापन उपयंत्र अभिकल्प संस्थान, मुंबई
Government Certificate Course on
Artificial Intelligence For
Pharmaceutical R & D
Course Timing- 07.30 PM to 8.30 PM (ऑनलाइन ONLINE) Date- 20 to27 May 2026 Course Duration: 8Days
Venue : IDEMI, Swatantryaveer Tatya Tope Marg, Chunabhatti, Sion PO Mumbai - 400 022
Email ID: training@idemi.org Website: www.idemi.org
Fundamentals of AI in Pharmaceutical Sciences, Applications of AI in Drug Discovery & Pharma Industry, AI Tools for Research & Scientific Writing, Ethical Use of AI in Research, Future Impact & Challenges of AI in Healthcare, Top 30 tools for education, Research Excellence and productivity enhancement, Basic of Molecular modelling, Structure Based Drug Design, Homology Modelling Molecular Docking, Molecular Dynamic Simulation.
Fees 4000+18% GST (Fees are not refundable)
After successsful completion certificate will be issued.
हमें कॉल करें / Call us between 10 am to 6 pm
Contact: 9403566219,8007765693,9869087617

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
Tiruchchirappalli Divsion
Tender No. 95265294A, Due Date: 27.05.2026
The following E-tender has been published in IREPS website. Firms are requested to login to https://www.ireps.gov.in -> Login -> E-tender -> Goods & services (new) and quote against the tender. Manual quotations will not be entertained.

Sl. No.	Tender No.	Description	Due Date
1.	95265294A	Fire Extinguisher with anti-theft alarm as per Specification No. MDTS 46270 Rev-6 with base document IS 15683/2018 and as per DRG CC64262 ALT-f. Details are available in tender schedule.	27.05.2026

Senior Divisional Materials Manager / Tiruchchirappalli
For and on behalf of the President of India

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER
For and on behalf of the President of India, the Dy. Chief Engineer (CON), South Eastern Railway, Rourkela invites E-tender for the following work. Following tender has been uploaded on website www.ireps.gov.in. The tender will be closed at 12.00 hrs. on due date. e-Tender Notice No.: 371614-ROU-DCE-C-01-2026, Date: 06.05.2026. Brief Description of work: Execution of Earthwork in formation by filling and cutting, blanketing, side drain, central drain, catch water drain, protection work, P. way track linking work, P.Way fitting, transportation of P. Way materials, supply of ballast, construction of service buildings, construction of FOB & metalizing work etc. of Kechobahal Yard modification in connection with GCT to serve M/s NTPC, Darlipali STPP (Deposit terms) under the jurisdiction of Dy. Chief Engineer/Con/Rourkela of South Eastern Railway. Approx. Cost: ₹ 14.84 Crore. Bid Security: ₹ 29,70,000. Completion Period: 12 months. Closing Date: 01.06.2026. Interested tenderers may visit website www.ireps.gov.in for full details/description/specification of the tenders and submit their bids online. In no case manual tender for this item will be accepted. N.B.: Prospective bidders may regularly visit www.ireps.gov.in to participate in all other tenders. (PR-137)

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Corrigendum to Tender Notice No. CAO/CN/BNC/172/2026 Dated : 27-02-2026

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
RFP for Construction of New Broad Gauge Line between Chainage 90000 and Chainage 130375 (40.375 km) including Civil & Track works, Signal & Telecommunication works, Railway Electrification and Electrical General Services between Hiriyur (HIRYR) (Incl.) & Palavvanahalli (PLVHL) (Incl.) stations and Extension of various bridges (Civil works) between Palavvanahalli (PLVHL) (Excl.) & Chitradurga (CTA) (Excl) stations (Chainage 130375 to Chainage 140490 (10.115 km)) in Tumakuru-Chitradurga Davangere New Line Project on EPC Mode. (Tender Ref. No. TK-DVG-EPC-05)	Rs. 7,82,76,56,049/-

Date of Closing	
Existing	Modified
13-05-2026 (15:00 Hrs.)	26-05-2026 (15:00 Hrs)

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Deputy Chief Engineer / Construction / Works
Bengaluru Cantonment
PUB/99/AAS/PRB/SWR/2026-27
Download the RailOne app for easy ticket booking, PNR status, and more railway services.
South Western Railway-SWR SWRRLY @SWRAILWAYHQ @sw_railways

Your feedback will keep us Cleaner, Sharper and Bolder
Call our toll-free number 1800 102 1878
Or write to us at customercare@thehindu.co.in
Scan the QR code to register your feedback
THE HINDU thehindubusinessline. FRONTLINE SPORTSTAR THE HINDU Young World THE HINDU

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
Chennai Division
E-Auction Notice / Catering / Passenger Amenities / E-Auction / 2026
The Divisional Railway Manager, Chennai Division, Southern Railway, calls for bids (commercial) through E-Auction and E-tender for award of Catering stall contracts and Passenger Amenities contracts in the following Railway Stations / locations. The E-auctions scheduled are as detailed below:-

Sl. No.	Catalogue No	Subcategory	Location/ Site	Auction Date	Tendering Mode	Auction Time
1	MAS-PAUT-425	Pay and Use Toilet	VDR	07.05.2026	E-auction	15:00
2	MAS-PAUT-425	Pay and Use Toilet	PZA	07.05.2026	E-auction	15:00
3	MAS-PAUT-425	Pay and Use Toilet	UPM	07.05.2026	E-auction	15:00
4	MAS-PBCO-26-06	Premium Brand Catering Outlet	CGL	13.05.2026	E-auction	15:00
5	MAS-WVM-2026-05	Water Vending Machine	CGL	14.05.2026	E-auction	15:00

All other details can be viewed on the website - www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Commercial Manager / Chennai

ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, BHOPAL
(An Autonomous Institute under MoH&FW, Government of India)
Saket Nagar, Bhopal (M.P.)-462020, www.aiimsbhopal.edu.in
Advt. No.: ADM-2(4)/Rect.cell/Contract/GY/2026/3142 Dated. 06/05/2026
INTERVIEW FOR ENGAGEMENT OF GYNAECOLOGY CONSULTANT (IVF) & EMBRYOLOGIST AT AIIMS BHOPAL PURELY ON CONTRACTUAL BASIS
All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhopal will hold an Interview for engagement of 01 Gynecology Consultant (IVF) & 01 Embryologist on purely contractual basis with consolidated monthly remuneration.
For details of essential eligibility criteria, terms & conditions of engagement, application form, application procedure and the date (s) of document verification & Interview, the detailed advertisement may be referred on the Institute's website - www.aiimsbhopal.edu.in. Candidates fulfilling the eligibility criteria and aspiring to attend the interview may submit their application in the prescribed format within 10 days of the publication of this advertisement on recruitment.contractual@aiimsbhopal.edu.in. The date of interview and document verification shall be notified separately on Institute's website only.
Sd/-
Dy. Director (Admin.)
AIIMS, Bhopal

Rail Wheel Plant/Bela
(Distt. - Saran), Bihar 841221
E Tender No.:- RWP-PLG-OT-2026-1 "Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer/PLG/Rail Wheel Plant, Bela for and on behalf of President of India invites online "e-Open Tender" through Indian Railways E-Procurement Portal (IREPS) www.ireps.gov.in for following work. 1. Name of work with its location and completion period: Design, Engineering, Supply, Installation, Erection, Commissioning, Testing of Cold Air Ventilation System for operators at different locations in Mould room at RWP/Bela and CAMC for this system for 05 years Post Warranty. 2. Approx. cost of the work: Rs. 28915302.00/-, 3. Earnest Money to be Deposited : Rs. 578300.00/-, 4. Cost of tender document : Nil, 5. Pre-Bid Conference Date Time : 13/05/2026 at 12:00 Hrs, 6. Tender closing date and time : 05/06/2026, 15.00 hrs. 7. Website particulars, Notice Board location where complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc. : E Tender No. RWP-PLG-OT-2026-1, For full details and submission of bid kindly visit Portal (IREPS) www.ireps.gov.in. The prospective firms/bidders submitting bid are advised to remain in touch with IREPS Portal (www.ireps.gov.in) for updates including Addendum/Corrigendum/ Cancellation with respect to the above tender because no such any notice/ information concerned that shall be published in newspaper.
Dy. CME/PLG, Rail Wheel Plant/Bela
RWP/CPRO/Advt/2026-27/14

ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, BHOPAL
(An Autonomous Institute under MoH&FW, Government of India)
Saket Nagar, Bhopal (M.P.)-462020, www.aiimsbhopal.edu.in
Advt. No.: Academic/AIIMS Bhopal/MHM/2026/05 Dated. 23/04/2025
Advertisement for Master of Hospital Management July -2026 Session
Applications are invited from eligible candidates for admission to the Master of Hospital Management (MHM) for the July 2026 session at AIIMS Bhopal. The detailed advertisement, eligibility criteria, prescribed format for application, details of seats, terms and conditions, etc., are available on the institute website: www.aiimsbhopal.edu.in
The Executive Director, AIIMS Bhopal reserves the right to cancel/vary the vacancies without assigning any reasons thereof.
Note: The candidates are advised to visit AIIMS, Bhopal website www.aiimsbhopal.edu.in regularly for any update(s).
Dean (Academics)

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
SALEM DIVISION
E-TENDER NOTICE No. SA-E2-2026-27-W1-W2, Dated: 04.05.2026
Divisional Railway Manager / Electrical / Salem Division, Salem - 5 for and on behalf of the President of India invites E-Tender for the under mentioned works. Online bids only will be accepted. For detailed NIT, qualification criteria, bidding document, tender submission etc., can be viewed / downloaded from website portal www.ireps.gov.in

E-Tender Notice No, Date and Name of Work	Details
1) SA-E2-2026-27-W1 Dated: 04.05.2026 Comprehensive Annual Maintenance contract (CAMC) for Johnson make Escalators and lifts available at Salem Division for a period of 5 years.	Approx. Cost - ₹ 79,48,166.00/- EMD - ₹ 1,59,000.00/- Tender Booklet cost : ₹ 5900/- Completion Period - 60 Months
2) SA-E2-2026-27-W2 Dated: 04.05.2026 Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) for Air Conditioners and Water Coolers over Salem Division for a period of two years.	Approx. Cost - ₹ 54,01,272.00/- EMD - ₹ 1,08,000.00/- Tender Booklet cost : ₹ 5900/- Completion Period - 24 Months
For all the works Closing Time & Date	15.00 hrs. on 04.06.2026
For all the works Bids Opening Time & Date	15.30 hrs. on 04.06.2026

All Addendum / Corrigendum, Time extension, Clarifications, etc. will be uploaded in the website portal www.ireps.gov.in only and will not be published separately in Newspapers. Bidders should regularly visit website to keep themselves updated.
Divisional Railway Manager (Electrical) / Salem

Manya ART & KRAFT Presents
ஹஸ்தகலா
Hastakalaa
CRAFTS | TEXTILES | HOME DECOR | JEWELLERY
Craftsmen from across India featuring Innovative Designs
Handcrafted Decors, Orgnaic Products & Engaging Daily Workshops
Date: 08th to 17th May 2026
Timings: 11.00 am. to 9.00 pm.
Venue: CERC CAMPUS EXHIBITION GROUND
Kalakshetra Road, Opp, Pamban Swamy Koil
Thiruvanmiyur, Chennai - 600 041.
Pet Adoption Drive on 08th, 09th, 10th May & 16th, 17th May
From 4.00 pm to 7.00 pm
By:- ADOPT
manya_hastakalaa manya.hastakala +91 98456 95922
ENTRY & PARKING FREE | OPEN ON SUNDAY'S ALSO

Punjab State Transmission Corporation Limited
(Regd. Office PSEB Head office, The Mall, Patiala 147001)
Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033814
(Office: Sr. Xen, Hotline & Safety Division, PSTCL, Ludhiana)
Mobile: 96461-18225, E-Mail:- xen-hotline-ldh@pstcl.org
E-Tender Notice
Tender enquiry no. 01/2026-27
The department of Punjab State Transmission Corporation Ltd. invites online bids for "Hiring of 1 No. Outsourced Hotline Gang consisting of 10 No. certified/trained skilled workers through Annual Maintenance Contract to be stationed at Jalandhar for Hotline maintenance of 400/220/132 KV transmission system of PSTCL."
Last date for bid submission: 08.06.2026 upto 11:00 AM
Date of opening of E-Tender: 10.06.2026 at 11:00 AM
Detailed Specifications may be downloaded from e-tendering web site www.eproc.punjab.gov.in. Corrigendum, if any, will not be published in newspaper. Details regarding corrigendum may be seen on www.eproc.punjab.gov.in or on PSTCL website www.pstcl.org.
Sr. XEN/Hotline & Safety Division, PSTCL, Ludhiana

READ FRONTLINE LEADING THE DEBATE SINCE 1984
EVERY FORTNIGHT.
TO SUBSCRIBE, VISIT
www.thehindugroup.in/subscribe

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Open Tender through E-Tendering 2026-27
NIT No: LWS-TC-OPN-EC1600HP-2026 Date-06.05.2026, For and on behalf of The President of India, Dy. CME/Loco Ajmer invites e-tender with following., S.N. 1, Name of work: Work of Engine major schedule overhauling/repair of 1600 HP DEMU DPC, Model QSK50L, Make-CIL, Quantity- 06 Nos. at Loco Workshop, N.W. Railway, Ajmer for 01 year, 2 Estimated Cost of work: Rs. 15,21,75,461/-, 3 Address of the NIT issuing office: Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer (Loco) Diesel Loco & Wagon Workshop Lal Phatak, Ajmer (Raj.)-305001, 4 Earnest money to be deposited: Rs.3043500/-(Only through net banking or payment gateway on IREPS portal), 5 Last Date and time for submission and opening of E-tender: 29.05.2026 up to 15.00 E-Tender will be opened at 15.30 on same day. Due to indispensable reasons bid opening schedule may change. 6 Website particular where complete details of e-tender can be seen and participated: www.ireps.gov.in, (Note- This is E-tender so tenderer can participate through e-tendering process only on mentioned website within bidding period) details, interested firms/tenderer may participate through IREPS portal in this e-tender.
669-DO/26
Follow us on : /NWRailways NWRailways_

INBRIEF

Tamil Nadu Class 12 Board exam results to be out today

The Tamil Nadu State Board exam results for Class 12 will be declared at 9.30 a.m. on Friday, School Education Secretary B. Chandra Mohan said. A total of 8,16,289 students had written the exams, which began on March 2 and ended on March 26. While the department had previously announced that the results would be postponed as they were still being processed, they will now be announced as scheduled. Sources in the department had earlier said the declaration of the results was being put off due to the delay in government formation. Students can access the results at www.tnresults.nic.in, www.dge.tn.gov.in, or results.digilocker.gov.in.

Sandalwood smugglers caught near Srivilliputtur

Forest officials arrested two persons while they were trying to smuggle sandalwood stolen from a private farmland close to the Western Ghats mountain ranges near Shenbagathoppu. During a routine patrol, the forest personnel had encountered the two persons on the Shenbagathoppu-W. Pudupatti ghat section of the Azhagarkoil beat in the Srivilliputtur Megamalai Tiger Reserve. The suspects were identified as Gubendran, 55, of Varudhanadu in Theni district, and Solairaja, 51, of Gandhigram. When the forest personnel checked their belongings, they found several pieces of sandalwood, weighing over 8 kg. During an interrogation, the suspects reportedly said they had stolen the sandalwood from a farm. The forest personnel also seized an axe, knife, torchlight, and a motorbike from them. The forest officials are also on the lookout for another suspect.

DMK's allies urge Governor to invite Vijay to form govt.

Enough time should be given to the leader of the single-largest party to prove its majority. The Governor should respect the Constitution and act accordingly, says CPI leader M. Veerapandian

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Several allies of the DMK on Thursday said Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar should invite TVK president C. Joseph Vijay to form the government, as his party has emerged as the single-largest in the recent Assembly election.

In a statement, CPI State secretary M. Veerapandian said that since there was no majority for any single party or alliance, and the TVK had emerged as the single-largest party by winning 108 seats, Mr. Vijay had met the Governor, staking claim to form a government. It was unfair to ask him to prove his majority immediately, he said, adding that Mr. Vijay should be given adequate time to do so on the floor of the House.

Mr. Veerapandian also said the Supreme Court had, in *S.R. Bommai vs Union of India* and many other cases, said enough time should be given to the leader of the single-largest party to prove its majority. The Governor should respect the Constitution and act accordingly, he added.

P. Shanmugam, State secretary of the CPI(M), said the Governor should invite Mr. Vijay to form the government, as no other political party had staked a claim to do so.

In one voice: CPI State secretary M. Veerapandian, VCK president Thol. Thirumavalavan; and MNM chief Kamal Haasan

In a statement, he said the people of Tamil Nadu had not granted a majority to any alliance in the election, but had elected the TVK as the single-largest party with 108 seats. "Mr. Vijay alone has staked a claim to form the government. But the BJP is using the Governor and taking a stand against the Constitution. That is why the Governor is delaying the opportunity for Mr. Vijay to form the government," he alleged.

Meanwhile, MDMK general secretary Vaiko said DMK president M.K. Stalin's stand that the DMK would not block the TVK from forming the government was "most excellent, laudable and timely, and demonstrates his statesmanship".

MNM president Kamal Haasan said the verdict in the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly election was unprecedented, as no party had been given the mandate to form the government on its own.

"My brother, Mr. Stalin, has said that we respect the people's verdict, and that we will function as a responsible Opposition. I respect his political maturity. Now, those holding constitutional responsibility must also fulfil their duty. This is not a request, but a reminder of their constitutional obligation," he said.

"The TVK, led by Mr. Vijay, has won 108 seats. Not inviting him to form the government would amount to disrespecting the mandate of the people of Tamil Nadu," he said.

TNCC to protest

Tamil Nadu Congress Committee president K. Selvaperunthagai announced a Statewide protest at all the district headquarters on Friday.

In a letter to the district presidents of the party, Mr. Selvaperunthagai said the TVK had emerged as the single-largest party in the Assembly. The Governor, instead of inviting it to form the government, had been acting as the "puppet of the BJP government at the Centre", he added.

Earlier, TVK leaders reached out to the VCK and the two Communist parties, seeking their support.

"Mr. Vijay called me and sought our party's support for forming the government," said VCK leader Thol. Thirumavalavan, adding that the actor-politician had also sent a formal letter.

"We have to discuss the issue with the frontline leaders of the party. We are also continuously discussing it with the leaders of the Communist parties. We will take a decision together," Mr. Thirumavalavan said.

Mr. Veerapandian said TVK general secretary 'Bussy' Anand met him and sought his party's support for government formation. Aadhav Arjuna, another TVK leader, was also in touch with Mr. Veerapandian.

"However, in a Communist party, individuals cannot take decisions on political issues. We have convened a meeting of our State council on May 8 to take a decision on the matter," Mr. Veerapandian said.

AIADMK leader Edappadi K. Palaniswami arriving at a resort in Puducherry on Thursday to meet newly elected party MLAs.

EPS saddened over Stalin's defeat in Kolathur: Anbalagan

The Hindu Bureau
PUDUCHERRY

AIADMK Puducherry unit secretary and MLA-elect A. Anbalagan on Thursday said party general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami was 'saddened' over the defeat of former Chief Minister M.K. Stalin in the Kolathur constituency in the Assembly election.

"Why should anyone think of even ditching such a leader like Mr. Palaniswami, who is so big-hearted that he even felt sad over the defeat of Mr. Stalin? When I met Mr. Palaniswami in Chennai, he was talking to me about the defeat of Mr. Stalin in Kolathur. Mr. Palaniswami said he (Mr. Stalin) had been in public service for decades, and the people could have been kind to him," Mr. Anbalagan said, while addressing the media.

Confirming that some newly elected legislators of the AIADMK from Tamil Nadu were being accommodated in a resort in Puducherry on the 'directions' of Mr. Palaniswami, Mr. Anbalgan said all the legislators were united under the leadership of the party general secretary. "There is no faction. All elected MLAs are here on the directions of Mr. Palaniswami. They are here not because of any direction given by some other leader. The elected members will follow whatever decision our leader takes," he said.

When asked why the elected representatives were staying in a resort in Puducherry, Mr. Anbalagan said the climate was better in Puducherry than in Chennai. "It is more cool here," he said.

According to police sources, there are around 30 elected legislators staying at RKN Beach Resort in Pudukuppam.

Later in the day, Mr. Palaniswami arrived at the resort to meet the legislators. He would interact with them and also have dinner at the resort, a party functionary said.

Sub-Inspector, history-sheeter injured during exchange of fire

The Hindu Bureau
THOOTHUKUDI

A 36-year-old history-sheeter from Thoothukudi was shot and apprehended after he allegedly opened fire on a police officer with a country-made gun while attempting to escape, at Kaniyalan Puthur village under the jurisdiction of the Tiruchendur Taluk police.

According to police sources, the history-sheeter had been identified as D. Mariya Antony Agnel from Mini Sahayapuram in Thoothukudi, who had around 30 cases against him, including that of murder and attempt to murder.

Petrol bomb case

Thoothukudi Town Deputy Superintendent of Police Sunil had nominated Sub-Inspector Raja Prabhu to arrest Mariya Antony in connection with a case in which he was accused of hurling a petrol bomb at a house.

Upon receiving credible information that Mariya Antony was spotted in Kaniyalan Puthur near Sonaganvilai, the SI, along with other police personnel, reached the area to arrest him.

Bid to flee

When the police attempted to apprehend him, Mariya Antony fired at Mr. Prabhu using a country-made gun, and attempted to flee. Mr. Prabhu reportedly opened fire in self-defence.

Both of them sustained injuries in the exchange of fire. They have been admitted to the Thoothukudi Government Medical College and Hospital, where they are undergoing treatment.

Govt. formation: the options and precedents before Governor Arlekar

T. Ramakrishnan
CHENNAI

With Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar stating that the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) has not established the requisite majority support in the State Assembly to form a government, he has many options as precedents to examine.

On Thursday afternoon, Mr. Arlekar's office made public this position, after two rounds of meetings over the past two days between the Governor and TVK founder C. Joseph Vijay, whose party had secured 108 seats in the Tamil Nadu Assembly. As Mr. Vijay has been elected from two seats – Perambur and Tiruchi (East) – the party's tally will effectively be 107.

Letters of support

Some of the parties have begun criticising Mr. Arlekar for insisting on the production of letters of support. Twenty years ago, when the DMK bagged only 96 seats in the 234-member Assembly, it formed the government only with the support of its allies, which accounted for 68 seats. *The Hindu*, on May 12, 2006, stated that "all the allies have submitted letters supporting the DMK to Governor Surjit Singh Barnala".

In fact, in April 1999, when the Congress tried to form the government at the Centre after the collapse of the Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) regime, then President K.R. Narayanan had sought written assurances of support from the partners of a proposed coalition at the time of ministry-making, which he considered to have become a well-established precedent.

His predecessor, S.D. Sharma, who had issued the letter of appointment to Atal Bihari Vajpayee in May 1996 as Prime Minister during their first meeting, changed his approach a few weeks later and insisted on the letters of support when the United Front government, headed by Deve Gowda, was installed.

He "even went to the extent of securing undertakings on matters related to programmes", stated this paper's report on April 19, 1999. Narayanan himself observed the practice in March 1998, when Vajpayee formed a coalition with the help of parties such as the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK). Sharma was severely criticised for his decision to appoint Vajpayee the Prime Minister even before the decision of the Congress to support Mr. Gowda was communicated to the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Facing flak: Some of the parties have begun criticising Mr. Arlekar for insisting on the production of letters of support.

The precedent of inviting the leader of the single-largest party to form the government was created as early as in 1952

Single-largest party

However, the precedent of inviting the leader of the single-largest party to form the government was created as early as in 1952, when the Congress set up its regime under the leadership of C. Rajagopalachari (CR). In the House of 375 members, the Congress obtained only 152 seats. A surprise inclusion in the CR Cabinet was the Commonweal Party's leader, M.A. Manickavelu Naicker. By the time the Assembly was constituted in early May, the Congress's strength rose to 165.

A former official of the Tamil Nadu government, who is well-versed with parliamentary practices and conventions, explains that there is nothing wrong with the Governor seeking letters, but he or she should not carry out a head count. The floor of the House is the best place for any party to demonstrate its strength. At the same time, the Governor cannot be oblivious to the possibility of horse-trading if he or she allows any party, which does not have a majority of its own or with the support of its allies, to form the government.

As regards the constitution of the new House, the former official adds that the practice in Tamil Nadu is for the Public Department to issue a Government Order on the formation of the Assembly, on receipt of documents from the Election Commission of India on the declaration of results, and get it published in the government gazette.

DMK-AIADMK coalition

The Governor can also find out from the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) president and the outgoing Chief Minister, M.K. Stalin, and the AIADMK general secretary, Edappadi K. Palaniswami, whether either of them, individually or jointly, are in a position to form the government. This assumes significance in the wake of reports of an understanding between the two Dravidian majors.

There are at least two precedents at the all-India level in support of this option. In July 1979, then President N. Sanjiva Reddi, after Prime Minister Morarji Desai of the Janata Party, had separate consultations with leaders of various parliamentary parties to make an assessment as to which of them would be in a position to marshal a durable majority for forming an alternative government at the Centre. It was after Y.B. Chavan, then Leader of the Opposition, conveyed to the President his inability to form the government, that an invitation was extended to Charan Singh, the leader of the breakaway Janata group, to form the government. Likewise, in November 1990, then President R. Venkataraman, after being informed by all major parties of their disinclination to form the government subsequent to the fall of the National Front regime headed by V.P. Singh, had asked Chandra Shekhar to form the government.

In case the Governor comes to the conclusion that no government can be formed under the given composition of the Assembly, he can recommend to the Central government the imposition of President's rule, besides keeping the House in suspended animation, or even dissolution if possible. This was done in Bihar in 2005.

Notwithstanding these precedents, there have been a number of recommendations and judicial opinions on the issue of the Governor's role in the appointment of Chief Minister in the case of a hung Assembly.

The Commission on Centre-State Relations, in Volume II, states that "the party or combination of parties, which commands the widest support in the Legislative Assembly, should be called upon to form the Government". Headed by former Chief Justice of India M.M. Punchhi, the panel also goes on to state that "in case no party or pre-poll coalition has a clear majority, the Governor should select the Chief Minister in the order of preference indicated below: a. The group of parties which had pre-poll alliance commanding the largest number; b. The largest single party staking a claim to form the government with the support of others; c. A post-electoral coalition with all partners joining the government. A post-electoral alliance with some parties joining the government and the remaining including independents supporting the government from outside".

Governor should act as per Constitution, invite TVK to form govt., says Arunraaj

K.G. Arunraaj

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) general secretary (policy and propaganda) K.G. Arunraaj on Thursday said the Governor of Tamil Nadu should act according to the Constitution, and invite his party, which had emerged as the single-largest in the recent Assembly election, to form a government.

Dr. Arunraaj said the Supreme Court had, in several judgments, clearly said a majority should be proved only on the floor of the House.

He was speaking to reporters after handing over a letter, signed by party president C. Joseph Vijay, to Indian Union Muslim League leader K.M. Khader Mohideen, seeking the party's support to form the government.

The IUML, as part of the DMK-led Secular Progressive Alliance, has won two seats. Dr. Arunraaj said the IUML leaders had told the TVK that they would consult their executive committee and take a decision on the request. He said the TVK was hopeful of securing their support.

To a question on whether he believed there was a conspiracy brewing to stop the TVK from forming the government, Dr. Arunraaj said that even before the elections, the party and Mr. Vijay had faced several challenges, and the party had emerged as the single-largest despite those challenges.

"It can be delayed, but cannot be denied. Justice will prevail. The people of Tamil Nadu should watch closely," he said.

Responding to the speculation on the AIADMK seeking the support of the DMK to form the government, the TVK leader said it would amount to going against the verdict of the people of Tamil Nadu.

"Why did they send out OPS [O. Panneerselvam], alleging he was having discreet ties with the DMK? But what are they doing now? People should think. Both the parties are attempting to dilute the verdict of the people," the TVK leader added.

Governor meets officials

Meanwhile, on Thursday evening, the Governor held a meeting with Chief Secretary M. Sai Kumar and Director-General of Police Sandeep Rai Rathore at the Lok Bhavan.

Officials said the law and order situation and administrative works were among the matters discussed at the meeting.

Pinarayi promises to listen to people, make corrections

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Pinarayi Vijayan

Breaking his silence after the Left Democratic Front (LDF) suffered a debilitating blow in the Assembly elections, Communist Party of India (Marxist) Polit Bureau member Pinarayi Vijayan wrote on social media on Thursday that the "unexpected" verdict marked a new beginning for the Left's continued political work, not an end.

The alliance, he said, was committed to restoring the people's faith in it and marching ahead with renewed vigour. Constant vigil was needed to ensure that the development projects and welfare schemes implemented in the past 10 years, which had brought sweeping changes in society, did not halt and were taken forward.

The Left, he said, would make no bones about an open examination of the election results and would listen seriously to criticisms and concerns raised by the public, Left supporters and members, and act upon them.

Reasons for defeat

He attributed the results to an environment created by forces that opposed the Left, such as the UDF, the BJP and a section of the media, besides "false campaigns unleashed by certain anarchic and apolitical centres" which gave some people some misgivings. Serious efforts would be made to sensitise them to the facts, he said.

The Left, he added, would not be set back by lies and PR-driven false campaigns.

However, it would democratically examine the lapses in its own policies and interventions and carry out necessary corrections before marching ahead with greater confidence and clarity.

As the Opposition, he said, the front would ensure that the Left's vision for a *Nava* Keralam – conceived through a knowledge economy, employment for youth, social justice, public health and education – was taken forward. The new government would be pressured into implementing the policies initiated by the LDF government for extreme poverty eradication and women empowerment.

The Left would be a responsible Opposition, supporting the new government's actions to better the standard of living of the people while opposing its anti-people policies, he added.

He thanked the voters who reposed their faith in the Left and congratulated the UDF on its win.

Kerala Congress drives hard bargain after electoral revival

Party has staked claim for two ministerial berths and the post of Chief Whip in the incoming UDF Cabinet; leaders cite party's strong base among Christian community, Church's support for alliance

The Hindu Bureau
KOTTAYAM

The Kerala Congress, under chairperson P.J. Joseph, centre, said it deserves 'fair representation' in the Cabinet. FILE PHOTO

Riding high on its 2026 election performance, the Kerala Congress under P.J. Joseph has entered the post-poll negotiation table with firm demands for Cabinet representation. The party has staked claim for two ministerial berths and the post of Chief Whip in the incoming United Democratic Front Cabinet.

After nearly a decade on the margins of power since 2016, the Kerala Congress has staged a decisive return, contesting eight seats and securing seven in Kerala. Meeting at the party chairman's residence in Thodupuzha, the newly elected legislators decided that the party would press for two key ministerial portfolios.

"As the third largest partner in the front, we are entitled to two ministerial posts. We have seven members in the House and a strong mandate. Naturally, we deserve fair representation in the Cabinet," said Apu John Joseph, who won from Thodupuzha. Senior leader Mons Joseph was elected parliamentary party leader in the Assembly.

With the Indian Union Muslim League expected to secure five ministerial berths, Kerala Congress leaders insist that their party, with its strong base among the Christian community, was entitled to at least two. "If the League gets five posts, the Kerala Congress should get two. We represent a significant section of the Christian community, and the Church extended strong support to the UDF in this election," a senior leader noted. In the previous UDF Ministry as well, the Kerala Congress had held two ministerial posts along with the Chief Whip position.

KC(M) faces turmoil ahead of steering committee meet

The Hindu Bureau
KOTTAYAM

The post-poll phase of Kerala Congress(M) in Kerala, following an electoral rout, appears to be moving quickly from reflection to rupture, with internal dissent and electoral disappointment setting the tone for a meeting of the party steering committee on Saturday.

The crisis has deepened after the regional party failed to win even a single seat out of the 12 it contested under the Left Democratic Front (LDF) banner.

The contrast with the Kerala Congress faction led by P.J. Joseph, which secured seven seats, has only left the party red-faced. A growing section of leaders is admitting that the results have inflicted serious damage on cadre morale, while also triggering a wider debate on the party's political identity. Many argue the KC(M) has steadily diluted its independent space after aligning with the LDF and that a crucial opportunity to reconsider its alignment ahead of the polls, reportedly at the instance of Roshy Augustine, was lost.

It is in this charged atmosphere that the intervention of State committee member Jayakrishnan Puthiyedath has acquired significance. Mr. Puthiyedath, who accused Roshy Augustine of blocking a potential shift back to the UDF, was expelled from the party.

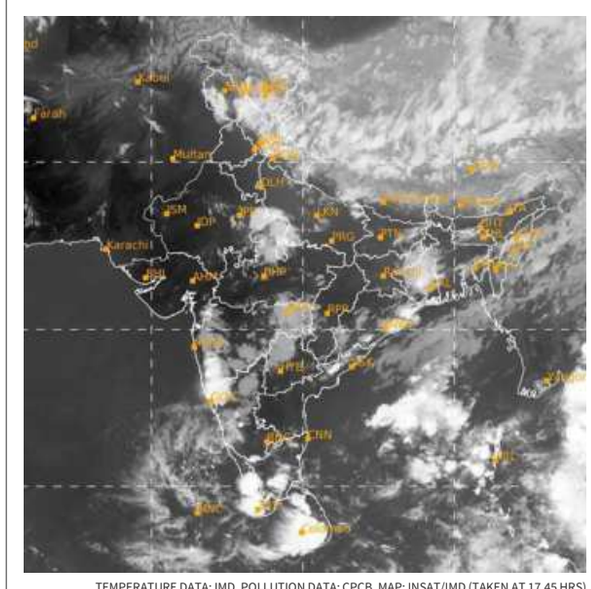
Police case against two IUML workers

The Hindu Bureau
MALAPPURAM

The police have registered a case against two Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) workers for publicly displaying a severed goat's head during victory celebrations following the defeat of Left Democratic Front (LDF) candidate and former Minister K.T. Jaleel at Thavanur in Malappuram district of Kerala. The act, widely shared on social media, drew criticism.

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 Friday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala and Mahe. Thunderstorm with lightning & gusty winds likely at isolated places over Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	30	32.4	22.0	Kozhikode	38	33.8	25.2
Ahmedabad	—	43.2	27.8	Kurnool	—	40.5	28.2
Aizawl	9.8	28.7	17.4	Lucknow	12	29.5	18.0
Allahabad	—	33.6	22.2	Madurai	—	34.5	24.6
Bengaluru	—	32.5	22.5	Mangaluru	—	30.6	26.6
Bhopal	—	39.0	23.2	Mumbai	—	34.4	26.7
Bhubaneswar	—	36.7	26.4	Mysuru	—	34.2	21.8
Chandigarh	—	30.2	22.0	New Delhi	—	33.6	23.8
Chennai	—	37.1	28.5	Patna	19	32.6	19.6
Coimbatore	5	33.4	22.6	Port Blair	0.2	32.5	26.8
Dehradun	—	29.3	18.2	Puducherry	—	34.2	27.2
Gangtok	3	17.2	13.1	Pune	—	40.9	26.0
Goa	—	36.2	26.5	Raipur	—	39.2	24.4
Guwahati	2	32.8	21.0	Ranchi	4	32.6	19.0
Hubballi	—	35.0	23.0	Shillong	6	22.0	12.5
Hyderabad	—	36.8	26.3	Shimla	†	24.5	14.2
Imphal	1	29.5	19.8	Srinagar	—	27.9	11.0
Jaipur	—	40.4	26.1	Thiruvananthapuram	8	34.1	25.0
Kochi	7	31.4	25.0	Tiruchi	—	36.8	26.6
Kohima	—	22.0	13.0	Vijayawada	—	36.4	27.4
Kolkata	18	32.2	23.2	Visakhapatnam	—	35.1	27.1

(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	.82	.68	.3	140	188	
Bengaluru	.16	.19	.50	42	106	
Chennai	.17	.10	.16	31	40	
Delhi	.36	8	.48	195	156	
Hyderabad	.16	.14	.35	66	89	
Kolkata	.13	.27	.34	74	63	
Lucknow	.12	9	.39	108	67	
Mumbai	2	9	.68	73	112	
Pune	—	.30	123	64	106	
Visakhapatnam	9	.47	.11	35	86	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Sri Ganganagar, Rajasthan recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 301 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Naharlagun, Arunachal Pradesh recorded a healthy AQI score of 24

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

Urban clean-up

Restoring glory: Desilting work is under way at Ulsoor Lake in Bengaluru on Thursday, as part of a ₹107-crore rejuvenation project for the 106-acre water body, one of the few in central Bengaluru. SUDHAKARA JAIN

BJP cadre ransack BRS MLA's camp office over 'derogatory remarks'

The Hindu Bureau
KARIMNAGAR

BRS leaders filing a police complaint over the attack by BJP cadre in Karimnagar on Thursday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Tension erupted in Karimnagar town in Telangana after BJP cadre vandalised the camp office of Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) MLA Gangula Kamalakar, and made a vain bid to attack BRS MLA from Huzurabad P. Kaushik Reddy in the town on Thursday.

The furious BJP cadre, armed with sticks, stormed the camp office to protest against what they termed as "unwarranted and derogatory remarks" by Mr. Reddy against Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sajay during a press conference held at the camp office earlier in the day.

Mr. Reddy had accused Mr. Sanjay of using tobacco mixed with drugs and dared him to undergo a drug test. The remarks triggered a violent protest by the BJP workers, who went berserk, ransacking the office furniture and smashing the window panes of Mr. Reddy's car.

The angry BJP cadre also attempted to attack Mr. Reddy, who was inside the conference hall of the camp office, where he addressed a press conference earlier in the day.

Even as the police locked the main entrance gate of the camp office, the protesters tried to scale the gate. As tension mounted, the police dispersed the agitators by resorting to mild laticharge.

A video of the incident went viral on social media, triggering a war of words between the leaders of the BRS and the BJP over the issue. The local BRS leaders filed a police complaint against several BJP workers, including two municipal corporators, seeking stringent action against them for allegedly vandalising the Karimnagar MLA's office.

Meanwhile, the BRS town committee has called a Karimnagar bandh on May 9 in protest against the "violent mob attack".

Entertaining petitions on religious practices can have far-reaching consequences, says SC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday said a deluge of petitions complaining about religious practices and religion would follow if the courts start interfering in matters of faith.

"If everybody starts questioning religious practices or matters of religion before a constitutional court, then what will happen to this civilisation where religion is so intimately connected with the Indian society. There will be hundreds of petitions questioning this right, that right, opening of temple, closure of the temple," Justice B.V. Nagarathna observed during a nine-judge Bench hearing of the Sabarimala review case.

Justice Nagarathna said India's uniqueness lay in the fact that it was a "civilisation" in which the intimate relationship between people and religion has been a constant, despite pluralities and diversities.

'Can't break ties'

The judge asked whether the courts were the right forum to question, examine and intervene in this relationship. "We nine judges, what we lay down is for a civilisation, that is India. India must progress. Despite all its development, economy, everything, there is a constant in us, we cannot break that constant. That is what is troubling us," Justice Nagarathna said.

Justice Nagarathna asked whether courts were the right forum to intervene in the relationship between people and religion.

Justice M.M. Sundresh, on the Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, said entertaining petitions challenging religious practices and beliefs for violation of fundamental rights may open the flood gates with far-reaching consequences.

"Every religion will break, every constitutional court will have to be closed," the judge remarked.

'Governed by law'

Senior advocate Raju Ramachandran, for petitioners challenging the practice of excommunication in the Dawoodi Bohra community, pointed out that India was indeed a civilisation, but a civilisation governed by a Constitution.

"Therefore, nothing that goes against the grain of our Constitution can be countenanced in a civilised society governed by the Constitution," Mr. Ramachandran said.

A.P. has regained confidence of investors, witnessing one MoU a day: CM to Collectors

G.V.R. Subba Rao
VIJAYAWADA

N. Chandrababu Naidu at the 7th Collectors' Conference.

Projecting Andhra Pradesh as a State on the rebound after years of "financial ruin and administrative collapse", Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday called for faster, innovation-led governance to position the State as a "national benchmark" in development, investments and service delivery.

Addressing Collectors and senior officials at the 7th Collectors' Conference at the Secretariat, he delivered a strong political and administrative message, asserting that his government had pulled Andhra Pradesh out of an unprecedented crisis inherited from the previous regime. Highlighting the State's renewed investor appeal, Mr. Naidu said Andhra Pradesh had unveiled 26 new policies that rebuilt confidence among industries and global investors. The government, he said, had already secured investment commitments worth ₹23 lakh crore with the potential to create nearly 24 lakh jobs. "Today, Andhra Pradesh is witnessing one MoU [Memorandum of Understanding] every day and one groundbreaking ceremony every week," Mr. Naidu said. "Without development there is no wealth, and without wealth there is no welfare," he added.

Unwinnable war

The U.S. should pursue a deal with Iran, and not take a maximalist stand

When Donald Trump announced 'Operation Project Freedom', aimed at "guiding" stranded merchant vessels out of the Strait of Hormuz, he warned that any interference from Iran would be dealt with "forcefully". Over the previous weeks, Mr. Trump had issued several ultimatums to Tehran to reopen the waterway, which it closed after the U.S. and Israel launched the war on February 28. As Iran refused to budge, Mr. Trump launched the operation to militarily reopen the strait. But it lasted barely 50 hours. Iran responded by firing at two American destroyers in the strait and attacking a UAE tanker off Oman's coast. The UAE, a close strategic partner of both the U.S. and Israel, also said it was attacked twice. With the ceasefire coming under strain amid hostilities, Mr. Trump, on Wednesday, said he was pausing the operation "at the request of Pakistan". While Mr. Trump continues to make sweeping claims about winning the war, the fact that the Strait of Hormuz remains closed – and that the operation to reopen it did not last even three days – points to a very different reality on the ground. The U.S. not only failed to achieve any of its declared objectives during the 40 days of war, but is now grappling with a crisis created by the war itself – the closure of the strait.

Unlike Mr. Trump, who has made several self-contradictory statements since the war began, Iran has remained consistent in its demands. Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei said last week that Iran would "protect" its missile and nuclear capabilities and continue to exercise control over the Strait of Hormuz. Tehran appears convinced that the war has strengthened its hand and that time is on its side. Mr. Trump has made a series of miscalculations. In the first week of the war, he said he would accept nothing short of Iran's "unconditional surrender". But as the conflict dragged on, he started demanding a deal. Both sides agreed to a ceasefire on April 8, but the U.S., which imposed a blockade on Iranian ports on April 12, failed to exact any meaningful concession from Iran. Contrary to his rhetoric, he holds few strong cards in this war of attrition. If the crisis persists, it will inflict lasting damage on the U.S. and the global economy, potentially endangering Mr. Trump's presidency. If he resumes the war, Tehran will retaliate by targeting Gulf kingdoms, which would be catastrophic for the global economy. America is not winning this war. No amount of social media threats or military posturing is going to alter that reality. Washington should recognise this and pursue a deal with Iran based on accommodating mutual demands and reciprocal concessions if it wants to avoid pushing the world economy towards the precipice.

Building hazards

India needs to do more to both prevent and fight fires

Each major fire accident in cities that ends up claiming human lives fleshes out different sets of causative and exacerbating factors. The recent one in Shahdara in East Delhi highlighted a lack of sufficient attention to planning for evacuating buildings in the case of emergencies, mainly fire. Nine people were killed and some 15 were rescued with grievous injuries in that accident. The residential building – stilt plus four floors comprising eight houses – had security enhancing features that turned out to be deadly: electronic locks on doors that could not be opened; a terrace that was not easily accessible; and metallic grills around the building including on balconies that had to be cut for access by fire service personnel seeking to rescue the victims. A fire in March in Palam, in which nine of an extended family died, highlighted access problems that fire services face in Delhi. The mixed-use building had few of the recommended firefighting facilities required in such buildings. Eyewitnesses complained that the hydraulic lifts used by fire services personnel to access higher floors were malfunctioning. Though the fire services insist they reached the Shahdara accident spot on time, response times have been longer in the capital city at other times. In a fire in Dwarka in 2025, fire engines could not enter the residential society because the name board of the society was blocking them.

While there is certainly a case for reviewing the fire preparedness and fire-fighting capabilities of Delhi, what often goes unaddressed are electrical problems that cause these fires across Indian cities. As summer sets in, air-conditioning blasts are often casually cited as in the Shahdara fire. What often happens is overloading of equipment such as the airconditioner during hot summer days. The wires that are not designed to handle such loads burn due to heat and the circuit breakers that should have tripped the equipment as protection do not do so. In India, the hierarchy of loads and circuit breakers is often not observed as residences are packed with high load equipment beyond what the system can safely carry. The intent is often to keep the equipment running under all conditions whereas tripping of overloaded equipment is a necessary safety feature. City authorities talk of drones and robots to fight fires when even the basic preventive measures are not in place.

Seeking a new paradigm for Dravidian exceptionalism

Narayan Lakshman

The victory of cinema superstar C. Joseph Vijay in the recent State Assembly election marks a watershed moment for politics in Tamil Nadu. Breaking with nearly 60 years of voting for one of only two major Dravidian parties is not just a signal of dissatisfaction but also an abiding quest for enlightened State leadership that recognises the contours of Tamil exceptionalism, and delivers the quality of governance required to meet that imperative.

At the heart of Mr. Vijay's emphatic win, which resulted in his party, the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), cornering 108 out of the 234 seats in the Assembly, lies a disenchantment with the smug complacence of rule by both the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and, for a decade until 2021, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK). Between them, the DMK and the AIADMK have alternated periodically in occupying power in Chennai to deliver on the promises of their Dravidian forebears C.N. Annadurai and Periyar E.V. Ramaswamy, which includes values such as state autonomy, freedom from Hindi imposition and other diktats of a distant New Delhi, and welfare policies including the noon-meal scheme and direct transfers to vulnerable groups.

It would be remiss not to mention that this noble project of upliftment of the common man in the State was built on the dubious substructure of a shadow economy encompassing institutionalised corruption and grand larceny on an eyewatering scale. That a former late Chief Minister of the State owned sprawling properties in central London, and that even top global corporations seeking industrial permits admit to being asked for sizeable cash bribes to speed up their licence issues, reveals the institutionalised nature of this rent-seeking model.

Would it then be improper to suggest that the TVK's surprise win was the result of an electorate growing weary of this Faustian bargain struck with the ruling powers, where they gave with one hand and took with the other?

Yet, there is more to be explained. Why at this moment in time has the public rejected the proven track records of two parties that, in the nearly six decades since they overthrew the Congress and dominated the State, have by and large managed to keep Tamil Nadu on a steady growth path while working towards fulfilling the Dravidian political vision?

Dissecting the victory

There could be several possible factors that might explain the expectation-defying 34.92% vote share that the TVK garnered across virtually every region of the State and likely across most demographic cohorts, especially among the youth, and women of all ages and backgrounds.

> At the heart of Mr. Vijay's emphatic win, lies a disenchantment with the smug complacence of rule by both the DMK and, for a decade until 2021, the AIADMK

Firstly, Mr. Vijay presented the over 56 million electors of Tamil Nadu with a unique campaign style, modelled on viral social media marketing strategies. In doing so, he broke with the convention of old-school "offline" campaigning techniques including but not limited to widespread rallies across the State. Mr. Vijay appeared to eschew such public interactions in favour of online messaging on social media platforms such as Instagram, to the point where he courted controversy when, during one of his last campaign speeches, he exhorted young children to compel their parents to vote for the TVK's 'whistle' symbol.

Second, an air of vulnerability and an unspoken sense of victimhood appeared to build up around Mr. Vijay as he pleaded innocence for the deadly stampede at the TVK rally in Karur in September 2025, in which at least 41 people died and many more were injured. This is despite the fact that the actor remained silent for three days following the incident, emerging later from his isolation without an apology for mismanaging a major public event organised by his party, and instead making veiled references to a conspiracy by the DMK-led government. The delay in the release of his film *Jana Nayagan* was similarly attributed to sinister forces seeking to sabotage Mr. Vijay's commercial prospects and thus undermine his public persona. Such developments appeared to have created momentum for a burgeoning sense of sympathy and outright anger that an outsider to the Dravidian movement framework could be so viciously attacked by incumbent powers.

While these developments certainly give credence to the view that the TVK surge in the election was rooted in a savvy, Gen-Z-driven, social media virality strategy and a strong sentiment of righting an injustice meted out to a political newcomer, it is also important to look at the broader context of tectonic shifts in the political and economic spheres that resulted in the disenchantment with the Dravidian model.

Disillusionment and doubt

The first key factor that might have resulted in voters rejecting the solutions presented by the DMK and the AIADMK for the unprecedented flux in the job market due to technological and economic shocks is hubris. Towards the last few years of each of their terms in office, the public would not have been wrong to be frustrated with the unspoken but implied government view that no other model besides that old combination of mass welfare policies and moderate economic growth driven by a reasonably efficient bureaucracy, with the State exchequers looted by political rent-seekers, was the only path forward for progress.

Combine this with the fact that the DMK appeared to be getting ever more deeply mired in dynastic nepotism, with resentment building around the handover of the reins of power to former Chief Minister M.K. Stalin's son, Udhayanidhi, and the AIADMK chief Edappadi K. Palaniswami's continued struggle to keep factional infighting from attenuating the cohesive core of his party's cadre.

A second critical concern of the electors of the State is that the gradual inroads made by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) into Tamil Nadu may be transforming the balance of power therein and eroding the State's rich tradition of rationalism, anti-ritualism, rejection of upper caste dominance, and opposition to any single religion enjoying disproportionate support from the government. The results for the alliance between the AIADMK and the BJP placed it in third position overall with respectively 47 and one seat for the two parties. This indicates a split in voter preferences on the overall acceptability of the BJP in the State. In this context, the surge towards the TVK might also reflect frustration with the Dravidian majors as they have been unable to come up with a robust strategy to halt the march of the BJP and its ground-level support base, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

Finally, we may be witnessing the dawn of a new era for Dravidian politics as a historical social movement, as the younger generations of voters are likely one step removed from the traditional founding values and ideals of Periyar and Annadurai. Instead, they are by turn gig workers, nomadic factory floor contract operators, apprentices in micro, small and medium enterprises, and entry-level service sector representatives seeking to build a career at a complex moment in Tamil Nadu's economic evolution. They respond more to a sharply witty Instagram post than a party manifesto published on the official website.

For these voters, and for those swamped by doubts on the capacity of the DMK and the AIADMK to continue to deliver good governance in an era of fundamental socio-economic transformation, Mr. Vijay's TVK spells promise. Now it remains to be seen whether they will manage to muster the numbers to actually form a government, and if they do, whether the Cabinet that Mr. Vijay assembles and the bureaucratic machinery that has historically excelled in rolling out essential policies for the people will help him make good on the many promises he made.

narayan@thehindu.co.in

Openness, not isolation, is the bedrock of the West

Milinda Moragoda

Former Sri Lankan Cabinet Minister, diplomat and the Founder of the Pathfinder Foundation, a strategic affairs think tank

Recent statements from Washington show how global politics is being increasingly framed along civilisational terms. The U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio has referred to the idea of a shared "Western civilisation," describing the U.S. and Europe as bound by common history, cultural heritage, and institutional traditions. At the same time, U.S. President Donald Trump has amplified comments about countries such as India, China, and Iran in the context of migration and geopolitical competition that reinforce a tendency to interpret global politics in civilisational terms. Taken together, these statements point to a broader shift: global affairs are being interpreted not only through the language of power and interest, but also through civilisational identities.

The appeal of such framing is understandable. It offers a sense of clarity in an era of rapid technological disruption, demographic change, and geopolitical uncertainty. But apparent clarity is not the same as analytical accuracy. Moreover, it is not an entirely new framing either. As early as the 1990s, political scientist Samuel Huntington had argued that global politics would evolve into a "clash of civilisations," where cultural and religious identities would become the principal fault lines of international relations.

Civilisational explanations can obscure more than they reveal, particularly when they imply that cultural cohesion, rather than institutional adaptability, is the primary source of national strength. A historical record of the modern West suggests otherwise.

A look at history

Much of the West's post-Cold War dynamism has rested not on homogeneity, but on openness – to talent, ideas, capital, and global competitive pressures. Its advantage has been institutional: the capacity to absorb diversity and convert it into innovation within rules-based systems.

> The West's advantage lies not only in military alliances or economic scale, but in institutional resilience and its capacity to attract, integrate, and retain talent

Nowhere is this more evident than in today's innovation economy. AI, in particular, has become the defining frontier of global competition, shaped by deeply international talent flows and research ecosystems. Companies such as Microsoft, OpenAI, and NVIDIA exemplify systems in which breakthroughs depend on globally sourced expertise, cross-border collaboration, and the ability to attract the most capable minds regardless of origin.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored this complementary reality: innovation now operates through globally distributed production systems. Rapid vaccine development and distribution, by firms such as Moderna and AstraZeneca, depended on international research networks and global manufacturing ecosystems. In the case of AstraZeneca, large-scale production through partnerships such as that with the Serum Institute of India illustrated how innovation and industrial capacity now operate across borders.

This is not an argument against immigration control. Immigration must be governed effectively, and civic norms must be upheld. But managing diversity is fundamentally different from retreating from it.

In an era of intensifying geopolitical competition, openness remains a critical strategic asset. The West's advantage lies not only in military alliances or economic scale, but in institutional resilience and its capacity to attract, integrate, and retain talent. Civilisational framing, by contrast, risks misdiagnosing this advantage – privileging identity over capability and boundaries over performance. Demographic realities reinforce this point. Many advanced economies face ageing populations. In this context, immigration is not simply a cultural or political issue, but an economic necessity. Without sustained inflows of skilled labour and human capital, growth slows, fiscal pressures increase, and innovation ecosystems weaken.

Openness as an advantage

The defining challenges of the 21st century – including AI governance and climate change – further highlight the limits of civilisational thinking. These are problems that cannot be addressed within cultural silos. Against this backdrop, framing global politics in terms of civilisational hierarchy carries risks. It encourages a narrowing of identity at precisely the moment when cooperation and adaptability are essential.

The question, therefore, is not whether identity matters. It clearly does. Societies require shared norms, institutional trust, and continuity. The more important question is whether democracies can manage change without losing confidence in the openness that has sustained their development. The strength of the West has historically rested on its ability to combine stability with adaptation – to absorb new influences while preserving core principles such as the rule of law, individual liberty, and accountable governance.

Therefore, the policy challenge ahead is not to retreat into notions of cultural purity, but to govern openness with clarity and purpose. This requires strengthening integration frameworks and reinforcing institutional trust. It also requires recognising that engagement with other civilisational spaces is not a concession, but a necessity in a globally interconnected world.

In a world of intensifying geopolitical rivalry, it may be tempting to define strength in narrower terms. But doing so risks undermining one of the West's most important strategic assets. Openness – disciplined, governed, and anchored in strong institutions – is not a vulnerability. It is a source of sustained advantage.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Floor test

People were under the impression that Mr. Vijay's TVK party, which emerged as the single largest party in the recently held Tamil Nadu Assembly election, would be called by the Governor to form the government. To the surprise of all, the Governor has insisted that Mr. Vijay produce formal letters of support from enough MLAs before the swearing-in process can move forward. It is questionable whether the Governor has such powers. The convention is that the Governor has to call the single largest party to form the Government which, in this case, is Mr. Vijay's party and subject him to the floor test to prove his majority within the shortest possible time. The Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court in the *Bommai* case made it clear that the floor test is the only reliable test by which a government can prove its majority. Such being the position, the Governor was not right in not inviting Mr. Vijay to form the government.

The Governor has not followed constitutional precedents and has assumed a power which he does not have. It is not out of place to suggest that the Governor's actions are unconstitutional.

N.G.R. Prasad
Chennai

Challenge for Congress

The Congress led UDF's return to power with a mandate of 102 seats is a rejection of the LDF's overbearing leadership. While the previous administration made strides in infrastructure, it collapsed under the weight of internal nepotism and a disconnect from the grassroots. For the UDF, the immediate challenge is to pivot from a campaign team into a cohesive governing body. The unseemly lust for the Chief Ministerial post displayed by senior leaders has been an embarrassment. The new government also faces a daunting fiscal battle exacerbated by a perceived lack of support from the Central government. There is a growing and justifiable sentiment in Kerala that the Centre is failing to provide the State its due, particularly regarding the 16th FC's tax devolution. Delivering on the five guarantees amidst such a strained treasury will require exceptional administrative competence.

S. Padmanabhan
Kochi

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

Should the abortion law be amended for minor rape victims?

PARLEY

Dipika Jain

Executive dean & professor of law, director, Centre for Justice, Law and Society, Jindal Global Law School

Alka Barua

Abortion theme lead and steering committee member, CommonHealth India

Why are so many pregnant persons approaching the courts for terminations? Do we need to remove time limits on abortions? Do abortion laws need to be delinked from criminal laws? How can access to safe abortions for all be improved? Dipika Jain and Alka Barua discuss in a conversation moderated by **Zubeda Hamid**. Edited excerpts.

Can we start with an overview of abortion laws in India?

Dipika Jain: There are two sets of laws that regulate abortion in India. Sections 88 to 94 of the BNS and the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971. Abortion is criminalised under Section 88 of the BNS, which means that a woman who terminates her pregnancy with her consent and the doctor who terminates her pregnancy with her consent and his consent can be criminalised. In 1979, there was an exception created via the MTP Act, which created a framework for conditional rights. Abortion is legal in India based on certain circumstances and conditions. The 2022 Supreme Court judgement also elaborates on abortion rights as fundamental rights. There are three components: unmarried women are entitled to seek termination; transgender persons are also included within the legal framework; and the right to terminate a pregnancy in India is part of [the] decisional autonomy of a woman or a pregnant person.

Alka Barua: The law looks fairly liberal, but there isn't broad and progressive interpretation at the ground level. And there are reasons for it. One, the law places decision-making authority primarily with the doctors. So this gives scope for refusal based on personal beliefs or misunderstanding or unawareness of law. The law's implementation doesn't take into account the fact that we have a shortage of certified providers and adequately equipped facilities. And this is particularly more so now when the gestational limit has been increased and later gestational terminations are more complex and require greater skills, better facilities. As long as abortion remains linked to a criminal law, it is socially stigmatized. And many women delay care or seek unsafe pathways in such situations.

Is there a case to be made for the Supreme Court's asking for the removal of time limit on terminations of unwanted pregnancies in the case of minor rape victims?

On paper: The Supreme Court, in 2022, has said that it recognises reproductive decisional autonomy as a fundamental right. GETTY IMAGES

DJ: The MTP Act sets out general outer limits of 24 weeks, with only two exceptions. One is substantial foetal anomalies, which has to be certified by a medical board, and the other is to save the life of the pregnant woman. In the past, the Supreme Court has, on multiple occasions, allowed termination up to 33 weeks of pregnancy in cases of foetal anomalies. [This] exposes a gap between legal categories that are rigid and real life, medical and social situations. So if it is safe, and it is with the consent of the pregnant person, and the termination is allowed in cases of foetal anomalies, why can't terminations be allowed in other cases where late-term termination becomes important? For example, sexual assault, rape, drastic life challenges, mental health crises. In my opinion, anyone whose pregnancy is safe to terminate should be allowed to terminate it.

AB: The law has not taken into account ground-level reality. There is no need for such rigid gestational limits for terminations, particularly in cases of sexual assault survivors, minors, or adolescents, etc. One reason is, they tend to come late: because of the trauma, the stigma, the lack of awareness about their entitlements under the MTP Act; in case of minors and adolescents, they often do not even know that they have conceived till late pregnancy. Then, most do not have access to resources; they have restricted mobility. Delayed access is not out of choice but because institutions, family structures, violence prevent them from timely access. We believe that risk should be assessed clinically. If it can be safely provided based on clinical judgment, then why this inflexible statutory cut-off? The intent of the law has to be interpreted more broadly rather than using it as a barrier to provide services.

Do healthcare providers feel they may be at risk of criminal proceedings if they proceed with abortions?

DJ: Abortion is criminalised under law. But there is also an exception, which if followed, on the basis of certain conditions, termination can be offered. However, because it is conditional and the burden of proof is on the doctor, complications arise. This is not a rights-based framework. It is a conditional, qualified framework and sets out very strict conditions. If you fail in any of these conditions, there can be chances of prosecution. We know that in 2021, a doctor in Meghalaya was put behind bars for a month on a termination he didn't even do. There are also other laws that complicate the criminal framework and liability, for example, the PCPNDT [and] POCSO. Why can't we move from a criminal framework to a rights-based reproductive justice healthcare framework?

AB: The reason for this is not only lack of awareness about what their obligations are, what the service seekers' entitlements are, but also lack of awareness among those who are enforcing the law at the ground level. Most service providers are worried about police involvement in cases of rape and minors. They are confused about documentation requirements. Then there are concerns about the uncertainty around pregnancies near the stipulated gestational limits. There are no clear protocols in place. All this, in addition to the fact that there is a social pressure, let's not forget that doctors belong to the same society as [that of] service-seekers. All this leads to a chilling effect. They don't want to provide services in such cases, particularly the later gestation cases.

Are there other countries that allow for abortion on a demand basis rather than on a conditional basis? Is that what a reproductive health rights framework looks like?

DJ: The Supreme Court in 2022 has said that it recognises reproductive decisional autonomy as a fundamental right. It means that the decision to terminate a pregnancy ultimately belongs to the pregnant person, not the doctor or the State. That's what the law is saying. Now, should that not also be the practice? If a pregnant person decides to terminate, why should the State impose so many conditions? Why can't it be based on decisional autonomy and on demand? There are many countries that have at least early-term abortion on demand or on request, and that's exactly how our law should be.

AB: Irrespective of what the law is, our experience is [that] when a woman decides to terminate a pregnancy, she does get it terminated. If restrictions are there, you are literally pushing her towards unsafe service providers. The MTP Act came into existence to prevent unsafe abortions and maternal deaths because of that. And if that very law, because of the conditions it has included in it, is leading service seekers towards unsafe practices, then the point is lost. I [also] just wanted to distinguish between refusal on any grounds, be it ethical or professional, skill level, and denial of access. An individual service provider may decline to perform a procedure to which they have objections personally. The law says nothing against it right now. But then they should be made to refer the case, or ask someone else in the facility to provide the services.

Would a law that lifts all conditions and allows for abortion on request be in conflict with the POCSO law where the State has to look into sexual assault?

DJ: When the POCSO law was drafted, the focus was on child sexual abuse. Section 19 of the POCSO Act allows for mandatory reporting. What happens when it interacts with the MTP Act? In the MTP Act, when an adolescent or minor gets pregnant, they can seek termination. But when the adolescent walks into the hospital, the doctor has to report her mandatorily to the police. Now, what happens is, in case of a 16-year-old in a relationship with a 17-year-old boy, this 16-year-old girl will not go ahead and seek termination because she knows that the mandatory reporting will mean that the boy will be held for statutory rape. This is the problem. In 2022, the Supreme Court harmonised POCSO with the MTP Act. The court ruled that minors can access abortion services without their identities being disclosed. So to some extent, this has been addressed. However, it's not something that is working on the ground.

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

NOTEBOOK

Off the script on Bengal elections

Polls come and go but close encounters with marginalised people stick with a reporter forever and their unanswered questions continue to echo

Shrabana Chatterjee

Standing inside the oldest coal mine of India in Raniganj, West Bengal, amid black dust, I could feel a song reach my ears. The women singing in a synchronised voice as they continued to dig for coal. It was solace, one that lingers on. Like Bertolt Brecht once wrote: In the dark times, will there also be singing? Yes, there will also be singing. About the dark times.

The song was often disrupted by an explosion for mining and the synchrony in the air was replaced with thick black smoke. As a lone reporter with no photographer accompanying, it was intimidating for me to navigate the coal belts and talk to the villagers in the area which has suffered from land subsidence due to mining.

The road led up to abandoned homes, broken walls, and soft soil where over 160 families still live, refusing to let the government stuff them into pigeon-holed one-room flats as part of their rehabilitation programme. "What about our land? Who will compensate us for our uprooted lives?" – these are the prominent questions in their minds.

As the State election wave recedes and campaigning parties go back, a common refrain in these parts is 'they didn't deliver on poll promises'. From the coal mines of Raniganj to the forests of Jhargram to the deleted voters of Murshidabad to the violence-hit people of Malda, anger over failed promises echoed from people.

Beyond Raniganj, though the landscape shifts, the disgruntlement is the same in Murshidabad too. In a district where some of the richest contest elections to represent the poorest electorate, the distance between political wealth and everyday poverty is massively wide.

These Muslim-dominated areas have been some of the worst-affected in the special intensive revision (SIR) process. The people say political parties sought their votes but did not restore their names in the electoral rolls. In Samserganj constituency, over 74,000 voters have been deleted, one of the highest in the State. The polls are over but their feeling of betrayal continues to simmer.

In these parts, it is a life of uncertainty for many. Parts of their homes have been lost to Ganga erosion; what remains stands precariously, yet continues to be inhabited. Several residents say their names no longer appear on voter lists. Between the loss of land and the absence of documentation, their security and identity remain unsettled.

On the other side of the river lies Malda. Though constituencies change, river erosion, lack of jobs, and deletion of voters remain a common crisis. The tension in the lanes of Malda's Mothabari constituency was palpable, with local people largely tight-lipped. Many have been arrested for laying a siege to seven judicial officers in protest against the SIR process. Now, they spend sleepless nights fearing harassment and arrest by the National Investigation Agency. No amount of assurance seems to make them speak to reporters.

When access becomes uncertain in such volatile situations, sometimes silences are read as responses.

Many districts away, in Purba Bardhaman's Kalna area, hundreds of potato farmers have sustained massive losses due to over-production and crashing market prices. "What good will all this talk do? You cannot bring back the person I have lost. Have some water and leave," a grieving son of a potato farmer who died by suicide told me. Political parties gave assurances, but that was all.

Parties have made lofty promises of upliftment for the marginalised in Jhargram too. But people say polls come and go but their lives have not changed.

Across communities and districts, the complaints are not against any one political party or government. The frustration of having been failed by the system run deeper, sometimes generational.

Sometimes, such encounters in villages go off the script, where a reporter's presence makes them feel like some help will follow, with many bringing documents and asking if their names can be restored to the electoral rolls and some asking if a compensation can be arranged for the loss of crops or their homes. Many even ask if they will be detained or deported if their names do not feature in the electoral rolls. You sit in silence. The questions do not stop, even though clarity may not follow.

(shrabana.chatterjee@thehindu.co.in)

PICTURE OF THE WEEK

Statement of a statesman

Emotional encounter: DMK President M.K. Stalin who lost from the Kolathur Assembly constituency in Chennai in the recent Tamil Nadu Assembly election visited the constituency on May 5 to thank people who voted for him. Party leader P.K. Sekarbabu is in tears as Mr. Stalin waves at supporters. PTI

FROM THE ARCHIVES — The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 8, 1976

Vigil over smuggling of antiquities

Madras, May 7.: The Central Government has started enforcing a scheme to keep a strict vigil over smuggling of antiquities and to prevent illegal trade in the priceless art treasures. Steps have been taken by the Archaeological Survey of India to implement an Act that has been passed in 1972.

The Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972 has come into force all over India since early April, 1976. According to this, those who possess antiquities such as stone sculptures, bronzes, wood carvings, ivory carvings, coins, palm leaves, manuscripts and books, of more than 75 years old, are to be registered with an officer of the State Archaeological Department. The possessor has to obtain an application form from the concerned officer and submit the details back to him, with four photographs of each object. After scrutiny, the officer will issue a certificate to the owner, who will keep a register of the antiques with him. Those interested in carrying on business of antiquities should obtain a licence.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 8, 1926

No extension of strike

Rugby, May 7.: Reports from all quarters indicate that no further extension of the general strike has occurred. Although in isolated instances strikers have resumed work, there is, on the whole, little change in the general situation. The strike of miners and railwaymen continues to be practically solid. In some Westmoreland pits mine workers are reported to have returned to duty and in other instances railway staffs have been reinforced by the return of a few men. No attempt is being made to reopen mines with volunteer labour, but railways, trams and omnibus systems are being increasingly operated by skilled and unskilled volunteers.

In Pulwama and Poonch, two schools bear the cost of conflict

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

A year on, two schools in Jammu and Kashmir, which bore the brunt of the four-day conflict between India and Pakistan in May last year, stand testimony to the cost of war, tragedy, and trauma.

With Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) on the other side of the nearby hills, the Christ High School in Poonch is finding it hard to bury the memories of the war. "Who would want a war that leaves children dead? In pursuit of justice for the Pahalgam victims, there was addition to the list of civilian deaths. War exposes the vulnerabilities of human beings," Father Shijo, principal of the school, told *The Hindu*.

Three students killed

Three students - Zain Ali and Urwa Fatima, twins who were in Class 5, and Vihaan Bhargav of Class 8 - were killed in Pakistani shelling when they were trying to move to safer locations between May 7 and 11. They were among 21 civilians, including five children, who died on this side of the border during Operation Sindoor, launched against Pakistan following a dastardly terror attack that left 26 civilians, including 25 tourists, dead in Pahalgam.

"Parents of two Class 5 students were evacuating them out of their native village when a shell hit them. The third student was on the way to Jammu in a vehicle when splinters from a shell exploded and hit him," said Father Shijo, as he recalled how the town was hit by shelling for at least two days.

On the first anniversary of Operation Sindoor on Thursday, the staff members of the school, with 1,500 students, held silent prayers for the dead and visited the two families for a remembrance meeting, but avoided any ceremonial function on the campus.

"We did not engage students in any remembrance because it would have recreated the scenes. It took students more than four months to come out of the trauma. We had to arrange local NGOs for counselling with students to comfort them. We also invited the parents last year, many of whom broke down while sharing their ordeal, to make them unburdened emotionally," he said.

Children at Madrasa Taleem ul Quran in Wuyan, Pulwama, which was affected during Operation Sindoor. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The school had to club classes and shut the rooms where the students, who lost their lives, studied. "Students were not willing to study in the same classroom, especially benchmates of the deceased. At every sound of a cracker, students would get frightened. They lived in fear for many months," he said.

The school saw a major power shutdown during the war and relied on its borewell for water. Besides, the shelling shattered the windowpanes and damaged the roof. "We have rebuilt. In fact, we have an underground space in place, but it can accommodate only 200 people," he added.

Awaiting compensation

Around 141 km away from the Poonch school, another school in Pulwama district tells a story of loss. The school was damaged in a blast, but since the nature of the explosion is still unknown, it does not fall in the compensation list of those who suffered damage and were provided relief money. A two-storey building of the high school, Madrasa Taleem ul Quran, in Wuyan was hit by an unidentified aerial object before sunrise on May 7.

"I heard in the morning of May 7, the school was hit. I rushed to check the damage but was stopped by the security forces. Later, I saw the computer lab was completely damaged. We acquired a children safety certificate from the education department only after dismantling the building first. It was not safe. However, no compensation was provided," Shabir Ahmad Sheikh, coordinator of the school, told *The Hindu*. Last June, the school sought financial assistance in the wake of ₹23 lakh loss incurred. "Revenue Department officials visited the school and had promised to provide the financial assistance once provided with the estimation of the school building damages," read the letter.

Mr. Sheikh said all expansion plans for the school, with 350 students, failed to take off because of the damage. Local legislator Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra too wrote to the government for compensation but to no avail.

With the nature of the blast yet to be established, the school awaits compensation.

From Page One

DMK explores backing AIADMK in hung House

Mr. Stalin, who had initially rejected the proposal, reportedly yielded to pressure from second-line party leaders and invited CPI(M) State secretary P. Shanmugam, CPI State secretary M. Veerapandian, and VCK leader Thol. Thirumavalavan to his house for discussions on Thursday. The DMK will not join the government, but the allies are free to take a decision, he reportedly told them.

The three parties hold the key to any further churn in Tamil Nadu politics. In fact, their combined support is crucial for both the TVK and the AIADMK to form a government. "A new situation has arisen after the election and we have to decide what should be the position of the Left parties. But it has never been part of our agenda that we would support the AIADMK," a senior communist leader said.

Currently, the TVK, with the support of the five elected candidates of the Congress, effectively has 112 seats in the 234-member House after accounting for the legal mandate for Mr. Vijay to resign from one of his two seats.

Should the AIADMK aspire to form a government without the support of the BJP's lone representative, it would require the support of its other allies Pattali Makkal Katchi (four seats) and Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (one), in addition to that of the DMK (59), the Indian Union Muslim League (two), and the six seats of the CPI, CPI(M), and VCK. It would give the alliance 120 seats.

While the two Communist parties sought time, stating their State committee meetings scheduled for Friday would take a final decision, Mr. Thirumavalavan indicated that he would follow the Communists' stand.

Growth trajectory

The resolution adopted by the DMK's MLAs-elect on Thursday further said that Tamil Nadu's growth trajectory could be sustained only if the welfare schemes implemented by the DMK government over the past five years continued without interruption. "The meeting unanimously empowers the party leader to take an emergency decision, taking into consideration the prevailing political and administrative situation," the resolution added.

Another resolution sharply criticised the Congress, the DMK's former ally, accusing it of betrayal after it quit the alliance and extended support to the TVK. "Congress was allotted a Rajya Sabha seat and 28 Assembly seats in the alliance. Yet, within three days of results being declared, it pawned the mandate earned through the hard work of alliance partners to the rival camp. Even during seat-sharing talks, the Congress failed to condemn remarks made against the alliance," the resolution alleged.

The legislators' meeting referred to developments in Puducherry, where Congress candidates reportedly contested seats allotted to the DMK."The rival candidates even met their party leader and sought his blessings. The Congress did not conduct itself sincerely even during the election campaign," another resolution said.

Cong. high command to choose Kerala CM

Congress MLAs-elect who walked out after the meeting with the AICC members at the Indira Bhavan, the headquarters of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC), remained tight-lipped about their choices for the coveted post. After the Congress-led UDF's victory in the Assembly elections, a three-way fight had begun for the Chief Minister's post, with Mr. Satheesan, AICC general secretary (organisation) and Alappuzha MP K.C. Venugopal, and senior leader Ramesh Chennithala in contention. Congress workers held protests in support of Mr. Satheesan in Nettoor in Ernakulam district and at Peravoor in Kannur, the constituency of KPCC president Sunny Joseph.

P.K. Kunhalikutty, general secretary of key UDF ally Indian Union Muslim League, said that the party has conveyed its Chief Minister choice to AICC the observers.

'Operation Sindoor was a fitting response to terror'

To mark the first anniversary, PM lauds the armed forces for their bravery and dedication in attacking terrorist camps and military infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

To mark the first anniversary of Operation Sindoor, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday lauded the armed forces for their bravery and dedication in attacking terrorist camps and military infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

In a post on X, Mr. Modi said that a year ago, India's armed forces displayed "unparalleled courage, precision and resolve" during Operation Sindoor and gave a fitting response to those responsible for the Pahalgam terror attack.

He said the entire nation saluted the forces for their bravery and dedication. Mr. Modi added that Operation Sindoor reflected India's uncompromising stand against terrorism and reaffirmed the country's commitment to national security.

PM Narendra Modi highlighted the professionalism and preparedness of the armed forces during the operation. FILE PHOTO

Mr. Modi also highlighted the professionalism, preparedness and growing jointness among the armed forces during the operation. He said the mission underlined the strength India had achieved through self-reliance in the defence sector under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative.

Late on the night of May 6 and into the early hours of May 7, 2025, India launched Operation Sindoor – a coordinated military offensive involving the Army, Air Force, and the Navy.

Mr. Modi changed his display picture across social media platforms to honour the courage and valour of the Indian armed forces.

The Prime Minister also urged citizens to change their profile pictures on social media as a tribute to the forces and the success of the operation.

Exclusive footage

Marking the occasion, the Indian Air Force released exclusive footage of Operation Sindoor at 1.05 a.m on Thursday. The 88-second video showcased precision strikes, coordinated military action and operational preparedness during the high-intensity counter-terror operation.

Despite outreach by India, Pakistan hasn't been isolated: Cong.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Thursday took a swipe at the Centre on the first anniversary of Operation Sindoor, alleging that despite India's extensive diplomatic outreach after the military operation, Pakistan had not been isolated internationally as it was after the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks.

"In spite of extensive diplomatic outreach by India, Pakistan did not get isolated as it had been following the Mumbai terror attack in November 2008. On the contrary, its Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir has been embraced with warmth by President Trump from June 2025 onwards and the world's leading sponsor of cross-border terrorism, namely Pakistan, has come in for praise from the U.S. military establishment," Congress general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh said in a post on X.

Recalling developments surrounding the operation, Mr. Ramesh said the first announcement of the ceasefire that halted Operation Sindoor on May 10, 2025, had come from then U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio at 5.37 p.m. IST.

He claimed that Mr. Trump had repeatedly asserted that his intervention led to the ceasefire, and alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had never publicly refuted the claim.

The Congress leader also referred to remarks made by Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan on May 30, 2025, in which he acknowledged that India had suffered initial losses due to tactical errors before adapting and carrying out precision strikes inside Pakistan.

Learnt several important lessons during conflict with Pakistan: military officials

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

On the first anniversary of Operation Sindoor, senior military officials asserted that India's response to cross-border terrorism had fundamentally altered the security landscape, with Lieutenant-General Rajiv Ghai declaring that no terror sanctuary inside Pakistan remains safe anymore.

Addressing a joint press conference in Jaipur with senior officers from the Indian Army, Air Force and Navy, Lieutenant-General Ghai, who served as the Director-General of Military Operations during Operation Sindoor, said the operation was "not an end, but just the beginning".

He stated that the operation continues in terms of preparedness and strategic planning. "We have imbibed several lessons during Operation Sindoor and accordingly, changes are being made. The operation will remain in progress for as long as required," he said.

Lt. Gen. Rajiv Ghai

Detailing the scale of the military action, Air Marshal Awadhesh Kumar Bharti said the Indian Air Force destroyed nine terrorist camps on May 7 and later struck 11 Pakistani airfields. "We destroyed 13 of their aircraft, either on the ground or in the air, including one high-value airborne asset at a record distance of over 300 kilometres," he said, adding that evidence of the strikes was available for the world to see.

Vice-Admiral A.N. Pramod said Operation Sindoor exposed the limitations of Pakistan's nuclear deterrence narrative. He stated that India's use of long-range precision weapons demonstrated its ability to strike deep inside hostile territory while maintaining calibrated escalation.

He also highlighted the growing importance of uncrewed and autonomous systems in modern warfare and stressed the need for accelerated integration of such technologies into India's operational framework.

The External Affairs Ministry affirmed that India's position on the Indus Waters Treaty was consistent. The IWT was kept in abeyance in response to Pakistan's continued sponsorship of terrorism.

Was a 'proper debate' held in Parliament on CEC and ECs appointment law, asks SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday asked if there had been a "proper debate" in Parliament about the "ethos" of its 2023 judgment that took the appointment of members of the Election Commission out of the exclusive hands of the political executive, namely, "the party which not unnaturally has an interest in perpetuating itself in power".

In a 2023 judgment in *Anoop Baranwal versus Union of India*, a Constitution Bench of the court had replaced the mechanism of the President appointing the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs) on the sole advice of the Prime Minister with a more participatory appointment process involving a three-member selection committee of the Prime Minister,

the Opposition Leader in the Lok Sabha, and the Chief Justice of India. The court had said the committee would be in place till Parliament brought in a law to replace it.

The Union government had brought in a law which reverted to the dominant role of the executive in the appointments of the CEC and ECs. Under the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service, and Term of Office) Act of 2023, the CJI was replaced in the selection committee by a Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister.

"But was there a proper debate in Parliament about the *Anoop Baranwal* judgment? Is the ethos voiced in the judgment reflected in the Parliamentary debates... That is not clear," said Justice Dipankar Datta, heading a Bench comprising himself and Justice Satish Chandra Sharma.

Senior advocate Shadan Farasat, appearing for an intervenor, said the passing of the law had been preceded by an *en masse* suspension of Opposition MPs. "There was no proper debate in the Parliament," he said.

"A majority of the Opposition was suspended. [AIMIM MP Asaduddin] Owaisi was the sole objector," advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for Association for Democratic Reforms, submitted.

Nida Khan, accused in TCS case, arrested

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Over 40 days after a first information report was registered against her in a rape and sexual exploitation case, suspended TCS employee Nida Khan was taken into police custody in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar late on Thursday night.

The arrest was made in a joint operation by the Nashik SIT, the Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar Crime Branch and the Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar Police Commissioner. "Ms. Khan has been taken into custody from Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar. We are in the process of completing the legal action now," said Assistant Commissioner of Police Sandip Mitke, who heads the Nashik Police SIT. She would be produced in court thereafter.

Recently, a Nashik court had refused Ms. Khan's anticipatory bail application after the prosecution claimed that she had links in Malaysia and in Malegaon.

APPEAL

Mr. Samarth, Mazumdar Shaw Medical Center, MRN No.10020001859257, 13 years is diagnosed with Aplastic Anemia. The only curative treatment is Bone Marrow Transplant. We are planning an Allogenic Bone Marrow Transplant using the sibling as the stem cell donor for the patient. The Approximate cost for the transplant is Rs.23, 50,000/-

Please send donation however small by Cheque/D.D/M.O Fav. **Save Poor Lives** A/c Samarth, **Our A/c Details**: S/B A/c No. 20000913487. S.B.I. R.A.Puram, IFSC CODE:SBIN0001855. Please Donate by G-pay No.9884607377, UPI Id: savepoorlives@oksbi. Donations are exempted under 80G of I.T.ACT.

SAVE POOR LIVES, Flat No. A1, Ceebros Garden, Door No.14/76, Kamarajar Salai, Raja Annamalaipuram, Chennai-600028. Ph. No. 044 42044165 / 9884607377. Email: savepoorlives@gmail.com. Our website: www.savepoorlives.com

Governor must ensure formation of a stable government in a State

The Governor should prevent complete breakdown of constitutional machinery leading to President's Rule in a State; it will be a failure of constitutional machinery if no party or group is able to command a majority to form a popular government

NEWS ANALYSIS

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The insistence that Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) president C. Joseph Vijay must prove majority support in the Legislative Assembly is based on a time-tested legal principle that a Governor's first priority is the formation of a stable government to prevent the State from slipping into a situation of complete breakdown of constitutional machinery, leading to President's Rule.

Supreme Court precedents have said a Governor cannot refuse to allow the formation of a government once the majority is established. The only exception could be where the Governor is of the view that a stable government may not be formed by the claimants. On the other hand, the court has noted that a Governor is not expected to wait indefinitely, and in the process, encourage defections or adoption of other objectionable activities.

The apex court and the Sarkaria Commission have highlighted the importance of giving Governors reasonable time to "explore alternatives with political parties, groups and Independent MLAs" to form a stable government. The phrase "reasonable time" is not defined in the Constitution.

TVK chief Vijay meets Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Arlekar in Chennai on Wednesday to stake claim to form a government. ANI

The "alternatives" before the Governor in a hung Assembly will be to invite a pre-poll alliance of parties with the largest number of seats to form the government first. The single largest party will be the second option if it could show majority support. A post-poll alliance or coalition is the last option before the Governor.

A nine-judge Bench in the 1994 S.R. Bommai judgment, while endorsing this hierarchy of preference, liberally added that the Governor could either go for the single largest party or "group". It did not matter whether the "group" was formed before or after the election. It would be a case of failure of constitutional machinery if these alternatives fail, and no party or group is able to command a majority to form a popular government.

"Suppose after general elections, no political party or coalition of parties or groups is able to secure absolute majority in the Legislative Assembly and despite the Governor's exploring the alternatives, the situation has arisen in which no political party is able to form stable government, it would be a case of completely demonstrable inability of any political party to form a stable government commanding the confidence of the majority members of the legislature. It would be a case of failure of constitutional machinery," the court observed in the Bommai judgment.

Partisan politics

However, the Supreme Court, in its seven-judge Bench judgment in *Rameshwar Prasad versus Union of India*, has also cautioned against Governors misusing their office for partisan politics.

"Whether it is a case of an existing government losing majority support or of installation of a new government after fresh elections, the act of the Governor in recommending dissolution of Assembly should be only with the sole object of preservation of the Constitution and not promotion of political interests of one or the other party," the court said.

The Rameshwar Prasad case flagged the criticism recorded in the Sarkaria Commission that Governors have, more often than not, used their powers to recommend President's Rule under Article 356 to "promote the political interests of the party in power at the Centre".

"It is seen that one day a person is in active politics in as much as he holds the office of the Chief Minister or Minister or a party post and almost on the following day or, in any case, soon thereafter, the same person is appointed as the Governor in another State with hardly any cooling period. Ordinarily, it is difficult to expect detachment from party politics from such a person while performing the constitutional functions as Governor," the court had highlighted the need for a "cooling-off period".

Supreme Court judgments have acknowledged that coalition governments have become the norm rather than a rarity.

"Coalition governments are in place in several States and in fact at the Centre. There is nothing wrong in post-poll adjustments, and when ideological similarity weighs with any political party to support another political party though there was no pre-poll alliance... There is nothing wrong in it," the court has observed.

'T.N. Governor should invite Vijay, ask for a floor test'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The correct course of action for the Tamil Nadu Governor would be to invite C. Joseph Vijay-led Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) to form the government and prove his majority on the floor of the State Assembly, former Union Law Minister Ashwani Kumar said on Thursday.

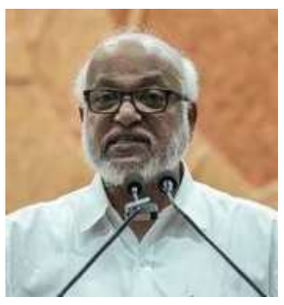
Reacting to the evolving political situation in Tamil Nadu, Mr. Kumar said constitutional conventions and judicial precedents make it clear that when a party stakes claim, the appropriate constitutional process is to allow it an opportunity to demonstrate majority support through a floor test in the Assembly.

"The due process argument attributed in the media to the Governor of Tamil Nadu is seen as a graceless stratagem on the part of the Governor to delay Vijay's swearing-in despite a deafening popular mandate in his favour. It is obvious that under the present circumstances, none other can or does command legislative majority," Mr. Kumar said in a statement.

"Constitutional conscience owes no apology to technicalities. Delaying the swearing-in of Vijay is a political outrage and a constitutional heresy," he further said.

T.N. govt. formation: CPI(M), CPI chiefs denounce Arlekar

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI


M.A. Baby

The CPI(M) and CPI on Thursday denounced Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar's decision not to call Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) chief C. Joseph Vijay to form the government, calling it "undemocratic" and an "insult" to the mandate given by the State's voters.

CPI(M) general secretary M.A. Baby cited the example of the 13-day BJP-led government of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the Centre in 1996. "Everyone knew that Vajpayee did not have the numbers. Still, he was allowed to form a government and a Parliament session was convened for him to show his strength," Mr. Baby said, while arguing that by virtue of being the single largest party in the Tamil Nadu Assembly, TVK should be called to form the government.

"No one has staked claim to form government, it is highly objectionable and undemocratic to ignore the verdict given by the people," Mr. Baby said.

CPI general secretary D. Raja said the strength of a government has to be tested on the floor of the Assembly and not in the Governor's house. "The mandate is in favour of TVK. This should be recognised. The Governor should call upon the single largest party to form the government... Governors should act in accordance with practices and conventions of a mutli-party democracy," he said.

Both the general secretaries did not clarify whether the Left parties will extend support for TVK or not. "We fought as part of Secular Progressive Alliance to stall BJP... BJP should not be allowed unethical tricks to create trouble for people," Mr. Raja added.

In the results to the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly, the TVK emerged as the single largest party with 108 seats while the ruling DMK came down to 59 seats and the AIADMK secured 47 seats in the 234-member House.

Since the verdict threw up a hung Assembly, the TVK has been working to gather support from other parties to form a government in Tamil Nadu.

Akhilesh Yadav calls on Mamata Banerjee, says Trinamool fought well

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Samajwadi Party (SP) leader Akhilesh Yadav called on Trinamool Congress chairperson Mamata Banerjee and her nephew Abhishek Banerjee in Kolkata on Thursday.

Mr. Yadav reached the Kalighat residence of the former Chief Minister. "You fought very well," he said to Mr. Banerjee, who received the SP leader.

"We have lost," Ms. Banerjee told him.

"No, no, you have not lost," Mr. Yadav replied.

Speaking to media persons after the meeting, Mr. Yadav alleged that the votes for the West Bengal Assembly election had been stolen by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Election Commission of India (EC), and other agencies. "We are in this battle with *Didi* [Mamata Banerjee] because we have to save democracy and the Constitution. If the right to vote is taken away, then what remains of democracy?" he said.

"*Didi* is not a person to be disappointed. She is a person of struggle. The BJP is patriarchal and feudal. That is why *Didi* has been targeted, because she is a woman," he said.

Show of support: Akhilesh Yadav meets Mamata Banerjee at her residence in Kalighat, Kolkata, on Thursday. PTI

The meeting between the leaders of the two Opposition parties assumed political significance amid efforts by the Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) bloc to recalibrate its strategies after the elections in several States.

The Trinamool chairperson, in her first media interaction after the loss, said she would work to strengthen the INDIA bloc.

After the meeting, the Trinamool, from its official X handle, shared photographs of the leaders to say, "Some bonds transcend politics and time, growing stronger through every season."

Following the Trinamool's loss in the recently concluded West Bengal election, several leaders of the INDIA bloc, including Sonia Gandhi, reached out to Ms. Banerjee. Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Arvind Kejriwal, and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) chief and Chief Minister of Jharkhand Hemant Soren had campaigned for the Trinamool Congress.

Nitish's son among 32 Ministers inducted into new Bihar Cabinet

Amarnath Tewary
PATNA

Thirty-two Ministers, including Nishant Kumar, son of former Chief Minister and Janata Dal(U) chief Nitish Kumar, took oath at Patna's historic Gandhi Maidan on Thursday as the Cabinet of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government in Bihar led by Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary was expanded.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Union Ministers Rajnath Singh and J.P. Nadda, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president Nitin Nabin, Mr. Nitish Kumar, and a host of other senior NDA leaders were present.

The sons of three erstwhile Bihar Chief Ministers are Ministers in the new Cabinet – apart from Mr. Nishant Kumar, Nitish Mishra, son of former Chief Minister Jagannath Mishra, and Santosh Kumar Suman, aka Santosh Manjhi, son of former Chief Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi were sworn-in.

The new Cabinet retains most faces from the previous Cabinet under Mr. Nitish Kumar, with some new faces, including Mr. Nishant Kumar, Shweta Gupta and Shailesh Kumar, aka Bulo Mandal from the JD(U); and Mithlesh Tiwari from the BJP. Senior Bihar BJP leader and Minister Mangal Pandey, along with two other party leaders, Surendra Mehta and Narayan Prasad, were dropped from the Cabinet amid speculation that Mr. Pandey, who had been a Minister for several terms, would soon be given a major role in the party's organisation in view of the Assembly election in other States.

Sharing stage: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Nitish Kumar at the Bihar Cabinet swearing-in ceremony in Patna on Thursday. ANI

Apart from Mr. Choudhary from the BJP, and the two Deputy Chief Ministers from the JD(U), Vijay Kumar Choudhary and Bijendra Prasad Yadav, the NDA Ministry has 15 members from the BJP, 13 from the JD (U), two from the Lok Janshakti Party-Ram Vilas (LJP-RV), and one each from the Hindustani Awam Morcha-Secular (HAM-S) and Rashtriya Lok Morcha (RLM).

The Chief Minister and two Deputy Chief Ministers took oath on April 15 at Lok Bhavan in the State capital, after Mr. Nitish Kumar took oath as a Rajya Sabha member on April 10.

The new Cabinet reflects a combination of castes, communities, and gender, with a focus on representation of Other Backward Classes, Extremely Backward Classes, the upper castes, Scheduled Castes, and women. Of the women Ministers, Lesi Singh, Shweta Gupta and Sheila Mandal are from the JD(U), while Shreyasi Singh and Rama Nishad are from the BJP.

The NDA Cabinet in Bihar now has 35 members.

The 243-member Legislative Assembly can have a maximum of 36 Ministers.

The highlight of the ceremony was the induction of Mr. Nishant Kumar, 44, who earlier expressed reluctance to be sworn in as a Deputy Chief Minister, and said he wanted to strengthen the party's organisation first. He set off on a "Sadbhav (goodwill) Yatra" on May 3 from Bagaha in West Champaran district, where party leaders were seen congratulating him on not joining the Cabinet as Mr. Choudhary's deputy.

The JD(U)'s working president Sanjay Kumar Jha, and Munger MP and Union Minister of Panchayati Raj Rajeev Ranjan Singh. alias Lalan Singh, both considered close confidants of Mr. Nitish Kumar, are said to have convinced Mr. Nishant Kumar to join the new Cabinet. Mr. Nishant Kumar was seen touching the feet of his father and Mr. Shah on the dais.

EC lifts model code in States where polls concluded

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) on Thursday announced the lifting of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) following the declaration of results of Assembly elections in Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and the Union Territory of Puducherry, and byelections in the Assembly constituencies in Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Nagaland, and Tripura.

The MCC would, however, remain operational in Falta of West Bengal, where a fresh poll has been ordered by the panel.

"Now that the results in respect of general election to the Legislative Assemblies of Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and U.T. of Puducherry, 2026 and by-elections in constituencies of Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Nagaland, and Tripura have been declared by the concerned Returning Officers... the Model Code of Conduct has ceased to be in operation with immediate effect," the EC said in a letter to the chief secretaries and Chief Electoral Officers of these States.

'Canada must act against anti-India extremist elements'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

India on Thursday called upon Canada to act against "anti-India extremist elements" operating from Canadian soil against the backdrop of a Canadian intelligence report highlighting the national security threat posed by Khalistani elements.

The annual report for 2025 by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), released last week, said the involvement of Canada-based Khalistani extremists in "violent extremist activities" continued to pose a national security threat to Canada.

"India has repeatedly urged the Canadian government to take effective action against anti-India extremist elements operating from its soil. This includes addressing the issue of glorification of violence, threats against Indian leaders and diplomats, vandalism of places of worship, and attempts to promote secessionism through so-called 'referendums'," Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at his weekly media briefing.

Randhir Jaiswal

He said India had consistently spoken out about concerns regarding the use of Canadian territory as a "safe haven" by extremist elements. "The CSIS assessment acknowledges the presence of supporters of the Khalistan separatist movement and notes that Canada-based Khalistani extremist (CBKE) groups continue to pose a national security threat not only to India but also to Canada."

To a separate question on the CSIS report mentioning India, alongside China, Russia, Iran and Pakistan, among the "main perpetrators of foreign interference and espionage against Canada", Mr. Jaiswal said New Delhi had consistently rejected such "baseless imputations".

"India is a democracy that adheres to international norms and respects the sovereignty of other nations..."

ରମାଦେବୀ ମହିଳା ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ, ବିଦ୍ୟାବିହାର, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର
Rama Devi Women's University,
Vidya Vihar, Bhubaneswar, Odisha-751022.
Ph.no-0674-2542644, E-mail-registrar@rdwu.ac.in, Website-https://rdwu.ac.in
No. 4152 / Dt. 30.04.2026
RECRUITMENT NOTICE
Applications are invited from eligible candidates as per UGC eligibility criteria (UGC Notification 18th July 2018 and subsequent amendments) to fill up various regular faculty positions (including backlog vacancy) in the Departments of Botany, Business Administration, Chemistry, Commerce, Computer Science, Economics, Education, English, Gender Studies, Hindi, History, Home Science, Journalism & Mass Communication, Life Science, Mathematics, Music, Odia, Philosophy, Physics, Political Science, Psychology, Sanskrit, Sociology, Statistics and Zoology of Rama Devi Women's University. Please refer website: **https://rdwu.ac.in/** for vacancy details notification wise.
Positions:
a) Professors (Notification No. 4149, dt.30.04.2026)
b) Associate Professors (Notification No. 4150, dt.30.4.2026)
c) Assistant Professors (Notification No. 4151, dt. 30.4.2026)
The filled application must be submitted online through the HIMS Portal **(https://hims.odisha.gov.in/)**, which will be available from **07.05.2026** onwards. Candidates are required to complete the application in all respects and upload all necessary supporting documents on or before **10.06.2026**.
In addition, a hard copy of the downloaded submitted application along with all relevant documents, must be sent only via Speed Post to the **Registrar, Rama Devi Women's University, Vidya Vihar, P.O.-Bhoi Nagar, Bhubaneswar -751022, District-Khorda, (Odisha)** so as to reach on or before **20.06.2026**.
For detailed information, please visit University website **https://rdwu.ac.in/**
By Order of the Vice Chancellor
Registrar
11001/37/2627
OIPR-11001/11031/1/26-27/0003

INBRIEF

HC issues notice to NDTV over Anil Ambani's complaint

The Delhi High Court issued notice to NDTV on Thursday over a defamation suit filed by businessman Anil Ambani over the channel's reportage concerning cases registered by the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate against companies linked to him. Counsel appearing for Mr. Ambani submitted that there had been 72 "targeted publications" against him over the past eight months. It was argued that despite Mr. Ambani being distinct from the entities under investigation, his name was repeatedly highlighted whenever action was initiated against any of the companies. The court has listed the matter for further hearing in July.

SC appoints former CJI as mediator in Kapur estate row

The Supreme Court on Thursday appointed former Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud as mediator to facilitate a settlement in the bitter inheritance dispute within the family of late businessman Sanjay Kapur, after the contesting factions agreed to attempt an amicable resolution. A Bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Ujjal Bhuyan also advised members of the Kapur family against making public statements or posting on social media about the dispute for the "entertainment of others". "It is a family dispute. Let it be confined to the family only. It should not be a source of entertainment", the Bench observed.

Myanmar's Kuki ultras attack Nagas in Manipur

Rahul Karmakar
GUWAHATI

Myanmar-based Kuki extremists allegedly carried out a pre-dawn attack on Naga villages in the ethnic conflict-hit Manipur's Kamjong district, bordering Myanmar on Thursday.

According to an apex body of the Tangkhul Nagas, at least 100 heavily armed men attacked three villages located close to the international border, fired indiscriminately, and set 18 houses ablaze.

Two civilians sustained bullet injuries while several others were rounded up at gunpoint and tortured by the armed men, the Working Committee of the Tangkhul Naga Long (TNL) said in a statement.

The TNL alleged that the Kuki National Army-Burma, backed by the People's Defence Force (an anti-junta Myanmar armed group), carried out the coordinated attacks on the three villages.

"The civilian settlements were heavily bombed with drones, and rocket launchers, destroying several houses while some were razed to the ground," the TNL stated. "The incident occurred just about 200 metres from the 11 Assam Rifles company station."

Vehicles with fake plates used in Bengal shooting

The police recover car, two-wheeler used by assailants who shot dead aide of Suvendu; BJP leader alleges it is a targeted assassination and demands death penalty for the killers; SIT begins probe

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

Vehicles bearing fake number plates have emerged as a key link in the killing of Chandranath Rath, personal assistant to Suvendu Adhikari, the outgoing Leader of the Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly, late on Wednesday night, according to the West Bengal police.

A Special Investigation Team has been formed to probe the attack, and forensic experts have visited the scene of the crime in Madhyamgram in North 24 Parganas district.

Rath, 41, was in a white car when he was shot three times at point-blank range and sustained severe injuries. He was declared dead at a private hospital. A silver car used by the attackers was abandoned near the crime spot, and the culprits reportedly fled on two-wheelers. The police have seized the four-wheeler.

"The number plate of the car was tampered with because the original registration number is from Siliguri. This was a fake number plate. We have collected evidence from the spot. We are conducting further investigation," Director-General of Police Siddhi Nath Gupta said in the early hours of Thursday. One of the motorcycles used to flee the crime scene has also been recovered, and is also reported to have used a fake number plate.

A crowd gathers at the Barasat Medical College and Hospital, where an autopsy was done on Rath's body. SHRABANA CHATTERJEE

"If he was not my aide or I did not defeat [outgoing Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee] in Bhabanipur, maybe they would not have targeted Rath. His crime was being my personal assistant," Mr. Adhikari said, after visiting his aide's family at the Barasat Medical College and Hospital, where a post-mortem examination was conducted.

Alleging that this was a targeted attack by hired assassins who had recced the location for a week before carrying out the murder, the BJP leader called for the killers to face the death penalty.

Rath, fondly remembered as Chandra, was a pilot by profession, but had quit and held a private job for some time before he started working for Mr. Adhikari eight years ago. He had a residence in Madhyamgram's Doharia area which is where he was heading on Wednesday.

"I heard gunshots and ran to the place. The car had three people, two of them were bleeding, and one was crying for help. But they were still alive and breathing, so we asked them to rush to the hospital where he was declared dead," Sushanta Sarkar, a BJP worker and a resident of Doharia, told *The Hindu*.

BJP State president Samik Bhattacharya, who visited the State-run hospital again on Thursday morning, said that West Bengal had become a "heaven" for criminals thanks to the 15-year tenure of the Trinamool Congress government in the State.

'Revenge killing'

Rath's grieving mother told reporters that this was a revenge killing because her son worked for the BJP. "As a mother, I cannot seek death for anyone. But I will demand life imprisonment for the culprits," she said.

The Trinamool was quick to condemn the attack. "We demand the strongest possible action in this matter, including a court-monitored CBI investigation so that those responsible are identified and brought to justice without delay," the party said in a post on X.

Harassed by group of men during flight, alleges Moitra

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Trinamool Congress Lok Sabha member Mahua Moitra on Thursday alleged that she had faced harassment from a group of men on board an IndiGo flight while travelling to Delhi to attend a meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence.

In a post on the social media platform X, the Trinamool MP said: "...Was on seat 1F on 6E 719. 4-6 men boarded in a group & leered at me & went to back of plane," Ms. Moitra wrote, sharing a video.

She alleged that after the flight landed and before the aircraft doors opened, the men heckled her and filmed the episode. "This is no 'citizen anger'. This is harassment & violates my safety in an aircraft. No way that these louts can get away with this," she said.

Ms. Moitra tagged IndiGo and Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu. "Find your crew report, name & shame them & put on no-fly list," read her post.

Ms. Moitra said she would send a complaint to the airline. There was no immediate response from IndiGo or the Ministry.

Govt. rolls out plan for free health checks for workers

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union Labour Ministry on Thursday launched a scheme for free health check-ups for all workers above 40 years of age across the country every year.

Inaugurating the scheme, Union Minister of Labour Mansukh Mandaviya said it will be a major milestone in strengthening occupational healthcare and social security coverage for India's workforce.

He said the government is committed to strengthening social security coverage for all workers.

"The Employees State Insurance Corporation coverage has increased from around seven crore beneficiaries a decade ago to nearly 15 crore beneficiaries today," he said.

Webinar to explore trends, opportunities in visual media careers

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

VIT Chennai, in collaboration with *The Hindu Education Plus,* will organise a webinar on 'Visual media careers: where to start and how to succeed' as part of its career counselling series.

The visual industry offers diverse career opportunities with the rapid expansion of digital platforms, content creation and social media storytelling. The webinar aims to help students, aspiring creators, and young professionals with practical insights into emerging trends, career pathways, higher education opportunities, industry expectations and portfolio building.

The resource persons include Padmanabhan T., Associate Professor, School of Media Arts and Technology, VIT Chennai; C. Pichandy, Eminent Professor – Media and Communication, and former Head, Department of Communication, PSG College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore; and Suresh Chandra Menon, actor, writer, and director.

The session, scheduled for 11.30 a.m. on May 10, will be moderated by journalist Soma Basu.

Those interested may register at newsth.live/THVITVE

Census enumerators not allowed into Gurugram's apartment buildings

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

In one of the first such instances, the Haryana administration has recommended the registration of a first information report (FIR) against two government school staffers for alleged negligence in Census-related work and for obstructing government duties. The Census Act allows for up to three years' imprisonment for such offences.

The criminal action comes even as Census enumerators, mostly government school teachers, complained of hostile behaviour and denial of entry by residents of high-rise apartment buildings and residents welfare associations (RWAs).

On Thursday, Gurugram Municipal Corporation Joint Commissioner and Census Nodal Officer Punit Kumar said that Census enumerators had been denied entry to several housing societies despite showing their identity cards. He said he has informed all RWAs and managements of housing societies that the government has deputed officers and enumerators for Census work and directed that they be allowed to carry out their work.

Mritunjay K. Narayan flags off mobile vans for Census 2027 at Janganana Bhawan, New Delhi.

Awareness campaigns

Registrar General of India Mritunjay Kumar Narayan flagged off six awareness vans on Thursday as part of the Census 2027 public outreach campaign in Delhi for the ongoing first phase, the Houselisting and Housing Census (HLO). These vans will travel across Delhi, carrying messages on Census participation, the self-enumeration facility, key features of Census 2027, and the importance of public cooperation with enumerators during field visits, a government statement said.

Delhi urges Dhaka to expedite verification of 2,800 illegal immigrants

Kallol Bhattacherjee
Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

The repatriation of Bangladeshi citizens who are illegally staying in India is a "core issue" in the Delhi-Dhaka relationship, the External Affairs Ministry said on Thursday.

Responding to comments from Bangladesh's new government about possible "push-ins" from the Indian side, Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal sought Dhaka's cooperation on expediting the repatriation of at least 2,862 identified illegal immigrants from Bangladesh.

"These comments must be seen in the context of the core issue of repatriation of illegal Bangladeshis from India. This requires cooperation from Bangladesh. Over 2,862 cases of nationality verification are pending with Bangladesh, some for over five years," Mr. Jaiswal said.

India expects Bangladesh to "expedite nationality verification" of these identified individuals so that "repatriation of illegal immigrants can take place in a smooth manner," he said. "Our policy is that all illegal foreign nationals staying in India must be repatriated as per our laws, procedure and established bilateral arrangements," Mr. Jaiswal added.

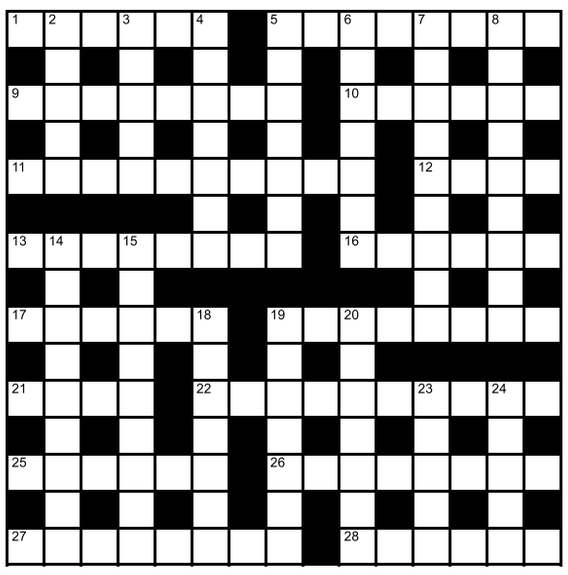
The Indian response came days after Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman and Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed said Dhaka would take "appropriate measures" if attempts are made to "push-in" individuals from India across the border.

TH CROSSWORD + 14788

(set by Afterdark)

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

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Remove new individual entering party (6)
5 Before church work, Louisiana doctor gets a small cut of meat (4,4)
9 In all likelihood, expert will get bowled cleverly (8)
10 Uncover study collecting funds frequently by extortion primarily (6)
11 Fine clothing for lawyer who's given to looting (10)
12 One's getting married at morning with religious leader (4)
13 Case for reconstructing casino after one crack in the front (8)
16 Residents of Borneo condemn a Tory, perhaps (6)
17 Greek essentially follows specialist in main course (6)
19 Dangerous tide came to devastate (8)
21 Son to sleep at break (4)
22 Innocent publican set free by rifleman essentially (10)
25 Claire cycled back to get pastry (6)
26 Say Man, settles to cover for a patterned fabric (8)
27 Mutinous mean lad obstructs rule to become a municipal officer (8)
28 Insect can have family (6)

Down

2 Say, a drier is lighter, foot's short (5)
3 A doctor's half dead at plant (5)
4 A composer in Hawaii gets a brazier (7)
5 State that lady won somehow (3,4)
6 Mohammad is only confining to US state capital (7)
7 Type of writing made of numeric characters (9)
8 Even woman in counter can be an anomaly? (3,3,3)
14 Can California arrest one falling short? Primarily is it accepted by law? (9)
15 A new parolee fled on a flier (9)
18 Witty remark on two animals found behind creek essentially (7)
19 Zero power used in a sport (7)
20 Metal collected outside college/institute/university (7)
23 Townhall eyewitness checked in backstreet (5)
24 Behold, setback is constant (5)

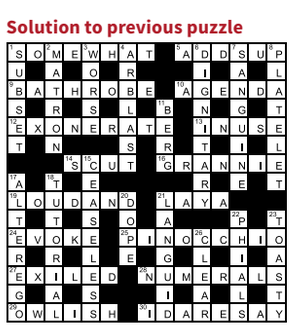
SUDOKU

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

No.SS6874 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to previous puzzle



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Five sacred Shiva temples

Smt. Desa Mangaiyarkarasi elaborated in a discourse that the Pancha Bhootha Sthalams are five sacred Shiva temples in south India, each representing one of the five fundamental elements of nature – Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Space. Together, they symbolise the deep connection between the divine and the natural world, guiding devotees toward spiritual understanding and liberation. The Earth element (*Prithvi*) is represented by the Ekambareswarar Temple in Kanchipuram, one of India's seven sacred sites of liberation. According to legend, Goddess Parvati performed penance here by creating a Shiva Lingam out of sand. When Lord Shiva tested her devotion by causing a flood, she embraced the Lingam to protect it.

The Water element (*Apu*) is embodied at the Jambukeswarar Temple in Thiruvanaikaval near Tiruchi, where the Lingam is constantly surrounded by water. The Fire element (*Agni*) is represented by the Annamalaiyar Temple in Thiruvannamalai. Here, Shiva manifested as an infinite pillar of fire, humbling Brahma and Vishnu. The Air element (*Vayu*) is associated with the Srikalahasteeswara Temple in Andhra Pradesh. The temple's name comes from a spider, a serpent, and an elephant who attained moksha here. A unique feature is the constantly flickering lamp in the sanctum, even in the absence of wind, symbolising the Vayu Lingam's presence. Finally, the Space element (*Akasa*) is represented by the Natarajar Temple in Chidambaram, where Lord Shiva performs the cosmic dance of bliss, the Ananda Tandava. Here, the divine is worshipped in a formless aspect known as the "Chidambara Rahasyam," symbolising boundless nature of space.

INBRIEF

CAG conducting audit of 101 cities to assess ease of living

India is conducting a special audit of 101 cities to assess ease of living from the citizen's perspective, Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) K. Sanjay Murthy said on Thursday. At the 5th BRICS Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI) Leaders' Summit here, Mr. Murthy said the CAG of India is auditing multi-modal transport and first-mile, last-mile logistics, in partnership with institutions like the IIT and IIM, and the World Bank. India is hosting the three-day summit under the overarching theme 'Ease of Living with a Focus on Urban Mobility'. Convened during India's year of BRICS Chairmanship 2026 by the Office of the CAG, it brings together 42 delegates, including Heads of SAIs from BRICS member countries, to deliberate on audit themes of shared relevance, exchange best practices, and strengthen public financial oversight. PTI

Pronto raises $20 million as valuation doubles from March

On-demand home services start-up Pronto has raised an additional $20 million in its Series B round from venture capitalist Lachy Groom, doubling its valuation to $200 million in just two months. The platform, backed by General Catalyst, offers services such as laundry, kitchen prep and home cleaning from ₹125, with workers available within 15 minutes. It competes with Urban Company's Insta Help and Lightspeed-backed Snabbit. Pronto raised $25 million in March from Epiq Capital, Glade Brook Capital, General Catalyst and Bain Capital Ventures at a $100 million valuation. The firm will use much of the fresh capital to scale its workforce, CEO Anjali Sardana said, adding the platform is "very supply-constrained." "We went from 3,000 bookings a day at the beginning of December to now over 26,000 bookings a day...we've been scaling supply quite fast, but it has not kept up with demand," she said. REUTERS

'Compliance norms could derail EU FTA deal benefits'

Calling the agreement the 'mother of all deals', EU's Ambassador to India Hervé Delphin says it is, however, missing a chapter on investments; the deal could be implemented by early 2027, he says

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

While hailing the India-European Union (EU) Free Trade Agreement (FTA) as creating a joint market comprising one quarter of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the EU's ambassador to India Hervé Delphin also struck a note of caution over regulatory hurdles and "unfinished business" that could overshadow the benefits of the deal.

Speaking at an event organised by the Federation of European Business in India, Mr. Delphin also said that the FTA would likely be implemented in "early 2027", a timeline that sources in the Indian government also confirm.

Negotiations on the FTA were concluded in January this year.

"Both sides must ensure that the agreement is implemented smoothly and in good faith," he said. "For this to materialise, we need to align on a pro-FTA mindset and approach across our systems: customs procedures or conformity requirements should serve their purpose and not be used as trade barriers."

"If administrative procedures are too burdensome businesses may consider that cost of compliance outweighs the benefits of preferential tariffs, in which case the FTA potential would be lost," Mr. Delphin added. "That would be a missed opportunity."

Speaking a little more about the opportunity created by the FTA, the Ambassador said that the agreement would create a free trade zone covering nearly two billion people and a quarter of global GDP. "It will be the largest FTA ever signed by either side. For all these reasons it has been rightly billed the 'mother of all deals," he said.

However, he also pointed out some of the shortcomings in the deal.

"The FTA does not cover all relevant areas," he said. "We need to look at 'unfinished business' and 'beyond FTA'. Investment is the main case in point... There is regrettably no FTA chapter on investment liberalisation in non-services sectors, which would have given investors more assurance and predictability."

Conditions apply: Conformity requirements should serve the purpose and not be barriers, said Mr. Delphin. BY ARRANGEMENT

'Banks should brace for risks emerging from Mythos AI'

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Risk management should be embedded in every bank's culture, said Mr. Nagaraju

Banks should make risk management a part of their core culture in order to face cybersecurity threats emerging from the newly introduced Mythos AI model, said Secretary in the Department of Financial Services M. Nagaraju.

"Risk management should be embedded in the culture of every bank," Mr. Nagaraju said while speaking at an IBA event here on Thursday.

The role of banks would become "more critical" as India continues to grow despite geopolitical challenges, he said.

"I hope the banking community is prepared well to face [any threat] in case Mythos is released publicly in the country...One successful cyberattack can cascade quickly across institutions and markets," Mr. Nagaraju said.

Speaking on India's exposure to the West Asia conflict, Mr. Nagaraju said, "Most of the areas have been impacted except for certain areas like educational institutions and the horticulture sector... some of these sectors were actually not impacted by the West Asia crisis."

"These sectors will not be included in the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme announced recently," the Secretary said.

"For the rest of the sectors, the scheme is available, and they can avail the benefit," he added.

Skyroot Aerospace raises $60 million, becomes unicorn

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Skyroot Aerospace, a private space tech company, announced its $60 million fund raise at a pre-money valuation of $1.1 billion, making it a unicorn.

The round was co-led by Sherpalo Ventures and GIC, a global institutional investor, with participation from other existing Skyroot investors including the founders of Greenko Group and Arkam Ventures. The founder of Sherpalo, Ram Shriram, a renowned tech investor and a board member of Alphabet Inc, will be joining Skyroot's board, the company said in a statement.

Walmart sourced goods worth over $40 bn from India since 2019: CEO

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Walmart Inc said it had sourced goods worth more than $40 billion from India since 2019.

"We've already sourced more than $40 billion in goods from India and are focused on strengthening entrepreneur and supplier capabilities, raising compliance and quality standards, and helping scale manufacturing so more Indian businesses are ready to export,'' said President and CEO John Furner. Speaking at Walmart Growth Summit in New Delhi on Thursday, Mr. Furner said this work was expanding economic opportunity and connecting innovative businesses in India with customers around the world.

Walmart also announced that under its Vriddhi Supplier Development Programme, the company had trained over 1,15,000 MSMEs across the country since its launch in 2019, equipping them with digital capabilities, critical business skills, and access to new markets. The company has a mandate to train over 170,000 MSMEs by 2028, under the programme to strengthen the pipeline of MSMEs that have the ambition to export to new markets.

John Furner

Coromandel Intl Q4 net profit at ₹115 cr.

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Agriculture solutions provider Coromandel International reported consolidated net profit for March quarter stood at ₹115 crore compared with ₹578 crore a year earlier.

The lower net profit came on a 19% rise in total income to ₹6,068 crore. Under exceptional items, the firm reported a ₹70.56 crore loss against ₹346.77 crore gain in the year-earlier period.

For fiscal ended March, net profit was 8% lower at ₹1,898 crore on a total income which was 30% higher at ₹31,827 crore.

₹2 dividend

The company declared a final dividend of ₹2 per equity share (face value of ₹1 each). Earlier, in February, it had paid an interim dividend of ₹9 per share.

"Coromandel's nutrient business delivered a steady performance in FY26, navigating a dynamic operating environment marked by supply disruptions, volatile raw material prices and sharp currency movements," MD and CEO S. Sankarasubramanian said in a press release.

S. Sankarasubramanian

Apple draws ₹100-cr. 'green' plan for India

Mini Tejaswi
BENGALURU

Apple's ₹100 crore investment would support development of over 150 MW renewable energy

Apple announced a slew of clean energy and environmental initiatives in India, including investments to expand renewable energy infrastructure, cut plastic pollution and foster green entrepreneurship in India.

These include a partnership with renewable energy developer CleanMax. Apple's initial investment of ₹100 crore would support the development of more than 150 megawatts of renewable energy capacity – enough to power an average of 1.50 lakh Indian households each year – with opportunity to expand in the coming years, said the iPhone maker.

Sarah Chandler, Apple's VP of environment and supply chain innovation, said, "We're proud to expand our efforts to invest in India's clean energy economy and protect the country's precious natural resources."

The new initiatives are expected to support Apple's ambitious goal to be carbon neutral across its entire footprint by 2030.

In order to reduce plastic pollution, Apple is working with WWF-India and supporting recovery-focused recycling and waste management initiatives that prioritise environmental and social safeguards, the firm said.

Kotak Bank gets RBI nod to buy 9.99% each in AUSFB, Federal Bank

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Kotak Mahindra Bank has received RBI approval to acquire up to 9.99% each in AU Small Finance Bank and Federal Bank.

In separate regulatory filings on Thursday, AU Small Finance Bank (AU SFB) and Federal Bank announced that they have received the approval letter from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on May 6.

'Aggregate holding'

Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd (KMBL) (along with its subsidiaries, the funds/schemes managed by KMBL's subsidiaries, collectively referred to as 'Kotak Mahindra Group') has received the RBI nod to acquire 'aggregate holding' of up to 9.99% of the paid-up share capital or voting rights in AU SFB, AU Small Finance Bank said.

Similarly, Federal Bank said the Reserve Bank of India accorded approval to Kotak Mahindra Bank for acquiring 'aggregate holding' of up to 9.99% of the paid-up share capital or voting rights of the bank.

Shares surge on BSE

Shares of AU Small Finance Bank closed at ₹1,032.25, up 0.76% over the previous close on the BSE.

Federal Bank shares closed 1.36% up at ₹297.10 on the BSE. Kotak Mahindra Bank scrip closed 0.84% higher at ₹379.35.

Banking on banks: Federal Bank shares closed 1.36% up at ₹297.10 on the BSE on Thursday.

WASHINGTON

Lebanon, Israel to hold new talks in Washington on May 14-15: U.S.

AP

Lebanon and Israel will hold a new round of peace talks on May 14-15 in Washington, a U.S. official said on Thursday, despite a new Israeli strike in the heart of Beirut. Next week's talks will be the third between Israel and Lebanon, which had not spoken directly for decades and have no diplomatic relations. AFP

TEHRAN

Iran's President Pezeshkian says he met Supreme Leader Khamenei

REUTERS

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Thursday he had met with the country's Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei, who has not been seen in public since his appointment in early March. "What struck me most was the vision and the humble and sincere approach of the Supreme Leader," the President said. AFP

ROME

Rubio meets Pope in a bid to ease tensions over Trump remarks

AP

The top U.S. diplomat, Marco Rubio, went to the Vatican on Thursday for talks with the first U.S. Pope, Leo XIV, against the backdrop of sharp tensions between the White House and the Vatican. The U.S. secretary of state's visit comes after Donald Trump's extraordinary criticism of Pope over his anti-war stance. AFP

YANGON

Myanmar junta claims recapture of trade artery towards China

AFP

Myanmar's military claimed on Thursday to have recaptured a key northern transport corridor towards China after a 15-month battle, touting a counter-blow to rebels in the civil war. The military said it crushed "terrorist insurgent groups" along a route linking the central city of Mandalay to the northern hub of Myitkyina. AFP

Labour challenged from all sides in U.K. elections

Over 5,000 seats in 136 councils in England were up for grabs, with Labour defending 2,566 seats and the Conservatives 1,364; PM Starmer has struggled to keep the centrist and left flank of his party together over immigration and welfare policies; he has also suffered reputational damage over the appointment of Peter Mandelson, the U.K.'s former envoy to the U.S. who had close links to Epstein

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and his Labour party were faced with the prospect of serious political damage as voting got under way in council elections in England and Assembly elections in Scotland and Wales on Thursday.

More than 5,000 seats in 136 councils in England were up for grabs, with Labour defending 2,566 seats and the Conservatives, 1,364 seats. The last elections for these seats were in 2022, when the nativist Reform UK had won just two seats. Last year, Reform had won 667 seats - the largest number – that were up for elections.

Mr. Starmer has struggled to keep the centrist and left flank of his party together over policies around attempts to tighten immigration and welfare spending. He has also suffered reputational damage – including in his own party – over the appointment of Peter Mandelson, the U.K.'s former envoy to the U.S. who had close links to the convicted paedophile and financier, Jeffrey Epstein. Labour is faced with the prospect of losing votes to both Reform on the right and the Greens on the left. Some, such as the University of Oxford's Stephen Fischer, project Labour to lose as much as 1,900 seats, or three quarters of its current tally.

"Those outcomes are so bad that the specifics don't matter," said Tim Bale, a political scientist of Queen Mary University of London, when asked how bad Labour's performance would need to be for it to end Mr. Starmer's premiership.

"And in any case the decision as to whether or not to oust Starmer depends less on how bad the results are ... more on whether they think anyone capable of challenging the PM can really improve the government's ratings," Mr. Bale told *The Hindu*.

Labour is fighting the Greens in inner London boroughs and the Greens and Liberal Democrats in the Northern metros such as Leeds and Sheffield. It is fighting Reform UK in other northern metros like Sunderland and Barnsley.

The Conservatives, who suffered big losses in the 2024 general election, could lose 1,010 seats according to Mr. Fisher. They are defending their seats in rural counties and the outer boroughs of London.

"I did not vote this year," said Sam Arora, a 39-year old British Indian businessman, from Wembley, a London area that is home to many South Asians.

"I find politics in this country has really sort of taken a turn," he added. Mr. Arora, who runs a business engaged in international trade used to vote for the Conservatives but feels the party is "becoming a bit too far right".

Keir Starmer and his wife Victoria Starmer leave after casting their votes at a polling station in central London on Thursday. AFP

In both Scotland and Wales, Labour was projected to come in third – trailing behind Reform.

In Scotland, all 129 places in the Scottish Assembly at Holyrood were contested, with voters animated by issues around the cost of living, health and social care and immigration, as per a Savanta poll for the BBC. (The online poll surveyed 2,136 people over 16 in Scotland, between January 29 and February 6).

The Scottish National Party (SNP), which won the election in 2021, with 64 seats - i.e., just one seat short of a majority - ran a campaign around Scottish independence, promising a referendum on secession from the U.K., as early as 2028. A 2022 Supreme Court ruling had given the U.K. Parliament the sole power to call such a referendum, the last of which was in 2014.

First Minister John Swinney had said in recent weeks that the SNP getting a majority in Holyrood would be a solid argument for Westminster to give Holyrood the power to call a referendum.

Reforming NHS

However, a YouGov poll released on Wednesday, projected the SNP to win 62 seats, with Reform coming in second with 19 seats and Scottish Labour following closely behind in third place with 17 seats. The Greens were projected to get 16 seats, twice as many as they won in 2021.

Reforming the National Health Service (NHS), Britain's healthcare system, has been at the top of the list for Scottish Labour's leader, Anas Sarwar, a former dentist. Mr. Sarwar had urged voters to "save the NHS" which was "not safe" with the SNP and its leader.

In Wales, the Senedd (Assembly) is also being expanded from a strength of 60 members to 96, with every seat being contested. The same three issues – cost of living, healthcare and immigration ranked on top of Welsh voters concerns in another Savanta poll of 2086 Welsh adults.

Labour has run the devolved (partly autonomous) government in Wales ever since the Senedd was formed in 1999. Polls published at the end of April and in early May have generally projected centre-left nationalist party Plaid Cymru coming in first, closely followed by Reform and Labour coming in third.

Plaid leader Rhun ap Iowerwerth, launching his manifesto in April had called a vote for Reform "a proxy vote for the politics of Trump", referring to the U.S. President. The party appears to have tamped down its approach to an independence referendum, saying instead in its manifesto that it would prepare a report on whether Wales should be independent from the U.K.

Support for Welsh Labour had been declining before Labour formed the U.K. government in 2024, according to Jac Larner, a professor of political behaviour at Cardiff University. But Mr. Starmer has not helped, he said. "In essence, Labour are paying a double cost of governing here – paying the price for an unpopular Welsh Government and an unpopular UK Government," Mr. Larner said.

Iran denies attacking ship as Trump warns of renewed bombing

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

Iran denied on Thursday attacking a South Korean cargo ship in the Strait of Hormuz this week, as U.S. President Donald Trump said a deal to end the war was "very possible" but warned Washington would resume bombing if talks failed.

Tehran's embassy in Seoul said it "firmly rejects and categorically denies" allegations that its armed forces were behind a blast aboard the Panama-flagged *HMM Namu*, which caught fire on Monday while transiting the strategic waterway with 24 crew members on board.

Mr. Trump later claimed Iran had "taken some shots" at the vessel and urged South Korea to join U.S.-led efforts to restore shipping through the strait.

Meanwhile, a shipping data company reported on Thursday that Iran has created a government agency to vet and tax vessels seeking passage through the crucial Strait of Hormuz as Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei said that the United States' proposal remained "under review".

Those who remain

A general view of a beach known as 'the airport', a departure point used by migrants trying to reach Europe through the Atlantic route, in Mbour, Senegal. Over 4,000 migrants died or went missing on the Atlantic route from Senegal to the Canary Islands in 2025. AFP

China sentences two ex-Defence Ministers to death with reprieve

Associated Press
BEIJING

Wei Fenghe

A Chinese military court gave suspended death sentences on Thursday to two former Defence Ministers who were accused of bribery, according to the official *Xinhua News Agency*.

The court said Wei Fenghe was guilty of accepting bribes and sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve. It said Li Shangfu was guilty of accepting and offering bribes, and handed him the same sentence.

Suspended death sentences are often commuted to life in prison in China. The sentences are the latest in Chinese President Xi Jinping's campaign of purging senior officials.

Mr. Xi started an anti-corruption drive more than a decade ago and his drive has continued unabated.

Israeli strike kills top Hamas official's son in Gaza, say a hospital and Hamas

Agence France-Presse
GAZA CITY

A Gaza hospital and Hamas on Thursday said the son of the Palestinian Islamist movement's chief negotiator had died from wounds sustained in an Israeli strike a day earlier.

Azzam Khalil al-Hayya, 23, the son of top Hamas official Khalil al-Hayya, "was martyred after succumbing to wounds sustained in an Israeli air strike targeting him yesterday," Gaza City's Al-Shifa hospital said in a statement.

The city's Al-Ahli hospital and a security source said on Wednesday that a strike on the Al-Daraj neighbourhood of Gaza City in the evening killed one person and wounded 10 others, including Azzam Khalil al-Hayya.

Women and children watch from a window the funeral of Azzam Khalil al-Hayya, in Gaza City on Thursday. AFP

Azzam Khalil al-Hayya is the fourth of Khalil al-Hayya's seven sons to be killed in Israeli attacks, according to a Hamas source. Two of those were killed before the Gaza war erupted in October 2023.

The third, Hammam, was killed in an Israeli strike targeting Hamas leaders in Doha in September, which killed six persons.

Khalil al-Hayya is the head of Hamas in Gaza despite living in exile in Qatar. He is currently vying for the leadership of the movement. He survived the strike on Doha.

In a statement, Hamas said that the killing of Azzam Khalil al-Hayya "came within the framework of attempts to exert pressure on the resistance leadership and its negotiating delegation".

'Ukraine launched major drone attack after Moscow shunned ceasefire offer'

Associated Press
KYIV

Russian air defences shot down 347 Ukrainian drones overnight, Russia's Defence Ministry said on Thursday, in what appeared to be a major attack after Moscow spurned Kyiv's ceasefire and tension mounted over safety at Russia's upcoming Victory Day celebrations.

Incoming drones were destroyed over 20 Russian regions, including Moscow, according to the Defence Ministry, in Ukraine's second-biggest aerial attack since Russia's all-out invasion more than four years ago. The largest was last March when it launched 389 drones.

Special service vehicles parked near Red Square decorated for the Victory Day celebrations in Moscow, Russia, on Thursday. AP

Dozens more Ukrainian drones were launched during daylight hours on Thursday, the Ministry said, including some heading again toward Moscow. Nearly 100 flights in and out of the Russian capital's three main airports – Sheremetyevo, Domodedovo and Vnukovo – were delayed or cancelled by midday, the *Moskva* news agency reported.

The attacks came ahead of Russia's most important secular holiday, Victory Day, which marks the anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany in the Second World War. Russian authorities have declared a unilateral ceasefire in Ukraine for Friday and Saturday.

Ukraine had responded to that with its own suspension of hostilities from midnight Tuesday. But Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Moscow disregarded the goodwill gesture and launched fresh attacks.

STAY ONE STEP AHEAD

Adding variety to your bowling arsenal is a must, reckons Krunal

K. MURALI KUMAR

Today, power-hitting is constantly evolving. The new-age batters coming in have an insane ability to clear the ropes with ease. As a bowler, I have realised that you have to add variety to your bowling arsenal. You must stay one step ahead of the batter. That is how bouncers and yorkers came into the process — Krunal Pandya.

CLINICAL SHOW

Cummins pleased with SRH's bowling effort against PBKS

NAGARA GOPAL

Punjab (Kings) are a really good side, they were number one coming into this. I thought the batters to get up to what we did was sensational. Then to close it out, no matter what the score is, bowling second against a side like that is always tough, but I thought we were quite clinical — SRH skipper Pat Cummins.

AREA OF CONCERN

Skipper Shreyas rues dropped catches after loss to Sunrisers

NAGARA GOPAL

It (target) was a bit too much because we dropped catches at the start. The wicket kept getting slower. They (Sunrisers Hyderabad) showed us how to win. I feel we got a fairytale start in the tournament. If we are going to continue with the same form, that's not going to help us — Punjab Kings captain Shreyas Iyer.

EXEMPTION

Australian players to stay back in IPL despite Pakistan ODI series

NAGARA GOPAL

Cricket Australia confirmed that its players will be allowed to fulfil their IPL 2026 commitments, granting them exemption from the three-match ODI series against Pakistan beginning May 30. The IPL league phase will end on May 24, and the final is scheduled for May 31. The Australians are scheduled to arrive in Islamabad on May 23.

Marsh, Prince excel as Super Giants end losing run

The opener slams 111 off just 56 balls as the home side ends up with 209 for thee in a game reduced to 19 overs a side; the pacer claims three as RCB falls short in pursuit of a revised target of 213

IPL-19

Aditya Padinjat
LUCKNOW

Lucknow Super Giants kept its IPL 2026 playoff hopes alive with a thrilling nine-run win over Royal Challengers Bengaluru at the Ekana Stadium here on Thursday.

The victory was set up by a brutal century from Mitchell Marsh, who scored his second IPL ton off just 49 deliveries, as well as Prince Yadav's inspired spell.

Rain breaks

After LSG was put in, play was interrupted by the first of three showers just nine balls in. That window was enough for Marsh (111, 56b, 9x4, 9x6) to announce himself with a towering six over long-off against Josh Hazlewood, and he lost no rhythm thereafter.

Cashing in

The Ekana Stadium has been bowler-friendly but Thursday's track was more placid. The powerful Australian cashed in, taking toll of the fuller lengths and width provided by the RCB bowlers to particularly devastating effect through the offside.

Star turn: Marsh put the RCB bowlers to the sword en route his second IPL ton before Prince struck vital blows, including the big wicket of Kohli. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

After Marsh's pyrotechnics had come to a close, Nicholas Pooran and Rishabh Pant brought the innings to a close on 209 for three in 19 overs with a flurry of boundaries.

RCB, chasing a revised target of 213, started poorly, thanks to Prince, who went from zero to hero. Four deliveries into the opening over, he fumbled a regulation take at deep third, but recovered spectacularly to hold onto a swirling miscue off Jacob Bethell's bat next ball.

Taking the new ball from the other end, he then ended Virat Kohli's stay after just two balls with a peach that pitched outside off before nipping in to take off-stump.

RCB captain Rajat Patidar (61, 31b, 3x4, 6x6) and Devdutt Padikkal mounted a resistance of 95, but the golden arm of Prince broke through again, inducing Padikkal to chip a return catch before bouncing out Jitesh in the same over.

The double strike led Pant to gamble on introducing Shahbaz Ahmed, and it paid dividends as Patidar holed out to long-off.

Tim David, Krunal Pandya, and Romario Shepherd were able to get the game down to 20 runs from the final over.

Digvesh does the job

But Digvesh Rathi held his nerve to get LSG over the line for its first home win of the season. It also ended a six-match losing streak.

SCOREBOARD

LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS
Mitchell Marsh c Bethell b Hazlewood 111 *(56b, 9x4, 9x6)*, Arshin Kulkarni c Patidar b Krunal 17 *(24b, 1x4)*, Nicholas Pooran c Krunal b Rasikh 38 *(23b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Rishabh Pant (not out) 32 *(10b, 4x4, 2x6)*, Aiden Markram (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (lb-5, w-5): 10; Total (for three wkts. in 19 overs): 209.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-95 (Arshin, 9.2 overs), 2-165 (Marsh, 16.1), 3-194 (Pooran, 18.2).

RCB BOWLING
Bhuvneshwar 4-0-34-0, Hazlewood 4-0-49-1, Krunal 4-0-31-1, Rasikh 4-0-53-1, Suyash 2-0-21-0, Shepherd 1-0-16-0.

ROYAL CHALLENGERS (Target 213)
Jacob Bethell c Prince b Shami 4 *(5b, 1x4)*, Virat Kohli b Prince 0 *(2b)*, Devdutt Padikkal c & b Prince 34 *(25b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Rajat Patidar c Markram b Shahbaz 61 *(31b, 3x4, 6x6)*, Jitesh Sharma c Pant b Prince 1 *(3b)*, Tim David **(Impact Player for Suyash)** c Digvesh b Shahbaz 40 *(17b, 4x4, 3x6)*, Krunal Pandya (not out) 28 *(16b, 2x4, 2x6)*, Romario Shepherd (not out) 23 *(15b, 3x4, 1x6)*; Extras (lb-4, w-8): 12; Total (for six wkts. in 19 overs): 203.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-9 (Bethell, 0.5), 2-9 (Kohli, 1.2), 3-104 (Padikkal, 10.1), 4-106 (Jitesh, 10.5), 5-112 (Patidar, 11.3), 6-158 (David, 15.3).

SUPER GIANTS BOWLING
Shami 4-0-33-1, Prince 4-0-33-3, Mayank **(Impact Player for Himmat)** 4-0-50-0, Digvesh 4-0-50-0, Shahbaz 3-0-33-2.

Toss: Royal Challengers.
Player-of-the-Match: Marsh.
Super Giants won by nine runs (DLS method).

Next assignment

LSG: May 10 vs. CSK Chennai, 3.30 p.m.

RCB: May 10 vs. MI Raipur, 7.30 p.m.

Capitals and Knight Riders in must-win territory

Vivek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

In theory, Delhi Capitals and Kolkata Knight Riders are still in the race to qualify for the playoffs of IPL-19. But for mathematical possibilities to translate into concrete reality, a flawless streak will have to be strung together until the very end of the league phase. With the two beleaguered units facing off at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, only one of them will be in control of its destiny at the conclusion of Friday's battle.

This is nearly do-or-die territory, with DC languishing at seventh spot with eight points in 10 matches and KKR, which has played a game fewer, at eighth with seven points. The Knights have already won three games at a stretch, but their abominable run at the start of the competition is to blame for their current predicament.

Much of how the contest pans out, of course, will depend on the nature of the surface. While the turf at the Kotla has lent itself to high-scoring affairs in recent years, the 2026 edition has required a more nuanced reading. The pitches have exhibited divergent characteristics, resulting in DC being just as unsure as the opposition of what to expect from the 22-yard strip.

Seeking inspiration: Axar will hope Rizvi steps up to the plate as DC battles to keep its season alive. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Today's match

Delhi, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: **34**
DC **15** | KKR **19**

PREVIOUS MEETING
KKR won by **14 runs**, 2025

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 & JIOHOTSTAR

For Capitals, K.L. Rahul will have to shoulder the responsibility at this critical stage. On a difficult deck against Chennai Super Kings, the 34-year-old let himself down with an injudicious stroke off Akeal Hosein. With the ball, the scrutiny will be on left-arm wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav, whose seven wickets at an economy of 10.36 are well below his usual standards. Axar Patel, too, has to step up as skipper and all-rounder.

In the KKR camp, Rinku Singh and Sunil Narine have been a cut above the rest. For the three-time champion to stay afloat, a few more will have to find their A-game.

Just waiting for my opportunity: Miller ahead of milestone

Vivek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

In the midst of his 15th season in the IPL, David Miller is one game shy of 150 appearances. It may take the South African batter some time to reach that mark, given that the 36-year-old hasn't featured in Delhi Capitals' last two matches.

With the team management moving towards two overseas quicks, Miller has had to make way.

"Not being able to play is frustrating as a player. You always want to play every game, but such is the structure of the IPL with only four overseas players. The combination becomes really important for the team," Miller acknowledged on the eve of the clash against Kolkata Knight Riders at the Arun Jaitley Stadium.

"I've been around, this is not my first IPL. To give feedback to the rest of the squad, always be positive and give what I can towards the team remain really important for me. And then just waiting for my opportunity to come again. If it does come, I just want to remain ready and prepare really well," the southpaw stated.

Miller... one short of 150 games. FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

For Miller as well as the franchise, the 19th edition has been a mixed bag.

"When we've batted, we've lost wickets in clusters. It puts us into positions where we've got to rebuild. Then, there are moments where we've dropped a couple of catches that potentially could have changed the outcome.

"We've spoken that it's all of us together. Win or lose, we're together. There's no pointing any fingers at all with what we've done," Miller said.

Nitish — the all-round glue holding SRH together

Anirudh Velamuri
HYDERABAD

What binds Sunrisers Hyderabad's explosive batting engine and a bowling attack that has stubbornly held its own on unforgiving surfaces? Nitish Kumar.

Perhaps the only player who truly straddles both worlds. His absence against Kolkata Knight Riders showed how vital he is to SRH's balance.

So when the 22-year-old returned from illness against Punjab Kings, the relief within the camp was palpable.

SRH's top-order has understandably grabbed the spotlight. Abhishek Sharma, Travis Head, Ishan Kishan and Heinrich Klaasen have piled up a combined 1,739 runs. On the bowling front, Eshan Malinga leads the chart with 12 wickets, followed by Sakib Hussain (10).

And then there is Nitish – quietly occupying the space between those departments, yet central to both. His 222 runs have come at 166.91, while his seven wickets have arrived at an economy of 10.39 in a tournament where bowlers have been sent on leather hunts.

Against Kings, he once again underlined his value. A 13-ball 29 provided SRH added momentum before he returned to dismiss the seemingly unstoppable Prabhsimran Singh. He ended the night with impressive figures of 2-0-11-1.

Key player: Nitish has been central to SRH's fortunes. NAGARA GOPAL

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	10	**6**	4	0	**12**	1.234
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	10	**3**	7	0	**6**	-0.934

For all the debate around the Impact Player rule sounding the death knell for genuine all-rounders, Nitish has become a compelling counter-argument. SRH's title ambitions will rest on several pillars, but few may prove as crucial as him.

Nitish is the thread that quietly binds together a side built on explosive batting and relentless intent.

In a team filled with stars, Nitish has emerged as the balance it cannot afford to lose.

INBRIEF

Sinner demands 'respect' from Slams in prize money row

Jannik Sinner called on Thursday for Grand Slam tournaments to show tennis players respect in a row over prize money, but stopped short of calling for a boycott of the sport's major events. "It's more about respect. Because I think we give much more than we are getting back. It's not only for the top players; it's for all of us players. So I do understand players talking about boycott because it's somewhere we also need to start."

Defensive lapses, missed chances cost India dear

Defensive errors and lapses at crucial moments proved costly as India had a difficult start to its AFC Under-17 Asian Cup football campaign, suffering a 4-0 defeat against Australia in Jeddah on Wednesday.

The result: India 0 lost to Australia 4 (Luke Becvinovski 4, Max Court 29-pen, Luka Demuth 74, Henrique Oliveira 86).

Vinesh's return from retirement doubtful

Vinesh Phogat's return to competitive wrestling looks doubtful as the Wrestling Federation of India has raised doubts over her eligibility on the basis of a United World Wrestling regulation on retired athletes. The 31-year-old, who retired following the 2024 Paris Olympics, reversed her decision on Dec. 12, 2025. Vinesh got a notice from the International Testing Agency for missing an out-of-competition dope test on Dec. 18, 2025. "Any retired wrestler who wishes to return to competition shall announce it to UWW at least six months before and be available for doping tests during this period," says a UWW rule.

IOC lifts ban on Belarusians competing in the Olympics

The IOC on Thursday lifted restrictions on Belarusian athletes competing in the Olympics, although restrictions on Russian athletes remain in place.

Unstoppable: Dembele, right, caps off a sweeping counter-attack with the opening goal. AP

Dembele's early strike helps PSG edge Bayern

The holder largely succeeds in subduing the German giant's attacking threat, despite Kane's stoppage-time equaliser; the host loses cool over some first-half refereeing decisions

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Agence France-Presse
MUNICH

Holder Paris Saint-Germain set up a Champions League final against Arsenal after a 1-1 second-leg draw at Bayern Munich secured a 6-5 aggregate victory on Wednesday.

PSG exploded on the counter less than three minutes in and Ballon d'Or winner Ousmane Dembele put Luis Enrique's visitors ahead on the night and two goals up in the tie.

PSG largely succeeded in subduing Bayern's attacking threat, despite Harry Kane's stoppage-time goal.

On its return to Munich's Allianz Arena, the scene of its greatest triumph against Inter Milan in last year's final, PSG once again emphasised its excellence in a competition it coveted without success for so long.

The French giant will be the favourites to lift the trophy for a second successive season when it faces Premier League leader Arsenal on May 30 in Budapest.

The French giant is hoping to become only the second back-to-back winners since 1990, after Real Madrid.

Bayern was angered by some first-half refereeing decisions but was largely toothless in attack.

The six-time European champions has still not reached the final since beating PSG in the 2020 showpiece in Lisbon.

Both sides were playing their 52nd match of the season in all competitions – not even counting last summer's Club World Cup – but only the hosts looked weary.

So dangerous in the first leg, Bayern was surprisingly stodgy in attack, with Michael Olise in particular having an off night.

In the midst of a record-breaking season, Bayern's fourth defeat in all competitions will sting for a club set to wonder what might have been.

Both teams only made one change to their starting XIs compared to last week's spectacle in Paris.

Only PSG's was forced, with Fabian Ruiz in for the injured Achraf Hakimi.

Ruiz, starting his first European match since January, set Khvicha Kvaratskhelia down the left flank with an excellent through ball.

The Georgian latched onto the pass, blazed past his marker before cutting back for the perfectly placed Dembele to slam home.

The result (semifinal, second leg):
Bayern Munich 1 (Kane 90+4) drew with PSG 1 (Dembele 3) (PSG wins 6-5 on aggregate).

PSG's bull run

Enrique's side continues its march to the top with another stellar show

- **1** Paris Saint-Germain is the first French club to make successive Champions League (CL) finals. It is also the first Ligue 1 team to advance to three European Cup/CL title deciders
- **1** PSG is the first reigning champion to reach the summit clash since Real Madrid in 2017-18
- **3** The French powerhouse has entered the final for the third time since 2019-20
- **7** Kvaratskhelia has now scored or assisted in seven consecutive CL knockout fixtures
- **7** Bayern striker Kane's equaliser helped him extend his scoring streak in the elite club competition to seven matches
- **44** PSG's tally of goals during this CL campaign (16 matches), one short of the record set by Barcelona (1999-2000)

Glory beckons: Arteta is eyeing a first-ever CL title for Arsenal while Enrique hopes to guide PSG to a second straight triumph. AP, AFP

Master tacticians Arteta and Enrique lift Arsenal, PSG

Natalia Hannah Rice
CHENNAI

Mikel Arteta and Luis Enrique, two Spanish tacticians who have been on the rise, have set up a mouth-watering Champions League final contest. It's another reward for their grind over the years.

When Arteta arrived at Arsenal in 2019, the club looked directionless. Its football lacked structure, recruitment appeared reactive, and performances fluctuated wildly. His rival Enrique, in 2023, inherited a different problem at Paris Saint-Germain (PSG), a side that was stacked with individual brilliance but was often accused of lacking collective identity.

Years later, both managers have reshaped their teams with distinct philosophies.

Arsenal has become one of Europe's most tactically disciplined sides. Built on aggressive pressing, positional rotations and controlled possession, Arsenal plays with a clarity that mirrors its head coach's personality. Players are recruited not only for their talent, but because they are tactically compatible.

Enrique's task at PSG has been equally tough. For years, the French club's project revolved around superstar forwards and individual efforts. But Enrique has attempted to move away from that dependence, prioritising intensity, balance and collective belief. Since the 55-year-old's takeover, PSG has been attacking quicker and defending with greater organisation than in the seasons that preceded.

What could make the CL title decider compelling is not merely the quality on the pitch but the ideological imprint both bosses have left on their clubs so far.

In Arteta and Enrique, Arsenal and PSG have found managers willing to demand patience, discipline and long-term commitment. The final, therefore, is also likely to be a clash of identities. It could be a reflection of the coaches who have spent years reshaping institutions until the football finally began to resemble their vision.

Their previous meeting ended in a 3-1 semifinal aggregate victory for PSG in 2024-25. Will Enrique outclass Arteta once again, or will the latter script history with Arsenal?

Indian women stun Korea, enter the recurve final

ARCHERY

Sports Bureau

The Indian recurve women's team, consisting of Olympians Ankita Bhakat and Deepika Kumari and rookie Kumkum Mohod, toppled a formidable Korea on its way to the final and assured the country of a medal at the Archery World Cup Stage-2 in Shanghai on Thursday.

The Indian trio defeated Uzbekistan 6-2 and Vietnam 5-4 before toppling top-ranked Korea5-1 in the semifinals.

India will meet host China in the final on Sunday.

The results: Recurve: Team: Men: India (B. Dhiraj, Tarundeep Rai, Yashdeep Bhoge) got a bye (first round), lost to Bangladesh 2-6 (second round).

Terrific trio: Ankita, Deepika and Kumkum rose to the occasion. WORLD ARCHERY

Women: India (Ankita Bhakat, Kumkum Mohod, Deepika Kumari) bt Uzbekistan 6-2 (first round), bt Vietnam 5-4 (shoot-off: 28-25) (quarterfinal), bt Korea 5-1 (semifinal).
Mixed: India (Ankita Bhakat, B. Dhiraj) got a bye (first round), lost to Brazil 4-5 (shoot-off: 19-19*, shot closer to centre) (second round).
Compound: Mixed team: India (Aditi Swami, Ojas Deotale) got a bye (first round), bt Hong Kong China 159-150 (second round), lost to USA 156-157 (quarterfinal).

Ajitesh along with lower-order leads Globe Trotters' recovery

FIRST DIVISION

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

Globe Trotters recovered from early setbacks to post 219 for seven against MRC-A at stumps on the opening day of the TNCA first division league final for the Raja of Palayampatti Shield at Gojan-B ground here on Thursday.

Opting to field, MRC reduced Trotters to 74 for three by lunch and continued to chip away with regular wickets through the middle session.

Composed knock

G. Ajitesh steadied the innings with a composed half-century (55, 78b, 7x4).

His knock helped Trotters rebuild after the shaky start and carried the side to 169 for six at tea.

Contributions from the lower-order ensured that the team crossed the 200-run mark by close of play.

For MRC, P. Saravana Kumar impressed with two for 55, while B. Aaditya claimed two for 44.

With three wickets still in hand, Trotters will look to add useful runs on the second morning before attempting to put pressure on the opposition batters.

The scores (final):
Globe Trotters 219/7 in 90 overs (G. Ajitesh 55) vs. MRC-A.
Toss: MRC-A.

Gukesh. FLICKR/GRANDCHESSTOUR

Gukesh holds So, keeps his hopes alive

Press Trust of India
WARSAW

D. Gukesh signalled that his preparations for the World championship are on track by first defeating his title challenger, Javokhir Sindarov, in the fifth round and then holding American Grandmaster Wesley So to a draw in the Super Rapid and Blitz event on the Grand Chess Tour.

The results (6th round):
Wesley So (USA, 9) drew with D. Gukesh (6); Alireza Firouzja (Fra, 4) lost to Hans Niemann (USA, 9). Fabiano Caruana (USA, 6) drew with Jan Krzysztof Duda (Pol, 6); Vladimir Fedoseev (Slo, 8) bt Radoslav Wojtaszek (Pol, 3). Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (Fra, 6) bt Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb, 4).

LIVE TELECAST

Bangladesh vs Pakistan: 1st Test, day 1, FanCode, 9.30 a.m.

ISL: Sony Sports Ten 2 & FanCode, 5 p.m,

IPL: Star Sports Ten 1 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.

Bundesliga: Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 12 a.m. (Saturday).

AROUND THE CITY

Devaraj impresses for United in losing cause

United CC off-spinner M. Devaraj produced an impressive spell of five for 44, but his effort went in vain as Jaya Education Group registered a convincing 69-run victory in the TNCA-Tiruvallur DCA fourth division qualifier-2 match on Thursday.

In the 21st Lucas TVS Tiruvallur DCA trophy Group-B clash, CPCL thrashed India Japan Lighting by eight wickets, thanks to Haridass' five-wicket haul (5/20).

The scores:
IV-div (qualifier-2): Jaya Education Group 186/9 in 30 overs (M. Gowtham 46, S. Sridharan 64, M. Devaraj 5/44) bt United 117/8 in 30 overs (V. Dinesh Kumar 3/20).
21st Lucas TVS Tiruvallur DCA Trophy Group-B: India Japan Lighting 89 in 17.4 overs (M. Haridass 5/20) lost to CPCL 91/2 in 10.5 overs (B. Ganesh Kumar 44 n.o.).

Garnet emerges third division champion

The TNCA third division league championship concluded with Garnet CC emerging as the overall champion after defeating Rising Stars CC by four wickets in the promotion playoff match for the CR Pattabhiraman Shield.

Garnet had earlier dominated the third division 'B' Zone for the G. Parthasarathy Shield, winning all 11 of its league matches to finish on top with 44 points.

Singam Puli CC secured second place with eight wins from 11 matches and 32 points.

Triumphant: Garnet CC which won the overall TNCA third division league championship.

Haridass (CPCL, 5/20); Devaraj (United, 5/44).

Lishan (SJCA, 109); Viswajith (LMCA, 139 n.o.).

In the third division 'A' Zone for the CR Rangachari Shield, Rising Stars finished as table-topper after winning nine of its 11 matches and ending with 36 points.

National RC also won nine matches and finished with 36 points but had to settle for second place.

Meanwhile, in the relegation play-off, Aruna CC defeated Perungalathur CC by four wickets, resulting in Perungalathur's relegation to the fourth division for the forthcoming season.

The scores: Rising Stars 251 in 47.3 overs (B. Swadesh 67, N. Karmegam 57, V. S. Varun 50, S. Boopalan 4/37) lost to Garnet 253/6 in 44.3 overs (R. Vivek 67, T. Kapil 45, S. Adityanathan 51, A. V. Abilash 34 n.o., Rohan Ravi Bhutra 3/36).
Relegation Playoff Match: Perungalathur 226/9 in 50 overs (G. Rajesh 42, A.K. Nitin 36, P.S. Nirmal Kumar 3/40, R. Adithya 3/53) lost to Aruna 228/6 in 41.2 overs (Sanjay Venkateshwar 59, G. Gourav Sharma 34, R. Krishna Moorthy 37).
Relegated teams: TI Cycles S & RC (III-A), Fox Trotters CC (III-B) & Perungalathur CC (III-A).

Lishan's ton lights up SJCA's win

S. Lishan's 109 powered SJCA to a huge 154-run win over PSCA in the u-12 category of the 20th Freyer International Logistics LMCA Trophy on Thursday.

In the u-16 clash, A.L. Viswajith's unbeaten 139 guided LMCA to a comfortable eight-wicket victory over SJCA.

The scores: U-12: GFCA 183/2 in 25 overs (Kushal 68, Dheeraj 97) bt I Intensity 93 in 19 overs.
SJCA 267/4 in 25 overs (Lishan 109, Mohit 50, Aaryan Rao 50) bt PSCA 113 in 24.1 overs.
I Intensity 92/9 in 25 overs lost to SPRCA 93/0 in 9.1 overs (S. Navish 56 n.o.).
U-14: GFCA 135/6 in 25 overs (M.S. Sudheep Shivanand 32, M. Humesh 57) bt I Intensity 77 in 22.1 overs (S.A. Kavin Roger 3/9).
SJCA 210/7 in 24.4 overs (T. Siddeshwar 50, Aaryan Rao 35, B. Pranav 50) bt PSCA 146/8 in 25 overs (A.R. Dharmik Shanmanth 42).
Gupta 124 in 24.4 overs (V. Jai Kavin 31, Gowshikan Sathish 3/25) lost to I Intensity 125/2 in 17.1 overs (V. Kaushik 34, Rethish Sathish 58 n.o.).
U-16: I Intensity 203/8 in 25 overs (Gowshikan Sathish 36) bt LMCA 119 in 18 overs (Sai Devesh 31).
SJCA 210/4 in 25 overs (Dhairya Malhotra 62, P.R. Krishna Badrinath 69) lost to LMCA 213/2 in 23.2 overs (A.L. Viswajith 139 n.o., Aariv Jain 38).

Thirunavukarasu and Tamil Selvan on top

The pair of Thirunavukarasu and Tamil Selvan finished first with 65.80%, while Lakshman and Uma Maheshwari (64.77%) and Jaishankar and Maya Iyer (63.07%) finished second and third respectively in the IIT Alumni Open Bridge tournament recently.

ENGAGEMENTS

Cricket: TNCA first division multi-day (final), MRC-A vs Globe Trotters, 9.30 a.m., Gojan-B.

From the doldrums to the top, Sunrisers' stunning rise

The 2016 champion, which began IPL 2026 with three defeats in its first four outings, has embarked on a fabulous run that has netted them six victories on the bounce; Nitish's all-round efficacy is a much under-rated but massive contribution to the franchise's impressive performances

NAGARA GOPAL

R. Kaushik

A disappointing first fortnight, a spectacular three and a half weeks thereafter. It's been a stunning turnaround for Sunrisers Hyderabad, the 2016 champions who began IPL 2026 with three defeats in their first four outings, but have since embarked on a fabulous run that has netted them six victories on the bounce.

What makes their revival even more special is the fact that they have seamlessly embraced a change in captaincy too, with Pat Cummins effortlessly slipping back into the role he has performed with aplomb in the past. Well before the start of this season, it was evident that Australia's Test and One-Day International skipper would miss the early part of IPL 2026, recovering as he was from a back injury that restricted his participation to just one Ashes Test in the Australian summer and forced him out of the T20 World Cup, where Australia crashed out in the first round following defeats to Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka.

Kishan's second coming

With Cummins guaranteed to miss the initial few matches of the tournament, the Sunrisers management bestowed the captaincy on Ishan Kishan, a late entrant to the franchise but clearly establishing his leadership credentials in no uncertain terms. His own career at a crossroads until a year and a half back, Kishan took charge of the Jharkhand team in the domestic season gone by. Not only that, he masterminded a wonderful run in the 20-over Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy that culminated in his state emerging triumphant in the tournament for the first time. The icing on the cake? A century by Kishan himself in the title round.

Such were the numbers he stacked up during that tournament that India were compelled to turn to him just before they announced their squad for the defence of the T20 World Cup, won in Bridgetown under Rohit Sharma in June 2024. Finally acknowledging their mistake in trying to resurrect Shubman Gill's patchy T20I career, Ajit Agarkar's selection panel decided it was time to part ways, even if only temporarily, with India's Test and ODI leader.

Out went the call to Kishan, the final evidence that he was deemed to have served penance for disobeying the BCCI diktat and refraining from playing domestic cricket in the early part of 2024. Kishan was stripped of his central contract for his temerity; that he was now being considered as one of the key batting cogs at the World Cup was a shot in the arm for the little wicketkeeper-batter, who played his part in India becoming the first team to win the World Cup in the shortest format on home turf.

SRH placing faith in Kishan was an extension of the BCCI recognising his worth, though Kishan's captaincy career with his new franchise got off to a rocky start. Despite a whirlwind 80 in the tournament opener before his innings was halted in full flow by a screamer from Phil Salt, Kishan found himself on the losing side as defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru hunted down a target of 202 with consummate ease. Victory in the next outing, at home against Kolkata Knight Riders, was cancelled out by consecutive losses to Lucknow Super Giants and Punjab Kings as Hyderabad found themselves in the doldrums, their power-packed batting line-up let down by the munificence of the bowling in which old warhorses Harshal Patel and Jaydev Unadkat no longer posed the same threat with their variations as they had in the past.

Debutants' dazzle

With their campaign hanging from the slenderest of threads and Cummins still some distance away from returning to match play, Hyderabad worked the changes, investing in uncapped Indian quicks. At the very first time of asking, they struck gold with debutants Praful Hinge and Sakib Hussain running amok against the formidable Rajasthan Royals top order at their Uppal base in Hyderabad. Hinge became the first bowler in the history of the competition to take three wickets in the first over of a match - needless to say, also the first debutant to pick up three scalps in his very first over - on his way to a four-wicket haul. Sakib followed suit with four wickets of his own as Rajasthan were swept aside by a mile, kickstarting a run that has made the Hyderabad outfit one of the frontrunners for a playoff berth.

Hinge's three first-over victims were Vaibhav Suryavanshi, the 15-year-old prodigy who courted a golden duck, Dhruv Jurel and South African Lhuan-dre Pretorius. Sakib had Jaiswal caught at the deep third-man fence in the second over as both unheralded quicks justified the faith of the leadership group. It was just the tonic the southern team required to rejuvenate a flagging run; with the rest of the bowling group led by Sri Lankan Eshan Malinga holding its own, left-arm wrist-spinner Shivang Kumar finding life in the fast lane to his liking and Cummins showing that he was never really away despite missing the first eight matches, Hyderabad have ticked over like a well-oiled machine.

It will be no exaggeration to place the credit for the dramatic upswing in fortunes at the feet of the bowling group, in which Nitish Kumar too has been a vital contributor. In the off-season, Nitish worked assiduously on his bowling, working on getting his pace up and embracing greater consistency in his sessions with Steffan Jones, a specialised pace coach. The results are there for all to see; the all-rounder has been used in various capacities, including as a new-ball operator, and he has responded to every challenge with a great heart and no mean exhibitions of skill. Hyderabad have become primarily a pace-heavy bowling unit, not unlike many others in the IPL for whom spin has become a secondary suit, and with all the parts ticking over nicely, they are reaping handsome rewards as the competition hurtles towards the business end.

Fearsome batting unit

If hardly a word has been written so far about the munificence of batting riches that Hyderabad boast, it's almost a back-handed compliment because so many have come to take their batting might almost for granted. In Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head --- TraviShek, as they are called - they have arguably the most destructive opening pair of the tournament. They were the first to buck the oft-touted significance of having a left-right combination at the top. The two left-handers complement each other superbly, instinctively knowing when the other is in the mood and backing off just that little without trying to compete with their partner for impact and effort. Rather than competing with one another, they support and feed off each other. Abhishek is an acknowledged slayer of spin without being too far behind when it comes to taking on pace, while Head is a marauder at the top of the order, though he hasn't been at his absolute best this season.

In recent games, the Australian too is showing signs of rediscovering top touch, which isn't the best news for the other teams in the fray that lie ahead of Hyderabad. Following this destructive left-handed tandem is a third left-hander in Kishan; between them, this trio has scored more than 1,200 runs already this season, with Head's not unimpressive 174.39 the least of the three strike-rates. Abhishek, who has 43 fours and 36 sixes, is striking at 210.17 and Kishan at 186.75; there is no more dangerous top-three in the tournament, and it is showing no signs of slowing up.

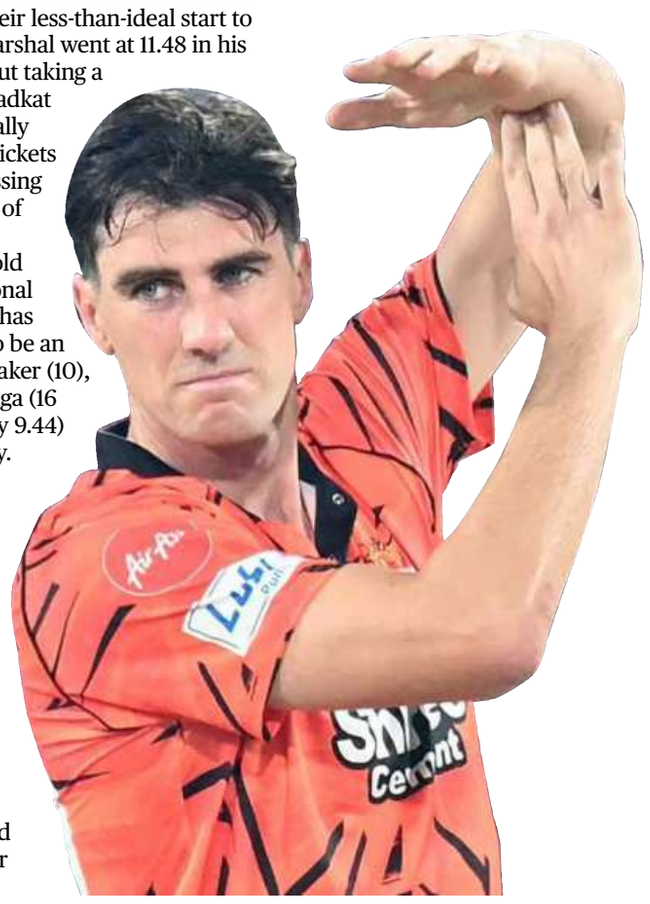
Add the wonderfully strokeful South African Heinrich Klaasen to the mix, and we get a line-up better than the best in the business. You'd think someone with 475 runs from 11 innings (Abhishek) would be on top of the run-making charts, at least as far as the franchise is concerned, but you'd be wrong in this instance. Klaasen, the gifted right-hander whose season began somewhat scratchily but who is now striking the ball as well as anyone else, has an astonishing 494 runs at a team-high average of 54.88. He is *only* striking at 157.32, which is quite a handful in normal course, but that relatively low strike-rate compared to the three batters above him is offset by his supreme consistency, which has already netted him five half-centuries.

Hyderabad have also been able to eke out meaningful and impactful runs down the order from Nitish, who has scored his 222 runs at a strike-rate of 166.91. His all-round efficacy is a much under-rated but massive contribution to his franchise going to the top of the table after its seventh win from 11 games - he also has seven wickets against his name - and singles out Hyderabad as the team to look out for, and beat, as the race for a place in the top four intensifies, especially after a hat-trick of losses for once high-flying Punjab Kings, who suddenly have embarked on a downward spiral.

Opinion has remained divided on the role of momentum in the 20-over game. Many feel that once a team gets on a roll, it becomes difficult to stop, a view endorsed by those who are on a winning streak. Others, like Punjab who go from one defeat to another, feel that momentum is overrated and that it all boils down to how one executes their skills on a given day. There is no definitive answer on which opinion is more correct than the other. If you ask Hyderabad, one suspects, they will talk in generic terms, talking about taking it one match at a time, about not getting carried away by past results and insisting that past victories will have no bearing on future outcomes. That's perhaps a sanguine way of looking at things.

Especially with the shake-up of their bowling attack, Hyderabad have showcased the courage and bravery required to be successful in this format. Some might say their hand was forced in a way, following their less-than-ideal start to the campaign. Harshal went at 11.48 in his four bowls without taking a wicket, while Unadkat was only marginally better, his four wickets somewhat redressing an economy rate of 10.90. Hinge has blown hot and cold since his sensational debut, but Sakib has proved himself to be an effective wicket-taker (10), backing up Malinga (16 wickets, economy 9.44) quite wonderfully.

They say that batters win matches and bowlers win tournaments. Hyderabad have both disciplines ticking over beautifully. Who knows, maybe this is the year Cummins (and Kishan) emulate David Warner and take them to their second crown.



THE GIST

- What makes SRH's revival even more special is the fact that they have seamlessly embraced a change in captaincy too, with Pat Cummins effortlessly slipping back into the role he has performed with aplomb in the past
- The Sunrisers placing faith in Ishan Kishan was an extension of the BCCI recognising his worth, though the captaincy career with his new franchise got off to a rocky start
- Hyderabad have become primarily a pace-heavy bowling unit, not unlike many others in the IPL for whom spin has become a secondary suit, and with all the parts ticking over nicely, they are reaping handsome rewards as the competition hurtles towards the business end

Why are fathers missing in reproductive health interventions

A father's lifestyle, diet, exercise, exposure to stress and other factors, can programme the next generation, influencing traits in their children; yet, men are barely involved in reproductive health programmes in India; under the RMNCH+A program, male involvement remains limited to the supplementation of iron tablets to adolescent boys

C. Aravinda

India's Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCH+A) programme has steadily reduced maternal mortality, neonatal deaths, and childhood mortality over the past three decades. Success is undeniable, when measured by survival. Yet, a quieter concern is surfacing in clinics and epidemiological data. Many children appear more vulnerable to recurrent infections, metabolic disturbances, and reduced physical robustness. The question is no longer about survival alone, but also about the biological quality of that survival. Increasingly, scientists are beginning to suspect that something fundamental may be missing in how we understand the inheritance of traits from parents.

New findings: In India, there is no structured focus on paternal preconception health, no systematic screening for lifestyle risks among prospective fathers, and minimal emphasis on environmental exposures that may affect sperm quality. GETTY IMAGES

Missing fathers

Reproductive health within the health system has traditionally focused almost exclusively on mothers. Antenatal care, maternal nutrition, and institutional deliveries form the core of national programmes. Fathers, in contrast, have largely remained outside the biological narrative. Emerging scientific evidence now suggests that this omission may not be trivial. A father's diet, lifestyle, exposure to toxins, stress and environment – long before conception – may influence the biology of the child in ways we are only beginning to understand. This shifts the conversation we need to have from a mother-centric model to a more inclusive, bi-parental understanding of health transmission.

The traditional model of reproduction is straightforward. The ovum contributes maternal genetic material, and the sperm delivers the paternal genome. The fusion of these two forms is a zygote, which develops under the guidance of DNA. In this framework, the father's role is limited to the transmission of DNA. His lifestyle choices (including whether he exercised, smoked, or lived in polluted surroundings) were believed to have no bearing on what was passed on. For over a century, this model was reinforced by August Weismann's idea of the blood-testis barrier, which held that environmental influences cannot affect germ (sperm and egg) cells. According to this view, a man's lifestyle, whether healthy or harmful, would not influence the sperm in a way that could be passed on to the next generation. The sperm was seen as a passive carrier of DNA, insulated from the external environment.

This assumption began to weaken in the early 2010s, when studies demonstrated that paternal exposures such as poor diet, alcohol consumption, and environmental toxins could influence offspring traits. These traits were not encoded in DNA changes, but appeared to be transmitted through epigenetic mechanisms. Small molecules, particularly RNA fragments in sperm, were identified as carriers of such information. These molecules could regulate gene expression in early embryos, effectively transmitting information about the father's environment without altering the genetic code itself. This discovery marked a shift in biology, suggesting that inheritance is more dynamic than previously believed. However, one key question remained unanswered: how exactly are these signals transmitted, and how do they shape the child's biology?

New evidence

A recent study published in *Cell Metabolism* by Chinese researchers adds an important layer to this evolving story. In this study, male mice that underwent structured treadmill exercise for eight weeks produced offspring with significantly improved endurance and metabolic profiles. Quantitatively, these offspring ran longer and covered greater distances in treadmill tests, with statistically significant differences often exceeding 30% - 40% compared to offspring of sedentary fathers. Oxygen consumption measurements showed higher VO2 levels across light and dark cycles, indicating enhanced metabolic efficiency. Muscle analysis revealed a shift towards oxidative fibre types, with a notable increase in type I and type IIa fibres and a reduction in glycolytic fibres.

The most compelling contribution of the study lies in its proposed mechanism. The researchers demonstrate that paternal exercise alters the profile of sperm microRNAs, a class of small non-coding RNAs. These microRNAs are delivered to the oocyte at fertilisation and interact with early embryonic transcripts. The study suggests that microRNAs suppress nuclear receptor corepressor 1, a molecule that normally inhibits PGC-1α, a master regulator of mitochondrial function. By relieving this inhibition, the embryo is programmed towards enhanced oxidative metabolism and mitochondrial development. The study further strengthens this causal pathway by injecting sperm-derived small RNAs from exercised fathers into normal embryos, which then reproduced similar metabolic and endurance phenotypes in offspring. It suggests that these RNA molecules are not merely markers, but active agents of inheritance.

One of the most intriguing implications concerns how these molecular signals bypass the classical Weismann barrier. The study suggests that systemic physiological states, such as increased muscular PGC-1α activity during exercise, can influence the composition of small RNAs in sperm. While the exact transport mechanism remains unclear, it is hypothesised that circulating RNA fragments or vesicle-mediated transport systems may allow signals from somatic tissues to influence germ cells. In effect, the barrier is not absolute but selectively permeable to regulatory molecules, particularly small RNAs that can re-programme gene expression without altering DNA.

During fertilisation, the sperm does more than deliver DNA. It contributes a complex molecular cargo, including proteins and RNA fragments. These molecules interact with the oocyte cytoplasm and influence the earliest stages of embryonic development.

The study highlights that sperm microRNAs can act immediately after fertilisation, modifying transcriptional networks before the embryo begins its own gene expression. This early window appears critical, as small changes in gene regulation at this stage can lead to lasting physiological differences in the offspring.

Several uncertainties persist. The precise fate of these microRNAs after fertilisation is not fully understood. It remains unclear how long they persist, which genes they consistently target, and whether their effects extend beyond the first generation. Furthermore, the findings are based entirely on animal models, and extrapolation to humans must be done cautiously. Human reproductive biology is more complex, and environmental exposures are far more variable. There is also a limited understanding of dose-response relationships, that is, how much lifestyle change is required to produce measurable effects in offspring.

What needs to be done

Even though we still don't fully understand how a father's lifestyle influences his child's biology, what is increasingly clear is that it does. This understanding however, is yet to translate into policy action.

In India, under the RMNCH+A program, male involvement remains limited to the supplementation of iron tablets to adolescent boys. There is no structured focus on paternal preconception health, no systematic screening for lifestyle risks among prospective fathers, and minimal emphasis on environmental exposures that may affect sperm quality.

Addressing lifestyle factors such as physical activity, substance use, and environmental exposures among men of reproductive age may offer a low-cost, high-impact strategy to improve population health across generations. If these findings hold true in humans, the implications are profound.

(Dr. C. Aravinda is an academic and public health physician. The views expressed are personal. aravindaaiimsjr10@hotmail.com)

THE GIST

- Reproductive health within the health system has traditionally focused almost exclusively on mothers. Fathers, in contrast, have largely remained outside the biological narrative. Emerging scientific evidence now suggests that this omission may not be trivial
- A recent study published in *Cell Metabolism* by Chinese researchers showed that male mice that underwent structured treadmill exercise for eight weeks produced offspring with significantly improved endurance and metabolic profiles
- Addressing lifestyle factors such as physical activity, substance use, and environmental exposures among men of reproductive age may offer a low-cost, high-impact strategy to improve population health across generations

Wastewater surveillance revealed hidden COVID surges in Bengaluru

Afshan Yasmeen

Wastewater surveillance in Bengaluru closely tracked COVID-19 trends during the first Omicron wave, but later emerged as an important tool in identifying hidden surges that were not fully captured through routine clinical testing, according to researchers studying the city's sewage-based monitoring network.

A study published in *PLOS Global Public Health* by researchers from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), International Centre for Theoretical Sciences (ICTS) which is a part of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) and Tata Institute for Genetics and Society (TIGS) found that wastewater surveillance mirrored the rise in COVID-19 cases during the Omicron wave, though it did not provide an early warning of the surge. Researchers said viral loads detected in sewage and reported infections rose almost simultaneously during that phase, limiting its usefulness as a predictive tool. However, subsequent wastewater monitoring indicated that as clinical testing declined in later phases of the pandemic, sewage surveillance became increasingly valuable in identifying fresh waves of infection that may otherwise have gone underreported.

Four COVID-19 surges

Farah Ishtiaq, a researcher from TIGS who is one of the authors of the *PLOS* study, told *The Hindu* that Bengaluru experienced four distinct COVID-19 surges between December 2021 and April 2024. These included the BA.2.10 wave, followed by a mixed BA.2 lineage surge involving BA.4, BA.5 and BA.2.75 variants, then the XBB wave, and most recently the JN.1 surge.

"During the early phase, from December 2021 to June 2022, wastewater signals and reported clinical cases were closely aligned. That showed both surveillance systems were functioning effectively and capturing the spread of infection in the community," Dr. Ishtiaq said.

She said the situation changed from July 2022 to November 2023, when routine clinical testing declined substantially. Testing, she said, was often stepped up only after infections had already begun to rise. "That points to a reactive rather than proactive surveillance model. Wastewater monitoring, on the other hand, continued consistently and therefore became a more dependable indicator of community transmission," she said.

Close study: Wastewater monitoring can became a dependable indicator of community transmission. FILE PHOTO

Reflection of trends

According to Dr. Ishtiaq, these trends were also reflected in a separate study in *The Lancet*, which analysed weekly wastewater monitoring data from Bengaluru. The study found that during the early phase of the Omicron period, virus levels in sewage closely matched reported clinical cases, but later diverged as testing levels dropped. Researchers said sewage data clearly detected a major surge associated with the XBB variant in April 2023, followed by another rise linked to the JN.1 variant beginning in late December 2023. Both these waves were visible in wastewater trends but were not proportionately reflected in clinical case reporting or genomic surveillance data.

The findings, they said, underline the importance of maintaining multiple surveillance systems, especially once public testing intensity declines after major pandemic waves. Bengaluru was among the early Indian cities to establish systematic wastewater surveillance, beginning citywide monitoring in August 2021. Samples were collected from 26 sewage treatment plants (STPs), which together process a large share of the city's wastewater.

For the *PLOS* study, researchers mapped wastewater catchment areas to 198 administrative wards under the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, allowing comparison of viral load data from individual STPs with ward-level case counts. The analysis focused on November 15, 2021, to January 31, 2022, covering the first Omicron wave. Using statistical tools such as Pearson correlation and change-point analysis, researchers found strong correlation – often above 0.8 – between wastewater viral loads and case counts across most treatment plants, indicating that sewage surveillance can reliably track infection trends in real time. However, the study found no robust lead time that would allow authorities to anticipate outbreaks significantly before clinical cases increased. Apparent short leads were attributed to interpolation of weekly wastewater data rather than genuine advance warning signals.

Complementary tool

Dr. Ishtiaq said wastewater surveillance should be viewed as a complementary public health tool rather than a replacement for clinical surveillance. "By the time a strong signal appears in wastewater, it often means that a substantial number of people in the community are already infected. That is why routine clinical testing at sentinel locations remains essential for early detection and timely response," she said. She added that maintaining consistent surveillance even between waves would help cities respond earlier, prepare hospitals and reduce the impact of future outbreaks. The findings underline that while wastewater monitoring cannot substitute clinical case detection, it offers a crucial window into community transmission -particularly when routine testing systems weaken or public participation in testing declines.

(yasmeen.afshan@thehindu.co.in)

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Children hospitalised after having mid-day meals in Bihar school

150 + Children fell ill after allegedly consuming mid-day meals at a government school in Bihar's Saharsa district, with over 100 admitted to the district hospital and others shifted to a local health centre. Family members of some children claimed that a snake was found in the meal, but the authorities have not made any comment on it yet. PTI

Value of narcotic tablets seized near Nepal border in U.P.

1 in ₹ crores. Uttar Pradesh Police arrested three alleged interstate smugglers and seized banned narcotic tablets worth around ₹1 crore near the India-Nepal border in Maharajganj district during an anti-narcotics operation. The police said the trio had been active in the region for the past three months and used hired vehicles to transport the banned tablets. PTI

Ex-Rajasthan minister arrested in Jal Jeevan Mission scam probe

960 in ₹ crores. Rajasthan's Anti-Corruption Bureau arrested former minister Mahesh Joshi in connection with the alleged ₹960-crore Jal Jeevan Mission scam involving fraudulent tenders and forged completion certificates, with multiple officials and contractors already under investigation. PTI

Number of passengers handled by Kochi airport during 2025-26

1.14 in crores. Cochin International Airport handled more than 1.14 crore passengers during 2025-26, marking the fourth consecutive financial year in which it crossed the 10 million passenger milestone despite disruptions linked to airline operations and tensions in West Asia. The airport also recorded over 73,000 aircraft movements during the period. PTI

Suspected mastermind arrested in fake firms and hawala racket

3,200 in ₹ crore. The Uttar Pradesh Police arrested a man accused of masterminding a network of fake firms, forged documents and suspected 'hawala' transactions worth more than ₹ 3,200 crore, with investigators probing links to GST fraud and possible terror funding. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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

Scope of legal fiction in party mergers

Henry Maine called legal fiction an agency by which law adapts to changing societies. In the Indian context, a 1955 ruling delineating the scope of legal fiction, reaffirmed by the Supreme Court in March, sets limits that the law on defections has yet to absorb.

LETTER AND SPIRIT

V. Venkatesan

The law has a long-standing habit of pretending: that an adopted child is the natural child of the adoptive parents, that a registered company is a person capable of suing and being sued. Sir Henry Maine, in *Ancient Law* (1861), called the legal fiction one of three great agencies, alongside equity and legislation, by which law adapts to changing societies.

The device has not been universally welcomed; historically, jurists worried that fictions allowed judges to make law in disguise. Lon Fuller, in his Stanford monograph *Legal Fictions* (1967), laid down the modern test: a fiction is honest only when its falsity is openly acknowledged; once it is "taken seriously", once people begin to treat the pretence as fact, it loses its utility and becomes dangerous. A fiction is a tool, fashioned for a defined end, and works only within that end.

On legal fiction in India

In Indian constitutional law, the leading authority on this discipline is *Bengal Immunity Co. Ltd. vs State of Bihar* (1955), decided by a seven-judge Constitution Bench. The case concerned a Calcutta-based company that manufactured vaccines and sera and sold them to buyers in Bihar; Bihar sought to tax those sales by relying on a deeming clause then attached to Article 286(1) of the Constitution, which treated a sale as having taken place in the State where the goods were delivered for consumption. The Court rejected Bihar's argument, holding that the deeming clause served only to fix the location of a sale for one purpose and could not be stretched to override the separate constitutional bar on State taxation of inter-State trade. Acting Chief Justice S.R. Das laid down the formulation that has since governed: a legal fiction is created for a definite purpose, must be limited to that purpose, and must not be extended beyond its legitimate field.

In April, the Rajya Sabha Chairman accepted the merger of seven AAP MPs with BJP. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

A complementary discipline came from Lord Asquith of the House of Lords in *East End Dwellings Co. Ltd. vs Finsbury Borough Council* (1952): one must imagine the necessary consequences of the fiction, but must not let imagination "boggle" beyond them. The Indian Supreme Court adopted that formulation in *J.K. Cotton Spinning and Weaving Mills Ltd. vs Union of India* (1987), confining a deeming fiction in the Central Excise Rules to its stated purpose.

That this discipline remains current was reaffirmed on March 10, 2026, in *Registrar Cane Cooperative Societies vs Gurdeep Singh Narval* by the Supreme Court. The case concerned two sugarcane growers' cooperative societies, Bajpur and Gadarpur, whose villages had fallen partly in Uttar Pradesh and partly in Uttarakhand after the new State was carved out of Uttar Pradesh in 2000. Years later, a member of the Bajpur society argued that his society had automatically become a "Multi-State" cooperative society on the date of bifurcation by virtue of a deeming clause in Section 103 of the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002. Justices P.S. Narasimha and Alok Aradhe rejected the argument. The deeming fiction in Section 103 had a defined purpose: to govern societies whose stated objects extended to more than one State. It could not be extended to undo a completed reorganisation of societies whose objects were confined to a single State. The case was about cooperative societies; the principle it applied governs every deeming clause in every statute.

The merger of political parties

Among the deeming clauses of political consequence is paragraph 4(2) of the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution (on disqualification for defection). Paragraph 4 protects legislators when their original political party merges with another and two-thirds of the legislature party agree to it.

The merger of the original party is the substantive condition; the legislative threshold is the verifying count. Paragraph 4(2) provides that a merger "shall be deemed to have taken place if, and only if" the two-thirds is met. Read against the *Bengal Immunity* case, these words tell the adjudicator how to verify a merger that has happened in the original political party, not that the legislators' assent is itself the merger.

That distinction was settled, on a parallel clause, by a 2007 Constitution Bench in *Rajendra Singh Rana vs Swami Prasad Maurya*. The argument that a legislature-party threshold could itself satisfy the substantive event in the original party would, the Court said, render one limb of the clause redundant. The court rejected it, holding further that the Speaker has no independent power under the Tenth Schedule to recognise either a split or a merger. The Punjab and Haryana High Court applied this in *Speaker, Haryana Vidhan Sabha vs Kuldeep Bishnoi* (2011): legislators alone cannot effect a merger; the original political party itself must take the substantive decision.

Recent practice, however, has allowed distortions. The Bombay High Court (Goa Bench) has twice upheld merger orders based solely on a two-thirds resolution of legislators, in 2022 and January 2025; the latter is under challenge before the Supreme Court. In April, the Rajya Sabha Chairman accepted, by administrative decision, the merger of seven Aam Aadmi Party MPs with the BJP on the same reading. A disqualification petition by the AAP has been filed. *Bengal Immunity* and *Rana*, read together, would have arrived at the opposite conclusion.

The reason is doctrinal. A deeming clause read as constitutive ceases to be a fiction. It becomes a substantive grant of power: the power of a faction of legislators to declare a merger that the parent political party has not authorised. That is the danger Fuller named and acting Chief Justice Das addressed when he confined legal fictions to their definite purpose.

(V. Venkatesan is a journalist and legal researcher.)

THE GIST

- Among the deeming clauses of political consequence is paragraph 4(2) of the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution. It protects legislators when their original political party merges with another and two-thirds of the legislature party agree to it.
- The Bombay High Court (Goa Bench) has twice upheld merger orders based solely on a two-thirds resolution of legislators. In April, the Rajya Sabha Chairman accepted the merger of seven Aam Aadmi Party MPs with the BJP on the same reading.

How does Kerala plan to tackle oil spill hazards?

What prompted the drafting of the Oil Spill Contingency Plan? How will it help protect Kerala's coastline?

G. Krishnakumar

The story so far:

Kerala had witnessed two shipwrecks off its coast involving two separate vessels - MSC Elsa 3 and MV Wan Hai 503 - on May 25, 2025 and June 9, 2025 respectively. The incidents had raised a serious threat to the State's marine ecosystem and coastal environment. The container ship MSC Elsa 3 went down with 640 containers, including 13 with hazardous cargo and 12 with calcium carbide. A large quantity of pellets, also called nurdles, had washed ashore on the southern coast following the incident. It prompted the authorities to step up efforts to formulate an Oil Spill Contingency Plan (OSCP). The Kerala State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB), which was entrusted by the government to initiate the required measures, had awarded the work to a Bangalore-based firm. The agency submitted a report dated April 20, 2026 before the National Green Tribunal stating that the draft OSCP is ready.

Kerala has a coastal line of 590 km, and the entire coast is prone to oil spill disasters as one of the international oil transportation routes is adjacent to the State's coastal line. As per the terms of reference for preparing the OSCP, oil tankers and other ships visiting ports in the State pose a risk to the coastline areas, when they are involved in accidents. The proposal to prepare an OSCP was initiated in 2016 as part of a governmental review of the preparedness of major accident hazard units to handle chemical accidents. However, it got delayed due to various technical and financial hurdles. The scope of work included marine oil spills that occur within 12 nautical miles (24 km) of Kerala's coastline and riverine systems extending 40 km inland or till tidal effect is evident, whichever is greater.

What are the highlights of the OSCP?

It includes mapping the Environmental Sensitive Index of oil spills along the coast of Kerala and preparing response-focussed contingency plans. The framework will elaborate on the oil spill contingency planning guidelines, wildlife response plans, ship board pollution emergency plans and tactical oil spill booming/site response plans. It will also include guidelines for crisis management and marine emergency response plans. The OSCP will highlight mitigation measures to be initiated in the wake of an emergency, the responsibilities of various departments, oil spill risks and protection priorities, shoreline response operations, and administrative action for clean-up. It will identify areas involving operation of fishing boats and ships, and map environmentally vulnerable areas along the State's coast.

The OSCP will recommend a detailed response plan with chain of command, duties and responsibilities. It will have the contact details, list of all available resources to be pressed into service in an emergency, and the database of available machinery or equipment for clean-up operations. The Plan will highlight the steps to be taken before initiating the shoreline clean-up, including assessment of shoreline oil characteristics, on-site conditions, methods to be adopted and the scope of work required in each area as per the priorities. The KSPCB has stated that the OSCP will be prepared in accordance with the guidelines of the National Oil Disaster Contingency Plan (NOS-DCP) of 2015, 2018 and 2024.

What steps precede the final OSCP?

As per the KSPCB, the draft OSCP includes various aspects related to hydrodynamic, oil spill modelling, marine sensitivity index mapping and net environmental benefit analysis. It will be vetted by a committee of experts. The draft Plan will be submitted to the Indian Coast Guard – the central coordinating agency for combating oil pollution in the coastal and marine environment. The final OSCP will be published after receiving the required clearances.

THE GIST

- Kerala had witnessed two shipwrecks off its coast last year, raising serious threats to the State's marine ecosystem and coastal environment. It prompted the authorities to step up efforts to formulate an Oil Spill Contingency Plan.
- The framework will elaborate on the oil spill contingency planning guidelines, wildlife response plans, ship board pollution emergency plans and tactical oil spill booming/site response plans.

IN THE LIMELIGHT

How Attenborough's imagery hid a history of colonial harm

David Attenborough's legacy of bringing nature's beauty to millions is unparalleled. However, his choice of aesthetics over politics sustained colonial myths and obscured the violent realities of modern conservation

Vasudevan Mukunth

The British natural historian David Attenborough turns 100 today. It is likely no one has done more to make the non-human world more legible and loveable to mass audiences. Attenborough's career as a host, starting with *Zoo Quest* in 1954, spans seven decades and nine documentary series. His influence on how several generations of people worldwide perceive ecology and conservation is unparalleled.

Yet that is also what has made his work and his efforts to communicate it so troublesome.

David Attenborough stands with a floral sculpture of himself at Kew Gardens in London. AP

Moving animals out

Zoo Quest made Attenborough famous, especially his genuine curiosity, but it also showed colonialism-like extractivism in action. The BBC filmed in exotic locations around the world, where wild animals would be captured and transported to the London zoo. While Attenborough has since said the show's attitude would not be acceptable today, he also stopped short of acknowledging the post-war infrastructure of British cultural imperialism it benefited from.

The BBC and London Zoo were producing *Zoo Quest* for the metropolitan British public, using tropical countries as theatres of spectacle. What the show represented also mattered to the BBC's history as its attitudes were baked into the broadcaster's Natural History Unit and subsequent productions.

Attenborough's own (professional) longevity has exacerbated his flaws. Among others, the English journalist George Monbiot has criticised Attenborough for saying almost nothing about the ecological catastrophe intensifying around him for decades. At various points in his career, Attenborough was feted for showcasing the beauty of the natural world – but which he often framed in a way to make it seem pristine, untouched by the difficult realities of ecological decline and the human hand in it. For reasons including the BBC's longstanding aversion to advocacy and his personal temperament, Attenborough chose aesthetics over the politics of harm. He told *The Guardian* in 2019 that he made "natural history programs not because I was a rampaging proselytizer preaching about conservation" but because he liked "looking at animals and seeing what they do". But the thing with being the voice of the planet, so to speak, is that what you do not talk about can become what does not merit being talked about, and eventually what is not real.

Of people and tigers

The BBC Natural History Unit for a long time presented the natural world as a space apart from the one humans lived in and shaped. This idea is closely related to fortress conservation – a conservation paradigm that, in India and elsewhere, has been inhumane to Indigenous peoples and communities that depend on forests for their survival.

Among other 'features', fortress conservation holds that natural parks and sanctuaries must be free of human presence. However, researchers, scholars, activists, and members of forest-dependent communities have repeatedly proved that this requirement is a myth. These communities have played an important role throughout history by protecting these forests. Yet governments and forest departments have been fond of fortress conservation because it confers the ability to conserve with the instruments of bureaucratic authority and territorial control, with guns if needed.

The idea also has a parallel in some western models of conservation, which believe the wilderness must be 'defended' against, even violently, by the people who live there – and in the case of shows like *Zoo Quest*, these people were often Africans and Asians. It does not brook the possibility, indeed reality, that national parks in Europe often have working farms and towns, partly because Attenborough's documentaries poured enormous ideological work, even if they did not intend to, into sustaining the myth of the pristine natural. As the anthropologist Zoe Todd has said, Attenborough has been guilty of presenting the Anthropocene as a world shorn of the violence against Indigenous peoples.

In one show, *Seven Worlds, One Planet*, Attenborough said India's tigers have it harder than ever to raise families. This is partly true and that makes his statement doubly irksome. Independent India did not massacre tens of thousands of tigers and push them to the brink of extinction – but the British Raj did. Today, India's tiger populations face fragmented habitats, poaching, dwindling prey, disease, conflicts with humans, and the ravenous appetite of crony capitalism for natural resources. But India has also been striving to conserve the animal, with tiger populations expanding considerably since independence. Attenborough painted an incomplete picture, giving the impression that what he was showing people was all of it. Just like that, the supposedly clueless people in India were to blame for the tiger's plight rather than the forebears of his viewers back home.

In fact, many Indigenous peoples today also want to use land in non-traditional ways, and the overall tigers-versus-tribals debate is much less straightforward today.

Problem focus

Attenborough has also patronised the U.K.-based Population Matters charity for years and in many of his documentaries has emphasised population growth as an important, or even the principal, driver of ecological distress. The focus on population remains disturbingly vital to this day, particularly among conservation philanthropists. Many neo-Malthusian assumptions among environmental NGOs and government agencies are also being deepened by climate migration and human demographic pressure on agricultural land. But despite repeated exhortations to the contrary, the world's population growth rate has been dropping since the early 1960s, shortly after Attenborough launched his career.

On the other hand, a recent report from Oxfam and the Stockholm Environment Institute found that in the 25 years from 1990, the world's richest 1% emitted twice as much carbon dioxide as the poorest 50%. Which should rank consumption patterns and the habits of industrialised societies far higher than population growth on the list of contributions to climate change. Yet Attenborough has not clarified this.

Such ideologies often stem from the notion that the populations of Commonwealth countries are growing 'too fast' today, thus moving blame away from the colonists. But as before, when Attenborough said "humans have overrun the world", he furthered a deleterious idea and amplified it to millions of people without the proper context, and it did even more harm as it entered an information landscape primed by the anxieties of far-right ecological nationalism.

To be sure, Attenborough is not an ecofascist – only that he has seemed to be unaware of the great effects of what he was and was not saying at any time. He has never professed any political views even though environmentalism is deeply political. He told *The Guardian* in the same interview that he wouldn't risk getting banned from the BBC. But when your voice is the most trusted on the subject of the natural universe, and when you decline to name colonialism as a historical cause of biodiversity loss, you implicitly exonerate it. When you insist on speaking to an undifferentiated humanity – rather than one aware that a farmer in the Congo has done much less to harm the earth than an investment banker in the U.S. – your false equivalence only serves power.

Public backlash against fortress conservation is gaining an increasingly risible momentum and is bound to prevail, especially in Africa and South Asia, where the lines between conservation and land-grabbing are becoming clearer.

Stopping at wonder

To be fair, these criticisms are not exclusive to Attenborough: they have become the pathologies of conservation practices that have only just begun to interrogate themselves in good faith. Even in 2021, 50 countries came together to commit to the '30 x 30' initiative, to protect 30% of land and the oceans by 2030. It drew enthusiastic support from Attenborough but vehement criticism from Indigenous rights organisations for paving the way for a new wave of dispossession in the name of conservation.

Protected areas around the world, rather than in the Global South alone, are what they are today thanks to millennia of human stewardship as well, in particular that of Indigenous peoples. Mistreating these peoples leads to biodiversity loss. It is that simple, yet many mainstream conservation circles still think this a radical position and instead prefer Attenborough's sanitised aesthetics.

None of this diminishes Attenborough's other achievements. It is impossible to overstate the importance of his bringing the wild into the living rooms of people who may otherwise have never imagined a coelacanth swimming through an indigo sea or the mesmerising dance of birds against a twilight sky. Even the grief he voiced in the latter part of his career about what the world had lost in his own lifetime seemed sincere and meaningful.

Many wildlife biologists and ecologists have anecdotes about how they were inspired to get into their fields after watching Attenborough's documentaries. And they may have gone on to ask the questions that he never did. However, there is no reason to believe the vast majority of Attenborough's viewers were prodded in the same direction.

The author is grateful to conservation biologist Neha Sinha for her feedback.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

What is the meaning and origin of the idiom "skeleton in the cupboard"? (Sashidhara Nimbargi, Mysore)

The idiom, I understand, was popularised by the English novelist William Thackeray. The idiom itself is based on an earlier legend of a King trying to find someone who had no worries in the world. The story goes that a King wanted to find someone in his kingdom who was very happy; someone who didn't have problems of any kind. He sent many people from his court to find such a person. After a lot of searching, they found a lady who seemed to fit the description. When she was informed that she had been chosen as the one person in the entire kingdom who didn't have any problems, she took the men upstairs and opened a cupboard. Inside, there was a skeleton. She informed the men that the skeleton was that of her lover's. He had been killed by her husband in a duel. "I try", she says, "to keep my trouble to myself, but every night my husband compels me to kiss that skeleton."

When you say that you have a "skeleton in the cupboard" (or "closet", as the Americans call it), it means that something happened in the past which you and your family is trying to keep a secret. You and your family members are keeping the matter hidden because it is a great source of shame. Here is an example"

The local politician assured us there were no skeletons in the cupboard.

Is the following sentence correct? "...it should be the prerogative of the Government to decide from which branch the Secretary should come from."? (C. Selvamani, Bangalore)

The word "from" has been used twice, it should have been used only once. You could either say: ...from which branch the Secretary should come, or ...which branch the Secretary should come from.

What is the leather patch that is put around the eyes of a horse called? (K. S. Natrajan, Madurai)

The leather patches are called "blinkers". When these patches are fixed beside the horse's eyes, the animal is forced to look straight ahead; it cannot see what is happening at the sides. When you say that an individual wears blinkers, it means he has a limited view of something. He doesn't completely understand or know all aspects of a situation. Here are a few examples.

Satish prefers not to know about his friend's drug problems. He wears blinkers when it comes to that.

Mohan has blinkers on when it comes to politics.

Why do we call the front room of a house the "drawing room"? (Cedric Charles, Coimbatore)

In the old days, when guests were invited to dinner, the host and the guests had dinner in the dining room. Once dinner was over, the men remained in this room to have cigars and drinks. The ladies, on the other hand, withdrew to another room. The room that they went to was called the "withdrawing room". This was later shortened to "drawing room". So, the drawing room was actually a place which ladies retired to, so that men could smoke, drink, and presumably crack dirty jokes.

Published in The Hindu on July 25, 2000

Word of the day

Palpable: so intense as to be almost touched or felt

Synonym: tangible

Usage: *The grief in the village was palpable after the tragedy.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/ScdNO2/palpable

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈpælpəbəl/

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

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

On May 7, 2025, cardinals gathered for the conclave that elected Pope Leo XIV, reviving global fascination with one of the world's oldest and most secretive electoral traditions.

Prathmesh Kher

QUESTION 1
In which famous Vatican chapel is the conclave held?

QUESTION 2
What colour smoke signals that a new pope has been elected?

QUESTION 3
What title is given to the period when the papal throne is vacant?

QUESTION 4
What famous Latin announcement declares the election of a new pope?

QUESTION 5
What is the official residence where cardinals stay during a conclave?

Visual question: The present papal coat of arms bears the Latin motto "*In Illo uno unum*". What does this expression mean in English? PUBLIC DOMAIN

Questions and answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 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. **Ans: Vladimir Putin**

2. The birthday of an Indian polymath who wrote and composed the national anthems of two countries, possibly influenced a third as well. **Ans: Rabindranath Thakur**

3. Started as a radio repair business, this modest firm went on to pioneer major innovations in consumer electronics. Today, it is a multinational conglomerate involved in films, robotics, video games, finance and much more. Name the iconic Japanese company established in 1946. **Ans: Sony**

4. On May 7, 1954, French forces were defeated by Vietnamese troops at Dien Bien Phu. The battle was part of this war. **Ans: First Indochina War**

5. This famous 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 severe hearing loss. **Ans: Ludwig van Beethoven**

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 for this reason. **Ans: Because it was signed by a relatively low-ranking German officer and took place in France. The Soviets wanted a formal signing by a leading German general in capital Berlin**

7. On May 7, 1999, the U.S.-led NATO accidentally bombed the embassy of this country in Belgrade during the Kosovo conflict. **Ans: China**

8. This parliamentary confrontation beginning May 7, 1940, directly led to Winston Churchill replacing Neville Chamberlain as Britain Prime Minister. **Ans: The Norway debate**

Visual: Heads of key neutralist nations of the Non-Aligned Movement at a meeting in 1960. Identify the leader on the far right, who was born on May 7, 1892. **Ans: Josip Broz Tito**

Early birds: Sudhir Thapa | Pulkit Sathe | Dodo Jayaditya | Prem Nath Tiwari| Sonali Das