



**CRAMPED  
APARTMENTS IN OMR?  
OR BIGGER PLOTS  
IN THE SAME BUDGET?**

**MAKE THE RIGHT  
CHOICE!**

**LAUNCHING PHASE-1**  
**G SQUARE**  
**CRYSTAL**  
**KARAPAKKAM**  
**(500M OFF OMR MAIN ROAD)**

**Plots in a secured gated  
community at Karapakkam, OMR** | **₹54 L<sup>from</sup>  
(800 sq.ft)**

**Launch Price**  
~~₹6950/sq.ft~~

**Early Bird Price  
(For first  
7 bookings  
only)**  
₹6750/sq.ft

### WHY G SQUARE CRYSTAL?



**Close to upcoming  
Metro Station at Karapakkam**

**15 min from  
Tidel Park**

**3 min from  
Sholinganallur Jn.**

### MARKET PRICE

**Thiruvanmiyur  
(15 min)  
₹11500/sq.ft**

**Perungudi  
(4 min)  
₹8500/sq.ft**

**Sholinganallur  
(3 min)  
₹8300/sq.ft**

**Radial Road  
(3 min)  
₹8300/sq.ft**



\*T&C apply

RERA: TN/29/Layout/7684/2022 | www.rerath.gov.in

### SALIENT FEATURES

41 residential plots in a gated community spread across 1.4 acres

Plots ranging from 774 sq.ft to 1132 sq.ft

2 min from Thoraipakkam

5 years of free maintenance

24x7 CCTV surveillance

State-of-the-art infrastructure like blacktop roads and LED street lights

Essential amenities like water, gas, drainage, etc. can easily be obtained

Ready-to-construct villa plots

Expansive landscape

**89397 10003**

[www.gsquarehousing.com](http://www.gsquarehousing.com)

Project approved by:



**G SQUARE**  
GROUP  
YOUR PLOT. YOUR HOME. YOUR WAY.

## CRAMPED APARTMENTS IN OMR? OR BIGGER PLOTS IN THE SAME BUDGET?

MAKE THE  
RIGHT CHOICE!

## 44 REASONS TO BUY G SQUARE CRYSTAL

### LOCATION

- The only CMDA approved gated plot community project situated at Karapakkam spanning 1.4 acres with only 41 residential plots in the heart of OMR
- Thoraipakkam - Neelankarai Link Road construction is underway which is to make OMR and ECR more accessible to each other and this will appreciate land value in this region
- Premium plots in a prime location with proximity to employment opportunities, good asset appreciation, state-of-the-art road infrastructure, proximity to beaches at ECR and other entertainment venues
- Proximity to the IT/ITES hub of Chennai is a major appreciation stimulator
- Strategically positioned in the heart of the rapidly developing IT corridor of Chennai & close to areas like Adyar, Thiruvanmiyur, Sholinganallur, Perungudi, Thoraipakkam, Medavakkam, Velachery, etc.
- Public transport access nearby (Karapakkam bus stop is 2 min away).
- Approach road width towards the property is 30 ft.
- Educational institutions like Sankara Matriculation, Akshara Matriculation, Sacred Hearts Matriculation, Hope Fountain School, Hindustan International School, etc. are nearby
- Close to hospitals like Arun Hospital, Gleneagles Global Health City, Nanthini Hospitals, Apollo Cradle Hospitals, Swaram Hospitals, etc.

- Entertainment avenues are in proximity
- Various religious centres of worship are also nearby
- Upcoming metro station is 2 min away at Karapakkam.

### PRODUCT

- Only 41 plots spread over a 1.4 acres community consisting of residential spaces in a very posh neighbourhood in the city
- 2 mins from Karapakkam bus stop
- Road width within the property is 30 ft.
- Residential plots from 774 - 1132 sq.ft

### PRICE

- Situated in a posh neighbourhood for a reasonable price
- Affordable plots with easy access to major developed areas like Sholinganallur, Thiruvanmiyur, Perungudi, Adyar, Medavakkam, Velachery, etc.
- People opting for apartments have to settle for 65% carpet area and 30% UDS, whereas, with G Square Crystal, you can now completely own your villa and the land it is on at a more reasonable price
- Unapproved plots are sold at the same price whereas G Square Crystal is a CMDA approved plot

### FEATURES

- 5 years of free maintenance
- 24x7 CCTV security
- State-of-the-art infrastructure like blacktop roads and LED street lights

- Ready-to-construct villa plots
- Essential amenities like water, gas, etc. can easily be obtained
- Expansive landscape
- Potable bore water

### LEGALITIES

- CMDA approved
- RERA registered
- Clear parent documents and titles
- Free patta after registration
- Leading banks have approved the property
- Legal advice offered by leading lawyers
- Road gift deed is available
- Free from mortgages

### POST PURCHASE GUIDANCE FOR EASY VILLA CONSTRUCTION

- Villa design and elevation consultants
- Vaasthu compliance experts
- Floor planner to plan your space as per your requirement
- Consultants who will help with all villa construction related approvals
- Material procurement experts
- Consultants who specialise in landscape designing and execution
- The best interior designers who will also execute the same
- Consultants to help buy home appliances for the best price
- Teams that will organise and execute your Grahapravesam

### LAUNCHING PHASE - I



#### Launch Price

~~₹6950/sq.ft~~

#### Early Bird Price

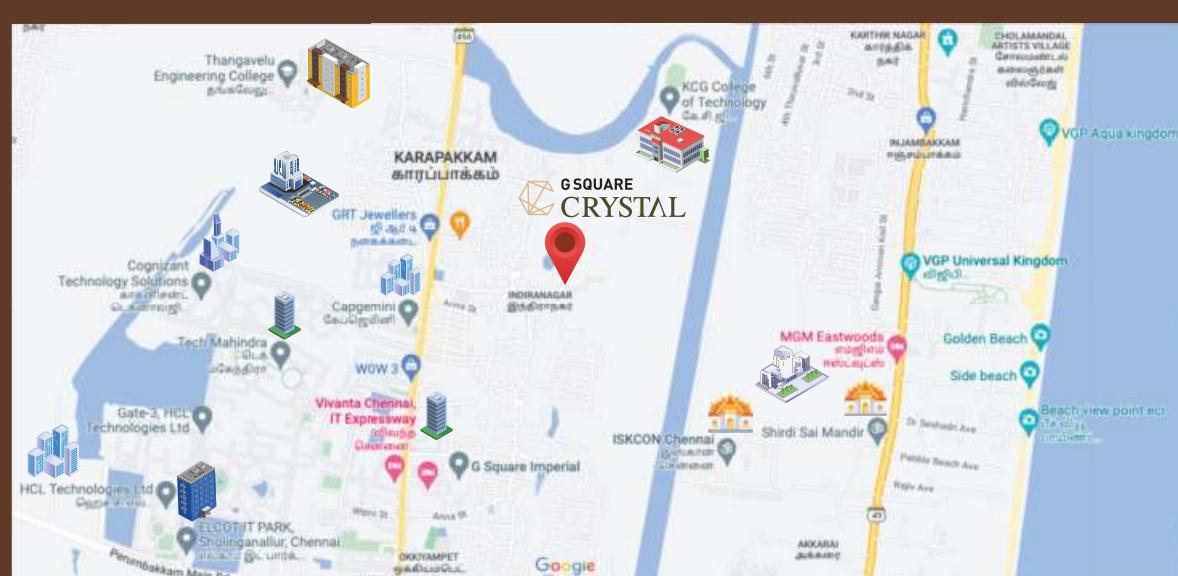
**₹6750/sq.ft**

(For first 7 bookings only)

#### Villa Plots from

**₹54 L**  
(800 sq.ft)

### LOCATION MAP



### WHY KARAPAKKAM IS THE DEVELOPMENTAL HOT SPOT?

#### PRESS ARTICLES



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ED conducts searches across the country in Delhi Excise Policy case  
page 10



21,000 score 100 percentile in maiden edition of CUET  
page 10



BJP to organise 16-day service camp to mark PM's birthday today  
page 12



Podoroska stuns Bouchard, continues dream run at Chennai Open  
page 13

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## NEARBY



Help medics from Ukraine, CM urges Modi

CHENNAI  
Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Friday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to allow students who returned from Ukraine to study in private medical colleges.

TAMIL NADU ▶ PAGE 5

Quality of free breakfast being checked: Minister

CHENNAI  
The Food Safety Department will monitor the quality of food supplied to students under the Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme, said Health Minister Ma. Subramanian on Friday.

CHENNAI ▶ PAGE 4

METROPLUS WEEKEND ▶ 8 PAGES

PROPERTY PLUS ▶ 8 PAGES



## At SCO meet, Modi and Sharif spar over transit trade access

PM flags energy, food crises due to COVID-19 and war

SUHASINI HAIDAR  
SAMARKAND

Better regional connectivity is only possible if members grant each other "full transit rights", Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday, referring to the refusal by Pakistan to give India transit trade access by land to Afghanistan and Central Asia.

Mr. Modi was speaking at the summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Heads of State here.

In a speech that was otherwise free from references to India's regional issues on terrorism with Pakistan and on territorial sovereignty with China, Mr. Modi called for greater cooperation in the Eurasian region and pointed to the "unprecedented" energy and food crisis arising from the twin issues of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine conflict. He also focused on the initiatives on manufacturing that India is willing to pilot in the next year, when New Delhi assumes the chair of the SCO and hosts the summit in mid-2023.

"SCO has an important role in developing reliable, resilient and diversified supply chains. For this, better



Clear stance: Prime Minister Narendra Modi attending an SCO meeting at Samarkand in Uzbekistan on Friday. ■ REUTERS

connectivity is necessary, but along with that, it is also important that we give each other full transit rights," Mr. Modi said at the SCO plenary session that also marked the first time he shared a forum in person with Chinese President Xi Jinping since the 2020 LAC stand-off and Pakistan's new Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

While Mr. Modi did not exchange words with Mr. Sharif or Mr. Xi at the publicly broadcast sessions, he stood next to the Chinese President during one of the photo ops for the SCO and observer and dialogue partners.

Later, all the leaders attended a lunch together hosted by Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, which was closed to media.

Speaking at the SCO meet, Mr. Xi congratulated India

for taking over the chair of the grouping and promised "China's support" to India in hosting the event next year. Significantly, both Mr. Xi and Mr. Sharif referred to the issue of terrorism, and the need to collectively fight the "menace" and "monster".

In his speech, Mr. Sharif, who focused on Afghanistan and the flood situation in Pakistan for most part, responded to Mr. Modi's remarks, calling for a more "structured" SCO approach to connectivity in the region, adding that "if there is connectivity, transit rights will automatically come".

India has developed Iran's Chabahar port as an alternative to Pakistan for the land route to Central Asia and Russia.

**FULL REPORT ▶ PAGE 11**

### Putin says he understands India's worries

SUHASINI HAIDAR  
SAMARKAND

Russia understands India's "concerns" over its war in Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin told Prime Minister Narendra Modi, promising to try and end the nine-month-old conflict and blaming the Ukrainian government for prolonging the crisis.

**FULL REPORT ▶ PAGE 11**

### Jaish chief in Afghanistan, says Bilawal

SUHASINI HAIDAR  
SAMARKAND

Denying any knowledge of Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Masood Azhar being in Pakistan, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto said the UN-designated terrorist was "in Afghanistan", a statement that directly contradicts a statement by the Taliban regime that placed Azhar in Pakistan.

**FULL REPORT ▶ PAGE 11**

## Ex-President named suspect in Sri Lanka Easter attacks

Sirisena asked to appear in Colombo court in October

MEERA SRINIVASAN  
COLOMBO

A Sri Lankan court on Friday named former President Maithripala Sirisena a suspect in a case pertaining to the 2019 Easter terror bombings, and directed him to appear in court in October.



Maithripala Sirisena

The magistrate court in Colombo's Fort area gave the orders in response to a private complaint filed by Fr. Cyril Gamini Fernando, a member of the National Catholic Committee for Justice to Easter Sunday Attack Victims, local media reported.

The magistrate court in Colombo's Fort area gave the orders in response to a private complaint filed by Fr. Cyril Gamini Fernando, a member of the National Catholic Committee for Justice to Easter Sunday Attack Victims, local media reported.

For more than three years now, Sri Lanka's Catholic

Church, and families of the victims of the gruesome serial blasts – that killed about 280 people and left hundreds injured – have been demanding justice.

In March, the Archbishop of Colombo, Cardinal Mal-

colm Ranjith, told the UN Human Rights Council that the incident was a "grand political plot".

**Lack of progress**  
Six months after the attacks, former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa ran for presidency promising national security, and won with a thumping majority.

Members of the Catholic Church and Cardinal Ranjith backed Mr. Gotabaya in the 2019 election, but later voiced disappointment over the lack of progress in the investigations.

**CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10**

## HC tells Kerala govt. to care for dog-bite victims

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court on Friday directed the State government to take steps to identify rabid stray dogs and remove them to a place of isolation within the limits of the local authority concerned, if need be, by tranquillising them under veterinary supervision.

It directed the government to provide effective and free medical treatment

to dog-bite victims until concrete measures were put in place.

The directive by a Bench comprising Justices Jayasankaran Nambiar and P. Gopinath came at a special sitting on the issue of stray dogs turning violent in the State and biting people at will, and reports that suggest that some of them would be afflicted with rabies.

**CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10**

## TIDEL Park to come up in Madurai: CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MADRASI

A new TIDEL Park will be established on five acres at Mattuthavani in Madurai at a cost of ₹600 crore in the first phase, and it will provide quality infrastructure to information technology and fintech companies, Chief Minister, M.K. Stalin said on Friday.

**CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 6**

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WESTERN RAILWAY - BHAVNAGAR DIVISION

VARIOUS ENGINEERING WORKS  
Sr. No.1: E-Tender No. 41-2022-23-R1,  
Name of Work: Zonal Contract for (2022-23)  
Zone No.8 under ADEN-Porbandar-  
Porbandar, (Incl.) - Kanalus (Excl.)  
Tender Value: ₹ 60,98,400.00. EMD:  
₹ 1,22,000.00. Sr. No.2: E-Tender No.  
42/2022-23. Name of Work: Supply of  
86420 cum 50 mm size Machine crushed  
stone ballast, including loading in to  
hopper wagon at GOP Jam Depot  
(Against the sanctioned weight of Jetalsar  
Jn: Wanshaljaya-Jn (SL))-TBR -4,000 Tkm  
& Kanalus-Porbandar (SL)-TRB -54,000  
Tkm. Tender Value: ₹ 5,54,80,343.70  
EMD: ₹ 4,27,400.00. For All Tenders:  
Date of Bidding Start Date: 22-09-2022  
Date of Bidding Closing: 06-10-2022  
The NIT has been uploaded on Railway  
Website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) on 13-09-2022

BVD-061

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EAST COAST RAILWAY

E-AUCTION FOR  
DIGITAL DISPLAY SCREEN

No. WVC/CH/RDN/VSKP/Digital/22

Dtd.: 13.09.2022

Lot Details Description: ADVERTISEMENT  
THROUGH DIGITAL DISPLAY SCREENS AT  
VISAKHAPATNAM RAILWAY STATION  
PREMISES, NEAR GATE NO.: 100 SOFT, GATE NO.: 2/AREA: 100 SOFT, GATE NO.: 3/AREA: 100 SOFT, GATE NO.: 4/AREA: 100 SOFT AND GATE NO.: 5/AREA: 100 SOFT, ENTRANCES UNDER RAIL DISPLAY  
NETWORK.

Lot. Start. Date & Time : at 11:00 hrs. of  
28.09.2022, Lot End Date & Time: at 12:00 hrs. of  
29.09.2022. Minimum Increase: 0.2%

For details please visit website: <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager,  
Waltair

EAST COAST RAILWAY

e-Tender Notice No. CPMGSUWATENG  
222002, Dated: 09.09.2022

Name of Work: CONSTRUCTION OF S&T AUTO  
GOMITIES BETWEEN SRIKAKULAM ROAD-  
PALASA STATIONS OF WALTAIR DIVISION,  
EAST COAST RAILWAY IN CONNECTION WITH  
PROVISION OF CENTRALIZED CONTROL  
SYSTEM WITH ELECTRONIC INTERLOCKING/  
INTERFACES AND BLOCK OPTIMIZATION  
SYSTEM (AUTOMATIC BLOCK SIGNALLING) IN  
CONNECTION WITH MODERN TRAIN  
CONTROL SYSTEM ON GOLDEN  
QUADRILATERAL/DIAGONAL ROUTES  
(483Kms) (UMBRELLA WORKS 2020-21).

Approx Cost of the work : ₹ 879.21 Lakhs

Completion Period of the work: 09 (Nine) Months.

Tender Closing Date & Time: at 1500hrs. of  
03.10.2022

No manual offers sent by Post / Courier / Fax or in  
person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if  
these are submitted on firm's letterhead and received in  
time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily  
without any consideration.

Complete Information including e-tender  
documents of the above e-tender is available in  
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Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to  
revisit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date  
of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigenda  
issued for this tender.

The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital  
Signature Certificate and must be registered on  
IREPS portal. Only registered tenderer/bidder can  
participate on e-tendering.

The tenderers should read all instructions to  
the tenderers carefully and ensure compliance of all  
instructions.

Guidelines/Special Conditions for Award of Tenders in  
Sub-sectioning work : Ref: Railway board letter  
No.2001/CE-ICT/3 dated 12.04.2001 read with  
Letter No.2016/CE-ICT/AP/2 dt. 17.04.2018, sub-  
sectioning has been done with a view to expedite  
the work and to optimise the cost of construction  
to one or other party. If some firms becomes L1  
in all the subsections, then evaluation of the firm for  
fitness for award of all the works should be done  
for eh work as a whole. This will avoid over-loading  
of the firms beyond their financial capability.

Chief Project Manager (GSU)  
PR-102/CF/22-23

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## Dak adalat on September 29

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

The Department of Posts will hold Tamil Nadu circle level dak adalat on September 29 at 10.30 a.m. at the office of the Chief Postmaster General, TN Circle, Anna Salai. The grievance meeting was slated last month, said a press release.

**THE HINDU**  
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# Metro Phase 2 to roll to another 93 km

Corridors to connect Parandur, where a greenfield airport is proposed, Avadi and Kilambakkam



SUNITHA SEKAR  
CHENNAI

The 118.9-km Phase 2 project of Chennai Metro Rail Ltd. (CMRL) is set to cover another 93 km in the coming years with the plan to extend one of the lines till Parandur, where a greenfield airport has been proposed.

The ₹61,843-crore Phase 2 project has been planned with three corridors – Corridor 3 with 45.8-km Madhavaram-Siruseri line, Corridor 4 covering Lighthouse and Poomala (26.1 km) and Corridor 5 running from Madhavaram to Sholinganallur (47 km).

The Corridor 4 will be extended till Parandur (50 km), Corridor 5 to Avadi through Thirumangalam and Mogappair (17 km) and Corridor 3 from Siruseri to Kilambakkam Bus Terminus via Kelambakkam (26 km).

The report will include

congestion levels, peak hour travel, travel demand in these corridors for the next 30 years, estimated cost involved to build them, public and private funding needed, social and environmental im-

pact and various other aspects. There is a plan to extend the Metro Rail from Chennai airport to Kilambakkam where a bus terminus is coming up.

The CMRL has submitted the detailed project report to the State government.

This line will give the commuters access to the bus terminus from different locations, the sources said.

**Consultant to be selected**  
"We have just floated a request for proposal to select a consultant for these corridors. The consultant will go through the existing reports such as comprehensive mobility plan, the present transport routes and development plans. The consultant will come back to us with a report in a few months," an official said.

"The distance between stations will increase and only the areas which have a good travel demand will be taken up for now. Otherwise, when there is a future need, stations can be built later," an official said.

## Zoo gets 'very good' tag

STAFF REPORTER  
CHENNAI

The Arignar Anna Zoological Park in Vandalur has been rated "very good" as part of the Management Effectiveness Evaluation

for Zoos for 2022. Bhupender Yadav, Union Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change, announced the results in the National Conference for Zoo Directors.

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Krishna) 7.30 p.m. - Sakshi

Srinivas (Disciple of Purnima

Gururaj). All are welcome.

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## Police arrest six for mobile phone theft

Several handsets seized in two cases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

The police recovered 22 mobile phones from them.

The police said Sathyia used to steal mobile phones from passengers in crowded buses or snatch handsets from pedestrians.

The Puzhal Police arrested two persons who were identified as Harishankar, 19 and Ganesh, 20 of Tiruvottiyur, for allegedly stealing mobile phones from a house.

On investigation, the police arrested M. Balu, 33, Sathyia, alias Lodukku Sathyia, 26, of Old Washermenpet, Sayad, alias Kozhi, 38, of Mannady and Marudhupandi, 55, of Tondiarpet.

The police seized eight mobile phones and a two-wheeler from the suspects.

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# Officials checking quality of free breakfast: Minister

Government has taken steps to ensure hygienic food is supplied'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

The Food Safety Department will monitor the quality of food served to students under the Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme, Health Minister Ma. Subramanian said on Friday.

Launching the scheme in the presence of HR and CE Minister P.K. Sekarabu and Mayor R. Priya here on Friday, Mr. Subramanian said the government had taken steps to serve quality food to children.

"The Food Safety Department officials checked the quality of the food before it was distributed in schools. The officials have planned the distribution of food with a focus on hygiene," he said.

Pointing to the difference



**C** The previous government roped in NGOs for distribution of breakfast but discontinued it

MA. SUBRAMANIAN  
Health Minister

scheme," he said. Each cooking centre will supply food to four or five schools.

Teams of women from self-help groups, who have been trained, will cook the food.

The utensils will be cleaned at the centres before distribution of the food.

On Friday, the breakfast scheme was launched for schools in north Chennai areas. As many as 5,941 students in 37 schools were served free breakfast.

The next phase of the scheme will be launched shortly. Greater Chennai Corporation Commissioner Gagandeep Singh Bedi was present.

EDITORIAL: EAT AND LEARN

► PAGE 8

Mayor R. Priya inaugurating the Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme on Friday.

■ B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

between the breakfast scheme launched by the previous AIADMK government and the present regime, Mr. Subramanian said the previous government roped in non-governmental organisations for distribution of breakfast in a few schools, but discontinued it within a few days. "It is wrong to claim that the AIADMK government launched the

# Chitlapakkam residents want composting yard to go

'About 100 acres of land that is part of the crucial Sembakkam lake used by Tambaram Corporation'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

Chitlapakkam residents want the composting yard near Thiru. Vi. Ka Nagar removed and alleged that it was established in the area that was part of the Sembakkam lake, one of the chain of water bodies in the southern suburbs.

Residents of Chitlapak-

kam noted that it was earlier used as a dumping yard by erstwhile Pallavaram municipality. The area on the northern side of the lake that is spread over 100 acres is again being used as a composting facility by the Tambaram Municipal Corporation.

Residents alleged that the facility fell in the lake's water

spread area and was located close to the weir. Members of Sri Sarvamangala Nagar Residents' Association recently made representations regarding the issues related to the lake to various government agencies, including the Water Resources Department.

The association's secre-

tary, M.Ravi, said the inlet channel, which brings floodwater from Pachamalai hills through Thiru.Vi.Ka.Nagar has shrunk and mostly carried sewage. "We have sought government agencies to prevent the entry of raw sewage into the lake. Moreover, the lake's boundary must be demarcated to discourage encroachments," he said. Residents also demand-

ed that the encroachments on the west side of the lake be removed.

Officials said the restoration work of the lake was being carried out jointly by the Nature Conservancy India, Care Earth Trust and IIT-Madras. The work was inspected recently. Most of legacy waste has been removed, officials said.

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### GEOGRAPHY

### GENERAL

# 'Reconsider stand on medicos who returned from Ukraine'

In a letter, Stalin asks Modi to admit the students in private medical colleges

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

Opposing the Centre's position of not permitting medical students who returned from war-torn Ukraine to complete their course in India, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Friday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi urging the Union Government to reconsider its stand. He requested Mr. Modi for admitting the students in private medical colleges as a one-time measure.

In the case filed by medical students before the Supreme Court seeking accommodation in colleges in India, the Union government informed that Indian medical students who returned from Ukraine could not be accommodated in colleges in India. The Centre had said



M.K. Stalin.

mended that the returned students could be accommodated in medical colleges in India and the students were very hopeful. However, the contrary stand taken by the Union government has dashed the hopes of these students. This needs to be reconsidered, Mr. Stalin suggested.

"If accommodating such returned students in government medical colleges is deemed difficult, I request that these students can be accommodated in private colleges by creating additional seats as a one-time measure," Mr. Stalin contended.

Since these students sought education in Ukraine due to their inability to pay the higher fees in private medical colleges in India, "a

special dispensation may be considered in the form of a comparable fee structure in private medical colleges" in India, similar to the fees paid by the students abroad, Mr. Stalin suggested.

The Chief Minister requested the Union Ministries of External Affairs and the Health and Family Welfare to actively identify colleges and universities abroad, suitable for the medical students under the academic mobility programme. "This process of identifying appropriate colleges and accommodating our students needs to be centrally coordinated rather than leaving it to individual students to scout for colleges in various countries. An appropriate framework may kindly be put in place for this process," he said.

## U.S. Coast Guard ship arrives in Chennai; joint exercise to be held on Monday

Aim of the visit is to boost interactions between Coast Guards of both nations

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

A U.S. Coast Guard ship, *Midgett*, arrived here on Friday as part of a goodwill gesture between the Indian Coast Guard and the U.S. Coast Guard, and to participate in a joint exercise on Monday. During the stay of *Midgett*, various activities have been planned, including reciprocal visit onboard ships, a press release said.

The aim of the visit is to boost interactions between the Coast Guard of both the nations. *Midgett* is commanded by U.S. Coast Guard ships, a press release said.



The U.S. Coast Guard ship, *Midgett*, arriving in Chennai on Friday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Captain Willie Carmichael. "As we spend the next four days with our Indian Coast Guard partners, we will work to advance our capabilities and interoperability through meaningful human interactions," he said.

U.S. Consul-General in Chennai Judith Ravin said: "India is an important partner of the U.S. in the Indo-Pacific region. I am confident the partnership during the visit of *Midgett* will strengthen our bond towards a shared vision of a secure Indo-Pacific."

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# Allow Assam team to inspect elephant Joymala: Gauhati HC

T.N. also told to allow inspection of nine other elephants leased out by Assam

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

The Gauhati High Court on Friday directed the Tamil Nadu government to allow a four-member team from Assam to examine Joymala, a temple elephant that had been allegedly abused, within three days of receiving a copy of the order.

The State government has also been asked to let the team inspect the condition of nine other elephants leased out by Assam. The team, headed by Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Hirsh Mishra, has been waiting since September 3 for permission from the Tamil Nadu government to inspect Joymala, a female captive elephant at Krishnankovil Temple in Sri Villiputhur. The elephant, renamed Jeyamalyatha, was leased out by Assam in 2011 for six months.

The High Court has issued a notice to the Tamil Nadu Chief Secretary and



The team has been waiting since September 3 for permission from the State government to inspect Joymala. • FILE PHOTO

the Director General of Police to let the Assam team inspect the elephants. The Tamil Nadu government has also been asked to reply on the matter within 15 days," Assam's Advocate General Devojit Saikia said.

"Notices have also been issued to the Tamil Nadu Forest Department and the Union Environment Ministry," he said, adding the court posted the case to September 28 for hearing.

The Assam government had approached the High Court on Wednesday after its Tamil Nadu counterpart declined to cooperate with the four-member team despite repeated requests. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma sent the team after videos purportedly showing Joymala being tortured triggered outrage.

The video was shared by the People for the Ethical Treatment to Animals (PETA) India, which said temple elephants were being abused in the southern State. The Tamil Nadu Hindu

Religious and Charitable Endowments Department had countered the PETA video with one of its own apparently showing Joymala in fine fettle.

The department called the PETA video fake and misleading, while the animal rights group said the Tamil Nadu government's video was a public relations stunt.

On September 15, the State government told the Madras HC that it would not be possible to return the leased elephants. The government had replied to a public interest litigation petition filed by N. Sivaganesan, a field scientist on wildlife conservation.

The representative of the State said Jeyamalyatha did not have to be returned because of a few incidents of mistreatment. The court was told that the elephants became accustomed to the temple and taking them away would hurt the sentiments of the devotees.

# 'Showcase positive side of elected representatives'

Many think politicians are immoral: State information chief

S. VIJAY KUMAR  
CHENNAI

State Information Commissioner S. Muthuraj has recommended to the Election Commission of India (ECI) and the Tamil Nadu State Election Commission to make available in public domain the contribution of elected representatives to nation building since Independence.

He was passing orders on a petition filed under the Right to Information Act, 2005, seeking voluminous data on the payment of property tax in the jurisdiction of the Greater Chennai Corporation. He said when the petitioners, who invoked the Act for information in larger public interest and to strengthen the democracy, were asked whether they voted in the last elections, some replied in the negative saying politicians were flawed and untrustworthy.

Mr. Muthuraj said the general opinion formed over the years against the genuine

benefits of politicians had resulted in a steep decline in the polling percentage, which does not augur well in a parliamentary democratic form of government. He said many people were of the opinion that politicians were very rich in terms of wealth and immoral in character.

As observed in other professions, mistakes done by one member could not be generalised and made applicable to every other member of the profession as such a generalisation would impact other genuine employees.

Only a negligible number of politicians were super rich while a substantial number of other politicians lived an ordinary life, he said.

## Less benefits

Mr. Muthuraj said the salary and pension structure of MLAs/MPs, compared to that of the judges of Supreme Court/High Court was very less. The illusion in the minds of people that politicians were getting various

FROM PAGE ONE

## TIDEL Park to come up in Madurai: CM

Speaking at the *Thol Koduppon Thozhilukku* Madurai regional conference organised by the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Department, he said it would generate 10,000 jobs and boost the economy of the region. It would be expanded on another five acres in the second phase.

Mr. Stalin said the TIDEL Park Limited, along with the Madurai Corporation, would float a special purpose vehicle for setting up the facility. It would be operated by TIDEL Park Limited.

Recalling that former Chief Minister M. Karunandhi sowed the seeds of the information technology revolution in the State by opening the TIDEL Park in Chennai in 2000, he said another TIDEL Park was opened in Coimbatore. The government was in the process of setting up neo-TIDEL Parks in tier 2 and tier 3 cities.

## 548 city policemen receive CM Constabulary Medal

210 personnel from law and order wing among recipients

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

As many as 548 personnel of the Greater Chennai Police received the Chief Minister's Constabulary Medal for rendering unblemished service without any punishment in the last 10 years of their service.

This year, 210 personnel from the law and order department, 148 from traffic, 73 from the Armed Reserve and 117 from the Central Crime Branch (CCB), Intelligence Section, Modern Control Room, Security Branch, High Court security, Crime Records Bureau and other special units received the medals.

Commissioner of Police



Commissioner of Police Shankar Jiwal giving away the medal. • S.R. RAGHUNATHAN

Shankar Jiwal and Additional Commissioner gave away the medals to the personnel.

Listing welfare measures, Mr. Jiwal said: "We are implementing weekly off to all

police personnel and fortnightly off to a few selected personnel." He recalled that a mobile app called CLAP had been introduced to get their leave sanctioned without any hassle. So far, 9,000 personnel benefited from the app.

Additional Commissioners of Police – T.S. Anbu, Prem Anand Sinha, J. Loganathan, Kapilmalar C. Saratkar and C. Mageshwari – were present.

At the Avadi Police Commissionerate, the Commissioner of Police Sandeep Rai Rathore gave away the constabulary awards to 98 police personnel and personally congratulated each one of them.

Shankar Jiwal and Additional Commissioner gave away the medals to the personnel.

Listing welfare measures,

Mr. Jiwal said: "We are im-

plementing weekly off to all

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Subject: Supply, Installation, Configuration and Technical support to CRIS PRIVATE CLOUD EXPANSION - 2022.  
Date of Opening: 10.10.2022 (15.30 HRS)  
Tender Documents can be downloaded from Website [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in). For future modification/ extensions pl. see [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in).

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

**Government of Tamil Nadu Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department Tiruvilarur District Notice Inviting Tender**  
Tender invitation for the Construction of Panchayat Union Office Building at Kottur Under SCPAR 2021-22  
1. For full details [www.tntenders.gov.in](http://www.tntenders.gov.in)  
2. e.Bids are invite by the Joint Director / Project Director, District Rural Development Agency of Tiruvilarur District at Two cover system for the Construction of Kottur Panchayat Union Office Building Under SCPAR 2021-22  
3. The bid documents can be downloaded free of cost in the website [www.tntenders.gov.in](http://www.tntenders.gov.in) from 17.09.2022 to 18.10.2022 upto 3.00 PM  
4. Last Date and Time for downloading and : 18.10.2022, upto 3.00 PM submission of Bid Documents  
5. Date and Time of online opening of Bid Documents : 18.10.2022, 4.00 PM onwards  
Joint Director / Project Director, District Rural Development Agency, Tiruvilarur.

**JOINT ADMISSION COUNSELING DELHI 2022**  
**Admission Notice for B.Tech. & B.Arch. Programmes 2022-2023**  
ONLINE applications are invited for admission to B. Tech. & B.Arch. Programmes offered by the following Universities/ Institutes established by the Government of NCT of Delhi:  
• Netaji Subhas University of Technology (NSUT), [www.nsut.ac.in](http://www.nsut.ac.in)  
• Delhi Technological University (DTU), [www.dtu.ac.in](http://www.dtu.ac.in)  
• Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University for Women (IGDTUW), [www.igdtuw.ac.in](http://www.igdtuw.ac.in)  
• Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology Delhi (IIIT-D), [www.iiitd.ac.in](http://www.iiitd.ac.in)  
• Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University (DSEU), [www.dseu.ac.in](http://www.dseu.ac.in)  
For detailed information regarding Eligibility Criteria, Reservation, Admission Procedure, Counseling Schedules, Application Process etc., please visit website: [www.jacdelhi.admissions.nic.in](http://www.jacdelhi.admissions.nic.in)  
ONLINE Application Process  
• Candidates MUST register ONLINE at [www.jacdelhi.admissions.nic.in](http://www.jacdelhi.admissions.nic.in) as per the instructions prescribed in the admission brochure available at [www.jacdelhi.admissions.nic.in](http://www.jacdelhi.admissions.nic.in)  
• All candidates are required to pay a Non-refundable Registration Fee of Rs. 1500/-in ONLINE mode ONLY using Credit Card / Debit Card / Net-banking/Any other online mode available on JAC portal.  
Important Dates  
1. Online Registration and Choice Filling has commenced since - September 05, 2022 (Monday) From 10:00 AM  
2. Last Date and time for online Registration September 25, 2022 (Sunday) till 05:00 PM (Fee Payment and Choice filling)  
For any further updates / notifications related to admission, candidates are advised to regularly visit [www.jacdelhi.admissions.nic.in](http://www.jacdelhi.admissions.nic.in)  
HELP DESK: [helpdesk.jacdelhi2022@nsut.ac.in](mailto:helpdesk.jacdelhi2022@nsut.ac.in)  
NOTE: - APPLICATION RECEIVED WITHOUT PRESCRIBED FEE SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED / SUMMARILY REJECTED  
Chairman, JAC Delhi 2022

## Holiday for Puducherry, Karaikal schools as fever cases spike

M. DINESH VARMA  
PUDUCHERRY

The government has declared a holiday for all schools in Puducherry and Karaikal for Classes I to VIII from Saturday till September 25, following a sharp spike in influenza cases among children in recent weeks.

The decision to declare a

week's holiday for government and private schools in these regions came after Chief Minister N. Ramasamy and Education Minister A. Namassivayam approved a Health Department recommendation to declare holiday as a precautionary step. The Director of School Education said the holiday ap-

plied to students of LKG, UKG classes as well.

The Health Department had noted that in the past 10 days there is an estimated 50% spike in fever cases among children visiting various health institutions in Puducherry. Most of the children are reporting high grade fever with cough and

cold. As a result, there is a substantive increase in the number of children visiting Out-Patient Departments in various hospitals and the number of inpatients in the Rajiv Gandhi Government Women and Children Hospital.

This flu-like illness spreads when children in-

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, "e"- PROCUREMENT NOTICE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, KHORDHA (R&B) CIRCLE, KHORDHA WORKS DEPARTMENT Tender Call Notice**  
e-mail : [rbcirclekhurda@gmail.com](mailto:rbcirclekhurda@gmail.com)  
Bid Identification No. CCE-Khordha (R&B) Circle - 14/2022-23  
Memo No. Dt.  
The Chief Construction Engineer, Khordha (R&B) Circle, Khordha on behalf of Governor of Odisha inviting percentage rate bid in double cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for Building work as detailed in the table below:  
1. Nature of Work : Building Work  
2. No of Work : 2 Nos  
3. Tender Cost : Rs.10000.00 (On-Line)  
4. Class of Contractor : A Class & Special Class  
5. Available of Bid document : From 10.00 AM of Dt.20.09.2022 to 05.00 PM of Dt.06.10.2022 up to 5.00 PM  
6. Date of opening of Bid : Dt 07.10.2022 at 11.30 AM  
7. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the Website: <https://tenderodisha.gov.in>. Any Addendum / Corrigendum / Cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.  
Chief Construction Engineer, Khordha (R&B) Circle, Khordha  
OIPR-34127/11/0022/2223

**Government of Jammu & Kashmir DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE (G&P) DEPARTMENT SRINAGAR KASHMIR**  
Tel:0194-2474234 Fax-2482032 email- [kashflor@rediffmail.com](mailto:kashflor@rediffmail.com)  
**Subject: - Extension No.03.**  
In view of no response, the last date for submission of bids invited vide this office e-Tender Notice No.22 of 2022 dated.19.07.2022 for Outsourcing of Entry ticketing system of Lidder Park, Pahalgam is hereby extended as per the details given below:-  
1. Period of downloading of bidding document 14.09.2022 from 11:00 AM to 27.09.2022 up to 02:00 PM  
2. Bid submission Start Date 14.09.2022 from 11:30 AM  
3. Bid submission End Date 27.09.2022 up to 02:00 PM  
4. Date & time of Opening of Tenders (Online) 30.09.2022 at 02:00 PM  
Other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid Tender Notice.  
No-DFK/GS-650/2269-71  
Dated: - 13/09/2022.  
**DIPK-10069/22**

## MCCI to come up with report on power tariff revision

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

The Madras Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) on Friday said it would come up with recommendations on the recent power tariff revision announced by the State government.

Chamber president T.R. Kesavan said: "MCCI had given a recommendation earlier. We are going to rework on it now. So unless we give a solution to reduce the cost of the system and find out an alternative, they don't have a choice. So, our report will look at how to optimise and do better so that it helps the government and the consumer."

Mr. Kesavan pointed out that there was a revenue problem for the government, "but we need to come out with an alternative solution." For the coming year, the chamber has picked up some key areas which it would focus on such as Industry 4.0, electric vehicles, fintech, climate change and sustainability, education and skilling, arbitration and encouraging start-ups.

For the skilling part, the chamber recently signed an MoU with Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation under the "Naan Mudalvan Scheme". MCCI is working on bringing out a ready reckoner or a handbook for regulatory compliances titled *Doing Business in Tamil Nadu* by working closely with the government.

## OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

### DEATH

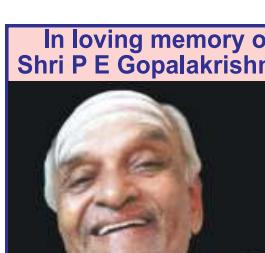


A. Subramanyam B.E. (Retd TNB ADE)  
05.07.1946 - 16.09.2022  
Cremation Today (17.09.2022)  
New No 19, Old No 6, Second Street,  
Perambur High Road, Chennai-600012  
Near Jamilia High School/ Sowmya Arts  
Mourned by family members Mb. 9840224581

The President, Members, Teachers and Staff of all schools run by The National Boys & Girls Education Society pay their homage to  
Sri D Narayanaswami (15.01.1929 - 16.09.2022) and offer heartfelt condolences to the Honorary Secretary Dr. Mrs Vathsala Narayanaswami and her family members.  
In memory of your loved ones  
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With a heavy heart from  
Dr. Geetha Subramanian  
and family

### DEATH



In loving memory of  
Shri P E Gopalakrishnan  
Who attained the Lotus feet of Shirdi Sai Baba on 15th Sep 2022 (DOB : 9th Aug 1939)  
In grief : Mrs PK Shantha;  
Mrs PK Raji, Rajesh and Sharada Radhika and Kasturi Rangan  
Abhishek Harishan, Anirudh Krishnan  
Loving Brothers and family  
Final rites at 10 am on  
17th September 2022 (Saturday)  
at their residence in Kalpathy  
Phone : 98400 51349 ; 9495077070

**SAD DEMISE**  
We regret to inform you the sad demise of  
Sri D Narayanaswami (15.01.1929 - 16.09.2022)  
and offer heartfelt condolences to the Honorary Secretary Dr. Mrs Vathsala Narayanaswami and her family members.  
In memory of your loved ones  
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### DEATH







## Eat and learn

Tamil Nadu's breakfast scheme is a good model for other States to follow

Sometimes the ability of a government to find resources for a good scheme is only limited by its intent. The Tamil Nadu government's launch of the free breakfast scheme for schoolchildren is an instance of a policy initiative with far-reaching consequences for school education and public health. As Chief Minister M.K. Stalin himself said at the launch of the scheme, provision of free breakfast is not a freebie, but the foremost duty of a government to ensure no child goes hungry. Mr. Stalin framed his words and deeds from the promontory of the progressive Dravidian model, which promises inclusive growth for all segments of the population. A key element is the welfare of children, which explains Tamil Nadu's early emphasis on feeding children in schools. The importance of a daily breakfast as the most important meal of the day is widely acknowledged. Multiple studies across the globe indicate that eating breakfast regularly confers positive outcomes on students, affecting their ability to focus, learn and retain information positively. School performance improves, as do behaviour and cognition, but a regular breakfast also takes care of diet quality, micronutrient sufficiency, anaemia and height and weight issues in children, and is even believed to sculpt BMI scores for the future. The government has targeted providing schoolchildren an average of 293 calories and an average protein input of 9.85 gm per day. The mid-day meal that is already being provided to students in schools comes up to an average of 553 calories and 18 gm of protein, giving every student who takes the food supplied in school about 846 cal and nearly 28 gm of protein a day. The Centre's midday meal guidelines prescribe between 450-700 cals per child per day, and a protein intake of 12-20 gm per day.

While the proposed menu for the Tamil Nadu government's breakfast scheme will take care of hunger, the calorific, energy and micronutrient requirements of the children, with a diet rich in local preparations and vegetables, it also has to provide adequate attention to taste and quality parameters. The government, rich with its experience of dealing with the mid-day meal scheme over several decades, must avoid the errors of omission and commission – including pilferage, poor quality of food, delays in sanctioning funds, and caste-related disruptions – that have been hurdles in its path earlier. Other State governments would also do well to be inspired by Tamil Nadu, which has allowed its intent to triumph over the state of its finances, finding money to fund this very crucial aspect of nation building – ensuring the growth and development of children.

## The oppressor's wrong

Nothing can really scandalise a court peopled by judges of integrity

"Who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel?" asked Alexander Pope, wondering if strong means were needed to beat a petty adversary. The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court has taken a sledgehammer to deal with YouTuber and blogger 'Savukku' A. Shankar, and sentenced him to a six-month jail term for some Tweets targeting the judiciary. As political commentary goes, his style of presenting his views is indeed quite trenchant. With a know-it-all air, he goes about giving purported background material, insinuating deals and designs behind developments, often without substantiation. It is no surprise then that he got into trouble. In his defence in the *suo motu* contempt proceedings, Mr. Shankar said his comments were aimed at questioning the under-representation of Dalits in the judiciary, and the excess representation to Brahmins, and that taken as a whole, his comments were aimed at improving the system. The court would have none of it, and deemed his comments contumacious. It noted that he expressed no regret or repentance, but affirmed that he would continue to speak about the judiciary after his release even if sent to prison. Even though Mr. Shankar made a personal insinuation against Justice Swaminathan, what really counted was his sweeping charge against the entire judiciary. This could have been dealt with by the Principal Bench in Chennai as the allegation was general in nature, but, unfortunately, it was posted before a Bench headed by Justice Swaminathan, who was the judge aggrieved by the earlier Tweet.

The purported logic behind courts retaining the power to punish for contempt is to save the institution from scurrilous attack so that the public does not lose its faith and trust in the judiciary. However, recent experience, as well as public criticism by former judges and legal luminaries, shows that the principal source of public disenchantment with the judiciary is the conduct of courts and judges. In 2018, four judges of the Supreme Court publicly accused the Chief Justice of India of misusing his power as Master of the Roster to influence the outcome of cases. Can there be anything more scandalising to the judiciary? Former judges and lawyers routinely pen articles questioning the commitment of the apex court to issues of personal liberty and even hint at complicity and craveness before the executive. Is there any point in going after laymen voicing their disenchantment with judicial wrongdoing? Criminal contempt is usually closed either by the court's tolerance or the contemnor's remorse, but, regrettably, neither happened in this case. If the court viewing any display of magnanimity as a sign of weakness is the 'oppressor's wrong', the defendant refusing to express regret is the 'proud man's contumely'. In truth, any conviction for criminal contempt is unwarranted, for nothing can really scandalise a court peopled by judges of integrity or save the image of a compromised institution comprising tainted individuals.

# The consequences of declining fertility are many

A below replacement level fertility rate would mean a smaller dividend window than expected



SANTOSH KUMAR DASH & SIDHARTH R.

below the replacement level for the first time to 2.0 in 2021, according to the latest National Family Health Survey (NFHS). The rate has dipped 10% in just five years.

At the time of Independence, India's fertility rate was six per woman, and it had taken 25 years to reach five, with the government launching the first ever family planning programme in the world in 1952. India's fertility further declined to four in the 1990s when Kerala became the first State in India to have a fertility rate below replacement level; slowly, other States followed suit. As reported by the NFHS 2021, only five States have a fertility rate above the replacement rate: Bihar (3), Meghalaya (2.9), Uttar Pradesh (2.4), Jharkhand (2.3), and Manipur (2.2). The steady dip in fertility rates has been explained as an effect of increased use of contraception, more years of average schooling, better health care, and an increase in the mean marriage age of women.

### Many economic implications

Countries in the earlier stages of demographic transition find positive effects of lower fertility on income as a major portion of the workforce moves to modern sectors of the economy with fertility dipping. Lower fertility rates can be viewed as both a cause and consequence of economic development. Lower fertility impacts women's education positively, which in turn lowers the fertility of the next generations. With better infrastructure development, better health care, and education, fertility drops and income rises. The spiral of lower fertility leads to a window of time when the ratio of the working-age population is higher than that of the dependent age groups. This high proportion of people in the workforce boosts income and investment, given the higher level of saving due to lower



S.R. RAGHUNATHAN

dependence.

The falling fertility rate will also lead to lower pressure on land, water and other resources and would also contribute to achieving environmental goals. After the window where a country reaps the benefits of the demographic dividend, the huge working age population moves to old age, supported by fewer workers.

Japan was the first country to experience the implications of falling fertility rates. The increasing dependency ratio has led to near zero GDP growth since the 1990s, and the country is facing fiscal challenges to meet rising social security costs. Other Asian countries such as South Korea are now reporting lower fertility than Japan which is now optimistic about having managed the lower fertility without moving to an utter demographic collapse.

A fall in fertility rate beyond replacement level would have a negative effect on the proportion of the working population, which in turn will affect output in an economy. A rise in education and independence among women would enhance their labour participation, which could arrest the fall in labour participation up to a limit. An influx of immigrants from countries with higher population growth could also play a positive part.

The impact of fertility drop on productivity is also highly debated. While a higher level of education and technological advancement in areas including artificial intelligence could increase the

productivity of the lower working age population, a paper, "The End of Economic Growth? Unintended Consequences of a Declining Population" by Stanford economist Charles Jones argues that falling fertility could diminish the creative capacity of humankind. He points to the need for ideas in technological advancement and productivity boost, which even artificial intelligence is still not capable of.

Countries across the globe are experimenting with policies to boost fertility. Germany found success in boosting births through liberal labour laws, allowing more parental leave and benefits. Denmark offers state-funded IVF for women below 40 years, and Hungary recently nationalised IVF clinics. Poland gives monthly cash payments to parents having more than two children, whereas Russia makes a one-time payment to parents when their second child is born. Russia also reinstated the Soviet-era 'Mother Heroine' title, who bore and raised more than 10 children amounting to almost a one-time payment of ₹13 lakh.

### In perspective

Though the benefits of demographic dividend are being reaped, a below replacement level fertility rate would mean a smaller dividend window than expected. Although India's working-age population will continue to grow for many more decades, it would need to keep an eye on fertility dips. Liberal labour reforms, encouraging higher female labour force participation rate, and a higher focus on nutrition and health would ensure sustained labour supply and output despite lower fertility. India, like other countries in the globe, would need to be equipped to aid the patter of more tiny feet sooner or later.

*Santosh Kumar Dash is an Assistant Professor at the Gullati Institute of Finance and Taxation (GIFT), Tiruvanthapuram. Sidharth R. is a postgraduate student in Economics at the University of Kerala*

## Remember Periyar with a pledge to embrace dissent

With majoritarianism on the rise, the iconoclast's ideas on debate and rationality of thought are more relevant than ever



K. KANIMOZHI

has the right to refute any opinion. But no one has the right to prevent its expression."

Periyar is often referred to as an iconoclast, for the rebellious nature of his ideas and the vigour with which he acted. His vision for the future was a part of all his actions. He did not merely aim at the eradication of social evils; he also wanted to put an end to activities that do not collectively raise standards of society. The radical nature of his ideas drew constant opposition.

Here, I would also want to debate some of the concepts propounded by Periyar. It is good that we refer to Periyar as an iconoclast and not an icon, because he would have dismantled that notion of an all-powerful icon himself.

He was one of the pioneering voices against the Kula Kalvi Thittam introduced by the then Chief Minister C. Rajagopalachari. It was not just a political statement; Periyar felt that it would encourage divisions based on caste that might cause irreparable damage to the social fabric. Kula Kalvi Thittam proposed to impose on schoolchildren a method of education, wherein students would learn their family's profession as part of the school curriculum. The proposal led to an uproar in the State led by voices such as Periyar and C.N. Annadurai. It was withdrawn and a message was sent to the wider



THE HINDU PHOTO ARCHIVES

world that Tamil Nadu stood united when it comes to caste oppression-related issues.

### Foundation of rationalism

Periyar's vision was about inclusive growth and freedom of individuals. He was an important ideologue of his day because of the clarity in his political stand. More importantly, he understood the evolution of political thought and was able to glide through time with this. He presented rationalism as a solid foundation for thinking along these lines. He said, "Wisdom lies in thinking. The spearhead of thinking is rationalism."

Periyar was way ahead of his time. All the reforms he shared with people could not be implemented at the time because of the searing discussions they led to. It took years for the ideas to take shape in a way that could be implemented.

One such reform measure he felt was needed to change the caste dynamic in society was

'Priesthood for all castes'. Has the opposition to such ideas been reduced in a way? Not really. But we shall continue to maintain a civil debate for the overall betterment of society, as Periyar said.

The struggle against the eradication of social evils takes several decades and Periyar with his idea of meaningful rebellion has guided me to play a part in this movement. It will be a guiding force for every student reading Periyar too. "Whomsoever I love and hate, my principle is the same. That is, the educated, the rich and the administrators should not suck the blood of the poor."

Periyar said, "Any opposition not based on rationalism or science or experience, will one day or other, reveal the fraud, selfishness, lies, and conspiracies." We can posit this with regard to the extreme-right activities we see happening across the country and sometimes abroad too.

**Violence against minorities**  
On one level, a few people are benefiting greatly from the rampant rise of acts of violence against minorities. These people have such an external defence mechanism that it becomes easy for them to use incendiary rhetoric and get away with it. The discussion that Periyar initiated continues to date, and is the antithesis to this manner of societal regression. Periyar

proclaimed that he would always stand with the oppressed in the fight against oppressors and that his enemy was oppression.

There have been several social reformers in Tamil Nadu who shared their revolutionary thoughts with the people in the past century. In that spectrum, Periyar occupies a unique place because he made interactions of multiple worlds possible. The world of social reform movements interacted with the world of people's politics when Periyar took over a stage or when he wrote. He focused on the progress of Tamil Nadu and was clear that it would be a never-ending journey.

Spaces for debate are shrinking all over the world. Majoritarianism and populism are not enabling sensible conversations in any public sphere. At such a time, Periyar stands as a stellar precedent, reminding us of a time when people with opposing ideas were invited to the stage for a debate. As a part of creating a society with social justice at its core, let us pledge to create open spaces for discussions in our communities. If need be, let us spearhead such activities on whatever scale. Only these spaces have the potential of creating a positive change at an ideological level.

*K. Kanimozi is a Member of Parliament (Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam)*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

### Breakfast, in school

The breakfast scheme launched by the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister for students of Classes I to V in government schools in the State is not only a novel one but also a first. The accompanying picture was a visual delight. The new scheme is without doubt a much-needed one. That many children attend classes each morning on a hungry stomach was thought-provoking. All efforts should be taken by the authorities to see that the quality of food is good and served under hygienic conditions.

SHALINI GERALD,  
Chennai

■ For very young students who may not be able to express their state of mind and attend class hungry, this is a

remarkable scheme that will help in their cognitive development. It is also imperative that the Tamil Nadu government monitors the scheme which will help it reap the long-term benefits.

CHALLAPALLI NEEHARIKA,  
Guntur, Andhra Pradesh

■ I am totally against freebies, but I staunchly support the breakfast scheme. A child cannot learn anything on an empty stomach. This scheme is sure to ensure the physical and mental well-being of children. Every right-thinking person will extend his or her support for the laudable move.

SUBBIAH N.,  
Chennai

■ "You cannot make people learn. You can only provide the right conditions for

learning to happen." These words by Vince Gowmon are completely aligned with the breakfast scheme. It will not only help in nourishment but also increase enrolment.

RISHAV,  
Barnala, Punjab

■ A good breakfast will help a child have a good attention span, help him concentrate and make him happy – all important for learning in school. The Tamil Nadu government deserves praise.

K.M.K. MURTHY,  
Secunderabad

■ The Chief Minister needs to identify the reason for many children going hungry. It could, in many instances, be the result of the head of the family spending a large part of his earnings on liquor. Welfare measures such as free breakfast, free monetary

allowances or free bus rides are meaningless unless we get to the root of the problem and in turn, the need for such schemes.

V. SUBRAMANIAN,  
Chennai

■ A child who is well-nourished would be able to climb the ladder to success quickly. The scheme is a boon for poor children. This is a timely and wonderful initiative.

LITTLE MERINTH AAMOSE A.,  
Thiruvananthapuram

■ Retiring... Roger  
A leading sports journalist, in 2016, described Roger Federer's game this way: 'Tennis is much less demanding physically – especially if you can play with the graceful, unmatched effortlessness of a Federer.' The grace with

which Federer played the game made it look so beautiful that watching tennis was less intense and more divine.

He ruled the court with such panache that you could never hate him. He set milestones which have now been bettered, but there is no denying that he raised the level of tennis which motivated many players to do well. We might have seen the last of Roger Federer the player, but Federer's indelible mark on the game will live on.

SUBASH BALAKRISHNAN,  
Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

■ All good things have to come to an end. And so did Roger Federer's amazing tennis career. His long absence from tennis did give rise to speculation that the Swiss legend would hang his

boots soon. His trophy-laden career has only left the tennis world awestruck.

R. SIVAKUMAR,  
Chennai

■ The tennis world may never again witness such a complete player as Roger Federer in future. Many became tennis fans only because of his grace and humane touch.

MANUEL JOSEPH,  
Muttom, Idukki, Kerala

■ My first introduction to Federer was in my school general knowledge book, in 2010. Even though I was never much into sports, I was drawn towards the game because of this great personality. Adieu Federer!

MEDHA BARMA,  
Bangalore



# Caught in a zero-COVID trap

China's strategy of lockdown and mass testing that made sense in a world without vaccines is now past its sell-by date. **Ananth Krishnan** reports on what the extreme measures and the expansion of state power have meant for the daily lives of residents

In pre-pandemic times, visitors to Shenzhen would often feel as if they were travelling in time to the future. China's technology hub is famed for being at the forefront of adopting new technologies that still remain on blueprints in the rest of the world, from futuristic buildings with sprawling indoor gardens that appear right out of a sci-fi movie, to the ubiquitous use of facial recognition technology for everything from riding subways to entering supermarkets.

Today, arriving in Shenzhen still feels like time travel – except now it is to the past. More precisely, it is to two years ago at the height of the pandemic, when lockdowns were part of the daily vocabulary globally and COVID-19 was seen as a deadly and life-threatening disease in a world without vaccines.

On an afternoon this June, a group of travellers arrived in Shenzhen in the Chinese mainland from Hong Kong. The journey, once a smooth, 20-minute train ride, now involves a gruelling 12-hour exercise at the border control point. This includes two deeply invasive nasal swabs that, for some travellers, even drew blood. The group was greeted by an army of Shenzhen health personnel dressed in full-white PPEs.

The 'Big Whites' or 'Da Bai', as the PPE-clad healthcare enforcers are known in China, have in the past two years become the faces of the country's stringent COVID-19 regulations. China is the only country that still follows a heavy-handed 'dynamic zero-COVID' policy, which calls for mass testing, lockdowns and quarantining of close contacts to eliminate outbreaks in the shortest possible time.

"Keep on your masks!" a Big White yelled at one arrival whose mask had slipped slightly below her nose. The group cleared immigration after downloading and scanning numerous Chinese 'health code' apps that are an indispensable internal travel passport in the country today. They were then sprayed with disinfectant, along with their luggage, before being whisked away on buses, with full police escort, to be confined in a room for a mandatory 22-day quarantine. And these were all vaccinated travellers who had also been tested no less than twice in just a few hours.

While the rest of the world has sought to move on to some form of post-pandemic normalcy, China remains firmly in the grip of a harsh zero-COVID policy. China is where the pandemic began, and it appears increasingly likely that this is where the last chapter of the pandemic will end.

## Endless lockdowns

On September 14, World Health Organization (WHO) director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus noted that the number of weekly reported deaths from COVID-19 in the second week of September was the lowest since March 2020. "We have never been in a better position to end the pandemic," he said. "We're not there yet, but the end is in sight."

In China, however, there appears to be no end in sight to measures that were first imposed in Wuhan – at a time when the idea of a lockdown was still unheard of in the rest of the world – and remain a part of life for a third straight year.

Within China, through 2020 and 2021, the zero-COVID strategy was by most accounts widely popular as it ensured a degree of normal life while the rest of the world was dealing with waves of deaths and lockdowns. By the summer of 2020, China had in fact largely emerged from the pandemic's first wave quicker than most nations, with its stringent lockdowns and bans on international travel paying dividends. Outside of Wuhan and Hubei province, no cities faced mass deaths. Across China, schools remained open, and with the world closed off, domestic tourism boomed. So did manufacturing, with China's exports reaching a record high during those two years while factories in much of the world were hit by COVID-19 restrictions. Zero-COVID certainly saved hundreds of thousands of lives in 2020 and 2021, a point that the government uses to justify continuing the approach.

Yet, that has become an argument increasingly difficult to make. Confronted with more transmissible variants, the 'test and trace' bedrock of zero-COVID has struggled. The number of cities in China under lockdown now is the highest since the early days of the pandemic. Moreover, a strategy that made sense in a world without vaccines looks increasingly past its sell-by date as the rest of the world opens. If zero-COVID gave China an advantage in the first year of the pandemic, it has now left China struggling.

## Harsher measures, mounting costs

As of early September, the Chinese magazine *Caixin* reported, 33 cities and an



The police work with railway authorities to check nucleic acid test reports and travel codes of passengers in Shenyang, Liaoning province. (Below): Passengers at the Hankou railway station in Wuhan. ■ GETTY IMAGES



death toll seen in the West (a fact highlighted ad nauseam by state media). Yet, three years into the pandemic, there are signs of public acceptance waning as more cities come under restrictions. Generally supportive attitudes to zero-COVID change overnight when one's own town is in lockdown. As Shanghai's residents faced two months of lockdown, thousands took to social media to ask what the point of the measures was when few severe cases had been reported officially.

## No exit strategy

If China were to open tomorrow, its healthcare system would certainly be overrun and likely face a near-collapse (as India's did during the second wave). This is the argument from Chinese officials in justifying the current approach.

It is also the argument used right at the top. As more questions began to be raised about China's approach in sticking to zero-COVID, President Xi Jinping, during a symbolic visit to Wuhan in end June, mounted a robust defence of the measures, saying they "must be upheld daily life."

As variants began to spread more easily, the measures to tackle them became harsher. Shanghai was placed under a brutal lockdown of two months, with most residents not allowed to step out of their homes and many complaining of food shortages.

When an earthquake in early September struck Sichuan province, which was dealing with an outbreak, residents rushed to leave their apartment blocks to find Big Whites barring their exits.

When parts of Beijing came under lockdown in May, cancer hospitals stopped taking patients for treatment. "As long as it's not COVID that you die from, it seemed they did not care," the daughter of one of the patients told *The Hindu*.

In Yining in western Xinjiang, which has been under a harsh lockdown since early August, thousands of residents took to social media to complain of acute food and medicine shortages. Most of the posts were deleted, while state media responded with a campaign to show an efficiently managed city. One Yining resident posted that his young child had died in lockdown without access to medical treatment.

Meanwhile, economic costs are mounting. Currently, planning internal travel within China is a fraught exercise, as each city has its own health code app and internal quarantine rules. The health code app determines every aspect of life. In Beijing, residents have to take a PCR test every 72 hours to preserve a green code, without which they cannot access schools, hospitals, offices or public transport. Uncertainty of lockdowns has dampened business sentiment amid already brewing troubles in the property market, a lynchpin of growth. In the second quarter of the year, China's economy grew by 0.4%.

Most people in China have been largely accepting of the measures – they do not, of course, have a choice in the matter – seeing it as a price to be paid for normalcy and to avoid the high

Data from Hong Kong show that three doses of Chinese vaccines are effective in preventing serious hospitalisation and death. The efficacy falls significantly when only two doses are administered.

Local government officials say their health resources are being entirely spent on regular testing and lockdowns to ensure zero-COVID. The same health workers who could have been sent door-to-door to vaccinate the elderly are instead occupied with administering lockdowns and PCR tests.

China also briefly considered and then abandoned vaccine mandates. In July, Beijing rolled out the country's first vaccine mandate, but abandoned it within 24 hours without explanation, amid suggestions that authorities were alarmed by the number of the elderly who had not completed their full doses.

While the unvaccinated elderly remain a significant concern, also complicating any easing of zero-COVID is continued official messaging that portrays COVID-19 as a life-threatening disease. As one Beijing doctor puts it, "Even one asymptomatic case now means an entire neighbourhood will be locked down. How do you then communicate with people that at some stage we have to live with the virus?"

## The politics of zero-COVID

That the doctor requested anonymity reveals how politicised this public health issue has become. There is no debate in China on the viability of the current measures, which are seen to have the personal endorsement of President Xi.

When Shanghai faced a surge in Omicron cases in February, the local health authorities, who had generally adopted a more open approach than elsewhere in the country, briefly suggested the city avoid a lockdown and adopt an approach that would mark a shift in China's COVID-19 strategy by only focusing on severe and elderly cases.

According to a recent account from the former Central Party School professor, in *Foreign Affairs* magazine, Cai Xia, who was removed in 2012 after criticising Xi's policies and is now living in the U.S., an online gathering of 60 experts

Even one asymptomatic case now means an entire neighbourhood will be locked down. How do you then communicate with people that at some stage we have to live with the virus?

A DOCTOR IN BEIJING

decided that life in the city could go on despite the cases. "But when Xi heard about it," Cai wrote, "he became furious. Refusing to listen to the experts, he insisted on enforcing his zero COVID policy... Just like that, a modern, prosperous city was turned into the site of a humanitarian disaster, with people starving and babies separated from their parents." Cai was referring to Shanghai authorities taking away COVID-19 positive children from their homes without their parents.

Asked why China hasn't considered planning an exit strategy, with 90% of its population receiving two doses and two-thirds receiving a booster dose – a number that would have been far higher with a sustained campaign – Chang Jile, who is the Vice Administrator of the National Disease Control and Prevention Administration, said the view is that the time isn't right. "Globally, the current pandemic is still at its height and the virus is still mutating," he said, reflecting a sharp divergence in Beijing's view and that of the WHO. "With the dynamic zero-COVID policy, we can bring infections under control in the shortest time and at the lowest social cost."

He also made it clear that this was the directive from the top. "President Xi has stressed the importance of targeted prevention, to get maximum results at the lowest cost, and to minimise the impact of the pandemic on social development. This requirement from central authorities is unchanged," he said. "Our philosophy on prevention and measures is about putting people and lives first... These measures may cause some inconvenience to normal functions and life, but we should bear in mind the overall interests of the country."

Leaving aside the fact that most residents who have suffered lockdowns would question his characterisation of "some inconvenience", the reality is zero-COVID has become intensely political in China, seen as one of Xi's legacies ahead of the start of his third term.

Some health experts privately hope that after the Communist Party's twice-a-decade conclave, on October 16, when Xi is expected to secure his third term, the country will begin to consider an exit. But there are few signs of a shift in approach in public messaging about COVID-19 to back those expectations.

What may prompt a change is the economic situation in China. Local governments, already dealing with a slowing economy, are running out of money to fund the continued testing and lockdown regime. From January 2020 until April 2022, according to *Caixin*, China

had carried out 11.5 billion PCR tests, costing \$45 billion.

## A cautionary tale on state power

Within China, zero-COVID has been framed as evidence of the superiority of the Chinese political system. Yet, if it was hoped that China's extraordinary pandemic record in 2020 and 2021, after the missteps in Wuhan, would present to the world a model to be emulated, zero-COVID has instead increasingly become a cautionary tale on state power. The model has given the state extraordinary control over people's lives in China.

The potential for abuse has already come to light. When people converged in Zhengzhou in June, in the central Henan province, to protest a financial fraud that had cost them their savings, many arrived at the city's train station to find their health codes had turned red, meaning they would be immediately quarantined. The provincial authorities had tampered with their apps to prevent them from gathering. After the case caused an outcry, officials were later punished.

The other side of the lockdown model is the extraordinary power it has given local-level officials and neighbourhood committees, who haven't wielded this much influence on the lives of residents since the days of Mao Zedong. Officials now have the power to indefinitely confine residents to their homes or to close businesses by citing the pandemic. A new pandemic-centred bureaucracy now controls local-level governance in China. Signs are that it has been established for the long haul. All this has also marked a significant retreat in China's efforts to build a system of 'rule by law' as a constraint on official power. On the contrary, official power is arguably at its highest in decades.

Chinese social media is full of stories of local pandemic enforcers running amok, from confining residents to buildings during an earthquake to welding doors shut to prevent people from leaving. The system encourages the extremism, as a local outbreak, for Party officials, would likely be career-ending, taking precedence over every other aspect of governance, including driving economic growth. For the first time since the Mao era, the Chinese people need government permission to renew passports and leave the country.

On one recent afternoon in Beijing, Big Whites from a local neighbourhood committee descended on a small business in a Beijing complex and ordered it shut down, confiscating its property. Vague "pandemic violations" were cited for the move. When the employees protested that they had their rights under Chinese laws, the local officials said, "We can do whatever we want."

Rather than a model to be emulated, the zero-COVID machinery in China has emerged as a warning tale. When states accumulate extraordinary power, they are unlikely to easily relinquish it.



FROM PAGE ONE

## Modi and Sharif spar over transit trade access

At present, delays by Pakistan have meant that even India's plan to send 50,000 tonnes of wheat to Afghanistan by the land route has not been completed over several months, as permissions for the last tranche of 10,000 tonnes to be transported have not been granted.

Briefing the media, Foreign Secretary Vinay Kundra said Mr. Modi also raised the issue of terrorism during the "restricted" meeting between the SCO leaders, and that all the SCO countries had agreed to prepare a consolidated list of terrorist entities and individuals in their respective countries.

The SCO summit declaration ended with an expansion of the group of eight countries – four Central Asian states, China, Russia, India and Pakistan – by inducting Iran as a full member, as President Ebrahim Raisi signed an MoU acceding membership. Among other membership hopefuls are Belarus, indicating that the grouping in future would have a larger number

of countries facing Western sanctions. The group also adopted more than 40 documents, including an agreement on cooperation and good neighbourliness and a joint statement on climate change.

Mr. Modi said that among the other problems the world was facing was ensuring "food security", an issue that Mr. Mirziyoyev referred to in his opening remarks, pointing out that the SCO countries made up a majority of the world's grain exporting nations.

"SCO member countries contribute about 30% of global GDP, and 40% of the world's population also lives in SCO countries," Mr. Modi said in his speech, adding that one possible solution to this problem was to promote the "cultivation and consumption of millets". Mr. Modi said that India was being developed as a "manufacturing hub" and would be one of the fastest growing economies. He offered to share the country's experience in innovations, start-ups, health tourism and traditional medicine.

## Ex-President named suspect in Easter attacks

The Cardinal has since contended that the attacks had a political or electoral motive.

The latest report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, released earlier this month, calls for the release of the "complete findings" of previous inquiries into the Easter Sunday bombings and establishment of a "follow-up independent and transparent investigation" with international assistance. President Ranil Wickremesinghe has said Sri Lanka would rope in Scotland Yard to help its investigators.

This is not the first time that the blame for the 2019 Easter bombings has fallen on Mr. Sirisena, who was President then. A parlia-

mentary select committee appointed in May 2019, and tasked with probing the Easter bombings, accused President Sirisena of "actively undermining" government and security systems, leading to "serious lapses" ahead of the attacks that shook Sri Lanka a decade after its civil war ended.

In February 2021, a Presidential Commission of Inquiry recommended that Mr. Sirisena and his intelligence chiefs be prosecuted for their failure to prevent the incident, despite Colombo receiving an intelligence input from India, weeks before the suicide bombings that are attributed to a radical Islamist network in Sri Lanka. Mr. Sirisena has denied any prior knowledge.

## Kerala HC asks State to care for dog-bite victims

The court asked the government to ensure that hospitals had adequate stock of medicines and equipment required for such treatment. The said treatment should also be without prejudice to the right of the person concerned to separately seek compensation from the State.

**'Delayed action'** Referring to people taking law into their own hands and unleashing violence on community dogs, the Bench spoke of reports of delayed State action leading to the same.

The court also took note of a circular issued by the State police chief to ensure safety of community dogs, in the wake of instances of killing of dogs by beating and mutilating them, and through poisoning.

Yet another report submitted by the Director of Animal Husbandry, State Animal Welfare Board, mentioned that many measures

were in various stages of implementation across the State.

They include a mass anti-rabies vaccination programme that has begun for owned dogs with the cooperation of the local bodies, to be followed by one proposed to be initiated from September 20 for community dogs.

The State has identified 170 hot spots where the vaccination will be administered through the Animal Husbandry Department.

In addition, Animal Birth Control (ABC) centres have been identified across the State, while veterinary doctors, animal handlers and dog catchers will be appointed on contract basis to carry out the ABC measures.

The list of veterinary hospitals where emergency night services are available together with 24-hour facilities have been put up on the website of the department, along with their contact numbers, the report says.

## Kedarnath temple to get a 'golden' makeover

Businessman to fund gold-plating of sanctum

ISHITA MISHRA  
NEW DELHI

A Mumbai-based businessman will fund the facelift of Kedarnath temple's sanctum sanctorum, which will now be gold-plated.

Currently the sanctum sanctorum of one of the famous Char Dham temple is

covered with 230 kilogram of silver.

Ajendra Ajay, chairman, Shri Badrinath-Kedarnath temple committee told *The Hindu* that the firm which has done the gold plating of sanctums of the Kashi Vishwanath and many temples in South India has been given the task of replacing the silver inside Kedarnath temple's sanctum with gold plating. The silver plating of the temple was done in 2017.

The work inside the temple began earlier this week and will be completed before

## ED teams search 40 locations in 4 States in Delhi excise case

Premises linked to beneficiaries, distributors and associates come under scanner

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI/HYDERABAD

The Enforcement Directorate on Friday searched 40 locations in different States in connection with the alleged irregularities in the Delhi excise policy case.

The premises linked to the beneficiaries, distributors and their associates in and around Delhi and Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu were covered. The officials searched some places purportedly related to YSR Congress Party MP M. Srinivasulu Reddy, including one at Nellore in Andhra Pradesh. The agency also recorded the statement of Delhi Minister Satyendar Jain.

On September 6, the ED searched over two dozen locations in Delhi, Gurugram, Faridabad, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Mumbai. The premises of Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who is an accused in the case, has not been covered by the agency so far. The money laundering probe is



**Under probe:** ED officials outside the residence of M. Srinivasulu Reddy, MP, during a search in New Delhi on Friday in connection with the scrapped Delhi excise policy. ■ PTI

based on an FIR registered by the CBI on August 17 against Mr. Sisodia and others.

### Public servants

Among the accused public servants named in the FIR are the then Excise Commissioner Arva Gopi Krishna, Deputy Commissioner Anand Tiwari and Assistant Commissioner Pankaj Bhatnagar.

The others are Vijay Nair,

former chief executive officer of Mumbai-based entertainment and event management company named Only Much Louder; Manoj Rai, former employee of Pernod Ricard; Amandeep Dhal, director of Brindco Sales; Sameer Mahendru, managing director of Indospirit Group; Buddy Retail and its director Amit Arora, Dinesh Arora, Mahadev Liquors, its authorised signatory Sunny Marwah, Arun Ramchandra Pilai and Arjun Pandey.

The agencies have alleged that undue favours were extended to licence holders; licence fee was waived or reduced; and L1 licence was extended without the competent authority's approval. The illegal gains were diverted to the accused public servants and false entries made by the private parties concerned in their books of accounts to hide the money trail.

## Amarinder to merge party with BJP

VIKAS VASUDEVA  
CHANDIGARH

Former Punjab Chief Minister and chief of the Punjab Lok Congress (PLC) Amarinder Singh is all set to join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in New Delhi on Monday.

Party's chief spokesperson Pritpal Singh Baliawal on Friday told *The Hindu* that Capt. Amarinder Singh would be joining the BJP on Monday, and would also announce the merger of the PLC with the BJP. Nearly a dozen of former MLAs will also join the BJP along with Capt. Amarinder Singh, he added.

He said an event would be subsequently held in Chandigarh in the next few days, where several leaders and members of the Punjab Lok Congress would join the BJP, he said.

On September 12, Capt. Amarinder met Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and since then there was speculation of his joining the saffron party.

## Mevani gets jail term in protest case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
AHMEDABAD

The Ahmedabad Metropolitan Court on Friday sentenced Gujarat Congress working president and a prominent Dalit activist Jignesh Mevani and 18 others to six months simple imprisonment in a 2016 case of unlawful assembly and road blockade while protesting.

In 2016, Mevani and others had staged an agitation demanding that a new building of Department of Law of Gujarat University be named after Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. During the protest, he and his associates had blocked a road. The case was registered at University Police station.

## 21,000 score 100 percentile in CUET

Universities likely to begin new academic session from first week of November

JAGRITI CHANDRA  
NEW DELHI

The National Testing Agency on Friday declared the result for the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) for undergraduate admissions in which more than eight lakh students had participated.

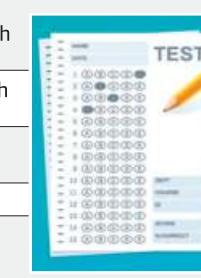
The total number of candidates who scored 100 percentile in each of the 61 subjects stood at 21,159. Of them, 12,799 were women candidates and 8,360 men.

English was the favourite subject among candidates in the maiden edition of the CUET. A total of 4,85,894 candidates appeared for the English paper, followed by chemistry (2,31,970), mathematics (2,29,793), physics (2,20,014) and Hindi (1,80,634).

Sanskrit recorded the highest percentage of students with 100 percentile score, at 23% of the 5,002 students who appeared for the subject. Among students who appeared for psychology, 5.9% had 100 percentile score, while 1.95% had the

### Results out | A look at the highlights of the results of the Common University Entrance Test for undergraduate admissions (CUET-UG)

Number of candidates who registered	14.9 lakh
Number of subject tests administered	47.1 lakh
Number of cities with exam centres	259
Number of mediums	13
Candidates with 100% percentile	21,159



top score in political science, 1.6% in English, 0.03% in maths and 0.02% in physics.

The marking scheme involved giving students "equipercentiles", where every student who appeared on a particular day in a specific subject was given a certain percentile. These percentiles for students appearing in the same subject on different days were then equated and converted into normalized marks.

The role of the NTA is confined to the registration of candidates, conducting the test, hosting of answer keys,

inviting challenges, finalising answer keys, preparing and declaring result and hosting score cards.

### Further steps

The merit list of students will be prepared by the participating universities.

They will also take a decision on counselling for students on the basis of the score card.

Now, students will be required to visit the admission portal of individual universities, fill online applications and submit the required documents. The NTA will pro-

vide the scores of the students to the participating universities for verification, Chairperson of the University Grants Commission M. Jayashankar Kumar said.

On the expected time frame within which universities may complete the admission procedure for undergraduate courses, Dr. Kumar said, "Once the CUET-UG scores are announced, universities may typically take about six weeks to conclude the admission process as they may issue first list, second list and so on until most of the seats are filled. Either in October last week or November first week, most universities may attempt to start their new academic session."

The exam was conducted on 20 days and in 38 slots from July 15 to August 30. It was held in 259 cities across India and nine outside the country. The massive exercise involved a total of 2,219 question papers in 13 mediums. It was marred by several technical issues.

## IN BRIEF



**AAP MLA arrested after anti-corruption searches**

NEW DELHI The Anti-Corruption Branch on Friday seized ₹24 lakh in cash and arrested Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Amanatullah Khan after conducting raids on premises linked to him in connection with alleged irregularities in the Delhi Waqf Board recruitment, officials said. PTI

### 6 Assam tribes to hold protest over ST status

GUWAHATI Six communities in Assam have threatened to launch a coordinated stir over the "inordinate delay" in granting them Scheduled Tribe (ST) status. These communities are Adivasi [referred to as "tea tribes"], Chutia, Koch-Rajbongshi, Matak, Moran and Tai-Ahom. On Thursday, Chief Minister Sarma said the ST status ball was in the court of the Rajya Sabha and the State could do little about it.

### SC seeks Web portal for student returnees

NEW DELHI The Supreme Court on Friday asked the government to consider creating a Web portal containing details of foreign universities where Ukraine-return Indian medical students can apply to complete their courses under the academic mobility programme approved by the National Medical Commission. A Bench said students should have the benefit of a transparent system.

### SIC pulls up officers for defaulter on penalty

JAIPUR The Rajasthan State Information Commission has taken a serious note of the laxity of government officers in depositing the fine imposed on them for violation of the Right to Information (RTI) Act. The Commission has directed that the failure to pay the penalty be recorded in the service books of all these officers if they do not comply with such orders within a month.

### Bombay HC stays payout order on Facebook

MUMBAI The Nagpur Bench of the Bombay High Court stayed an order of a consumer redressal commission directing Facebook India Online Services and META Platforms to pay ₹25,599 to a man for non-delivery of a product purchased online and fraudulent advertisement. The commission had directed the companies to pay ₹599 to Tribhuvan Bhongade, a daily wage labourer for non-delivery and ₹25,000 for causing mental agony to the complainant.

## 'Modi a true follower of Ambedkar'

Vision of Constitution-maker was being carried forward by PM, says Kovind



Ram Nath Kovind (centre), Anurag Thakur (left) and Justice K.G. Balakrishnan (right) at a book launch on Friday. ■ PTI

and efforts in the fields of infrastructure, education, socio-economic mobility and gender equality, a consonance that the BJP as a political party has been at work to establish as its support base among the Scheduled Castes has also grown.

Mr. Kovind said that Ambedkar's vision of a self-reliant India was being carried forward by Mr. Modi. "Work done by Prime Minister Modi in the form of Swachh Bharat, Antyodaya scheme, Ujj

wala scheme, electrification scheme, New Education Policy, bank accounts for all are examples how his work is going on the lines of the vision of Babasaheb," he said.

Prime Minister Modi had also been proactive in developing five sites connected with Ambedkar as the *panch teerth* [the five pilgrimage spots], Mr. Kovind said.

Interestingly, he maintained that Ambedkar was never in support of the special status for Jammu and Kashmir. It was the Modi government in 2019 that revoked the special status under Article 370. Mr. Kovind said it was "a matter of pride" for him that he got an opportunity to witness the same as President.

## Maharashtra was set to sign Vedanta MoU

STAFF REPORTER

MUMBAI

The Maharashtra government had formalised all plans and fixed the date to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Vedanta-Foxconn and Avantastarte as early as July 29, for setting up the multibillion-dollar semiconductor plant at Talegaon near Pune, according to a letter written by

## SC seeks Centre's reply on issue of marital rape

It seeks govt. stand on criminalisation

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday sought a response from the government on appeals to criminalise marital rape.

A Bench led by Justice Ajay Rastogi indicated that several similar petitions were pending in the court and they would be listed together for hearing in February next year.

The appeals follow a split decision from the Delhi High Court on whether or not to prosecute husbands for non-consensual sex with their wives.



## IN BRIEF



## CBI gets Partha Chatterjee's custody

KOLKATA A court in Kolkata on Friday rejected the bail application of former West Bengal Minister Partha Chatterjee and remanded him to the custody of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) till September 21. Mr. Chatterjee was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on July 23 in the West Bengal School Service Commission (SSC) recruitment scam.

## Four held in Begusarai firing incident: police

PATNA Four persons were arrested on Friday in connection with the Begusarai firing incident of Bihar, in which one person was killed and nine others were injured. The arrested persons have been identified as Keshav alias Naga, Sumit Kumar, Yuvraj and Chunchun Kumar alias Satyajit. "In 50-hours of the incident, the police arrested four persons involved in the incident," an official said. However, family members of Keshav accused the police of wrongfully implicating him in the case.

## FAIMS opposes name change of AIIMS

NEW DELHI Opposing any change to the name of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi, the Faculty Association of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (FAIMS) cautioned that it may lead to the institute suffering "loss of identity". The association said all faculty members were unanimously against the move.

## ED seizes ₹46.67 crore in HPZ Token app case

NEW DELHI The Enforcement Directorate has seized ₹46.67 crore lying in various bank and virtual accounts in connection with a money laundering probe involving the HPZ Token app that allegedly promised its users large gains against investments in mining machines for bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies. The agency found that the application was being operated allegedly by Lillion Technocab and Shigoo Technology Private Limited.

## ED files chargesheet against Sanjay Raut

MUMBAI The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday filed a chargesheet against Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut in a 2018 chawl redevelopment case related to irregularities. Mr. Raut, a close aide of former Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, was arrested on August 1 and is lodged at the Arthur Road jail. He filed for bail on September 7, contending allegations against him is a perfect example of "abuse of power" and "political vendetta".

## BJP playing politics in rape case'

Congress demands justice from the U.P. government for the family of the victims

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is trying to give a communal colour to the rape and murder of two Dalit sisters in Uttar Pradesh's Lakhimpur Kheri, the Congress alleged on Friday as it sought "fast-track justice for the families of the victims".

The principal Opposition party also demanded that the Narendra Modi government implement the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Act with "full force".

Addressing a press conference, Rajesh Lilotia, who heads the Congress's Scheduled Caste department, said the alleged rape and murder of the two sisters should not be seen as an isolated incident, and added that atrocities against Dalits have been rising.

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data revealed that 70,818 cases of atrocities against Dalits have been pending investigations till 2021, he said.

"This is a very serious matter and I would like to appeal not to do politics over this sad and unfortunate in-



**Under watch:** Security personnel outside a mortuary during the post-mortem of one of two minor Dalit sisters raped and murdered in Lakhimpur Kheri. ■ PTI

have been 61,000 cases of atrocities against Dalits and women in the past four years. The BJP and its people are trying to give the Lakhimpur Kheri incident a communal colour to dilute it," Mr. Lilotia alleged.

"The Congress demands justice from the U.P. government for the family of the victims. It also demands that the Modi government implement the SC/ST Act with full

cident," he added.

The Congress leader al-

leged that the BJP and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) are resorting to divisive politics.

"The Congress demands justice from the U.P. govern-

ment for the family of the

victims. It also demands that the Modi government imple-

ments the SC/ST Act with full

force," Mr. Lilotia said.

"On one hand, big claims are made that the Modi govern-

ment is working for the

welfare of Dalits, on the other

hand there are these sta-

tistics," he added.

The Congress leader also

accused the Yogi Adityanath

government in Uttar Pradesh

of not providing justice in

the 2020 Hathras rape case.

## Sewa Pakhwara to mark Modi's birthday

The service camp will go on till Oct. 2

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is planning to go big with celebrations to mark Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday on Saturday, with all district-level offices of the party being asked to organise a "Sewa Pakhwara" or service camp for the next 16 days (till October 2), which will include activities such as blood donation drives, adopting one tuberculosis-afflicted person to ensure proper treatment and sanitation drives.

BJP general secretary Arun Singh, addressing a press conference at the party's headquarters in New Delhi, said that he had written to all district presidents giving details of the activities to be undertaken, including setting up exhibitions on the life of Mr. Modi.

"Have exhibition at State and district level on personality and works done by PM Modi, a sample of which will be sent to the leaders. It is aimed at inspiring people

to do positive works," stated the communique sent by Mr. Singh.

People will also be able to send personal greetings to the Prime Minister and commit to activities under the "Sewa Pakhwara" via the NaMo app, Mr. Modi's personal App.

Among other activities listed for party workers to undertake are vaccination camps, sanitation drives, sharing stories of "Vocal for Local". The party has urged its leaders to celebrate "Unity in Diversity" and 'Ek Bharat'.

According to the reports, the leaders have been asked to follow the custom, traditions and eating habits of another State for a day.

The BJP's youth wing, the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha, has been tasked with organising blood donation and health check-up camps in every district.

Additionally, 10 best health check-up camps and blood donation camps will be awarded.

## Around 1,200 gifts to PM to be auctioned

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Union Culture Ministry on Friday said the fourth edition of the e-auction of gifts given to Prime Minister Narendra Modi would start from Saturday, with nearly 1,200 mementoes up for grabs.

During a briefing, Culture Minister G. Kishan Reddy said 1,222 gifts to Mr. Modi would be auctioned from Saturday, which was Mr. Modi's birthday, till October 2. The proceeds of the auction would go towards the Namami Gange project as was the case for the previous auctions, he said.

He added that 1,805 items were auctioned in the first round in 2019 and 2,772 in the second round. In 2021, the third auction had 1,348 items, he said.

"Mementoes in the auction include exquisite paintings, handicrafts and folk artefacts. Several of these are items customarily offered as gifts, such as angavastraams," he said.

## IAF to fly AN-32 on blended biodiesel for 200 hours

Performance very satisfactory, says Air Vice-Marshall

DINAKAR PERI  
NEW DELHI

As part of efforts to reduce its carbon footprint, the Indian Air Force (IAF) is looking to fly an AN-32 transport aircraft modified to operate on 10% blended biodiesel for 200 flight hours in the next six months, Air Vice Marshal S. K. Jain, Assistant Chief of the Air Force (Maintenance Plans), said on Friday.

The aircraft took flight on biodiesel blended with aviation turbine fuel (ATF) for the first time in December 2018. "So far, an AN-32 has flown 65 hours with a 10% blend of biofuel and the performance has been very sa-



**Going green:** An AN-32 took flight on blended biodiesel for the first time in 2018.

tisfactory," he said at a seminar on sustainable aviation biofuels organised by the Aeronautical Society of India.

A second aircraft, a Dornier, was now undergoing

ground tests after it had been cleared by the original manufacturer of the engine, Honeywell, for use of 50% biofuel, he said.

The global aviation industry is one of the biggest emitter of greenhouse gases that cause global warming. The fuel consumption of the IAF for 2021-22 was 6.2 lakh kilo litres, which contributed 15 lakh tonnes of carbon dioxide.

On the civil aviation front, an official from aircraft manufacturer Airbus said it had plans to offer 100% sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) compatibility on its commercial aircraft latest by 2030.

## Left stalled BJP in Kerala: Yechury

Look at Goa before asking who is BJP's 'A or B' team, CPI(M) leader tells Congress

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Days after attacking the Congress for spending 18 days of its Bharat Jodo Yatra in Kerala, the CPI(M) piped down its criticism, with its general secretary calling it the Congress's prerogative to decide "how many days it spends where" though he did not shrink back from hitting out at Congress leader Jairam Ramesh for calling the CPI(M) the "A team of BJP".

Addressing a press conference at the party headquarters in Delhi on Friday at the end of the party's two-day Polit Bureau meeting, Mr. Yechury said: "Every party has the right to take their own path. Going to people is a good thing. AAP is also doing



Sitaram Yechury

it in its own way. How many days they spend and where is their prerogative, but the people will of course draw their own conclusions."

To another question specifically pointing out Mr. Ramesh's tweet calling CPI(M) the "A team of BJP", he hit

out by saying, "Kerala is the only State where BJP has zero legislators. And who did this? It is the Left Democratic Front that stopped the BJP's expansion in Kerala. And as far as A or B team is concerned, they should look at Goa before levelling such allegations."

According to the sources, that the party's Polit Bureau also discussed the Bharat Jodo Yatra and its own sharp reaction to the Congress's decision to spend 18 days in Kerala. The CPI(M) from its official handle had tweeted "Bharat Jodo or Seat Jodo-18 days in Kerala, 2 days in UP. Strange way to fight BJP-RSS." It was felt that the responsibility of countering the Congress should be left to

the party's Kerala unit. Mr. Yechury reiterated his stand that a national-level pre-poll alliance before the Lok Sabha election of 2024 was not possible. The electoral understanding had to be arrived at in every State addressing the unique political factors of each of them.

"We need to understand that we have a parliamentary democracy not a presidential form of democracy," he said, explaining that an Opposition alliance could be formulated only once the results came in.

Having added that caveat, he praised both TRS chief K. Chandrasekhar Rao and NCP chief Sharad Pawar for initiating a dialogue within the Opposition parties.

## Eklavya schools for tribal students get short shrift in teacher recruitments

4,000 teachers have been appointed so far



**Bleak future:** Students at the EMRS in Attappadi in Kerala performing Yoga as part of the Yoga Day this year. ■ NESTS

Despite sanctioning record numbers of Eklavya model residential schools for tribal students since 2014 and setting up of the National Education Society for Tribal Students (NESTS) to manage these schools in 2018, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has so far been unable to fix the teacher shortage faced

across 378 such schools that are currently functional.

According to the data gathered by the Ministry, nearly 4,000 teachers have

been appointed across the 378 schools, of which nearly 70% are either on contract or on deputation from State government schools.

According to the guidelines issued to the States in 2020 by NESTS, each school had been recommended to have a total of 52 staffers, of which 30 were meant to be teachers.

This would mean that 378 schools would have a total of 11,340 teachers.

Officials said that the structure under which the NESTS was set up in 2018, had made it difficult for it to monitor and enforce its own recommendations to the schools as far as teacher recruitment was concerned. After the NESTS was set up,

the State Education Societies for Tribal Students (SESTS) were also set up, which would receive the funding from the Ministry and allocate it accordingly.

The guidelines said that while NESTS would be responsible for recommending the syllabi, the school and hostel standards, and the teacher recruitment guidelines, the SESTS would be in charge of implementing these guidelines with room for local modifications in each of these areas.

"The guidelines never mandated that the State so-

cial expenses, which was resulting in large gaps in the salaries of teachers working at the same level.

These are the same problems that the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Research and Training Institute in Odisha had identified at EMRSs in an official report in 2015.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs said the only way to solve the teacher shortage and bring uniformity in the teaching standards was to completely overhaul the administrative structure under which the EMRSs were run.

**TH CROSSWORD** (set by Dr. X) **13663**

1 Remove one's clothes in outing, captivated by very fine fellow (5,3)  
5 Capturing rook with king, miss subtly grins (6)  
10 Outline visit to a prison perhaps? (7)  
11 Man from the east left enthralled by magnificent German physician (7)  
12 Treat with new operation controlling onset of retinopathy (5)  
13 Anxious unionist annoyed about hint of scandal (9)

14 Mysterious criminal nurtures a plan to kill nationalist (12)  
18 How basketball player might score while still distressed by break-up (2,3,7)  
21 Good progress after tackling a problem in style of painting (9)  
23 Tossing and turning in dark, every so often overwhelmed by fear (5)  
24 Trendy doctor exciting hot nurse at opening (5-2)  
25 Presses back neck in scrap (7)  
26 Bolt breaks record in running (6)  
27 Quick appraisal of working with mask around beginning of epidemic (4-4)  
Down  
1 Mathematical ratio is inadequate, contains a little error (6)  
2 Beer and rye stocks got used up (3,3)  
3 Revolutionary colour scheme in abstract technique (9)  
4 Art of predicting correct roulette number in gamble (7-7)  
6 Member reviewed tax rate (5)  
7 Royal really upset about a little insensitive banter (8)  
8 Plan by woman holding clubs and diamonds to dominate right away (8)  
9 Ultimately eager opponents rose to fight one-on-one (6-2-6)  
15 Torture and flog gangster in abandoned site (9)  
16 Bad poetry by silly George, boring – extremely dull (8)  
17 Hang frames in retreat to welcome group (6,2)  
19 Chess champion concedes as Kasparov moves (6)  
20 Black tie, not loud is preferable (6)  
22 Follow a criminal outside bar (3,2)

Across  
1 Remove one's clothes in outing, captivated by very fine fellow (5,3)  
5 Capturing rook with king, miss subtly grins (6)  
10 Outline visit to a prison perhaps? (7)  
11 Man from the east left enthralled by magnificent German physician (7)  
12 Treat with new operation controlling onset of retinopathy (5)  
13 Anxious unionist annoyed about hint of scandal (9)

CM YK

## SUDOKU

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

# Podoroska packs off crowd favourite Bouchard, makes last four

The Argentine will meet 17-year-old Fruhvirtova, who will play her maiden semifinal

## CHENNAI OPEN

N. SUDARSHAN  
CHENNAI

Nadia Podoroska won her second consecutive set in less than 24 hours, this time packing off crowd favourite Eugenie Bouchard 1-6, 6-4, 6-2 to enter the last four of the WTA Chennai Open, at the SDAT Tennis Stadium here on Friday.

In a match that lasted nearly three hours, both players alternated between enthralling tennis and extended flat spots. Bouchard's pedigree and big-match experience should have helped her edge the contest; she won more points (88 to 86), served and returned just as well as the Argentine and made seven fewer double-faults.

But Podoroska, whose ranking of No. 298 is deceptive at best – she was ranked as high as 36 in July last year – was steady when it mattered while Bouchard combusted at crucial junctures. Podoroska will next meet the 17-year-old Czech Linda Fruhvirtova, who ousted the tournament's second seed Varvara Gracheva 6-4, 6-3.

Fruhvirtova, for whom it will be a maiden Tour-level semifinal, was later given the inaugural Margaret Amritraj Award for the most promising young player of the tournament.

Bouchard played pop-the-cork tennis at the beginning, winning 16 of the first 21 points to go 4-0 up, saving six break points to hold to 5-1 and

then breaking again to take the set 6-1.

However, the bubbling promise soon faded, and Podoroska, just like against Tatjana Maria in the round-of-16, sprang to life in the second set, running up a 4-1 lead. She put enough air under the ball to take it away from her opponent's strike zone, even as Bouchard was guilty of not picking off short balls that were dragged down by Podoroska's spin.

A medical time-out for Bouchard (exhaustion), though, disrupted Podoroska's rhythm. The Canadian got one break back and had three break opportunities to level at 5-5. But Podoroska wriggled out, as Bouchard missed all three, including the

second on which she fluffed three attempts at a smash.

Podoroska went on a roll again in the third set, breaking twice for 3-0 lead, only for lightning and light rain to stop play for 35 minutes. She appeared shaky on resumption, but held on to make her first Tour-level semifinal since the 2020 French Open.

A visibly tired Bouchard later retired from her doubles quarterfinal, in the company of Yanina Wickmayer, down 3-6, 1-1 to Anna Blinkova and Natela Dzalamidze.

**The results (quarterfinals): Singles:** Nadia Podoroska (Arg) bt Eugenie Bouchard (Can) 1-6, 6-4, 6-2; Linda Fruhvirtova (Cze) bt Varvara Gracheva 6-4, 6-3; Magdaléna Linette (Pol) bt Rebecca Marino (Can) 7-6(10), 6-3.



Recognition: Fruhvirtova won the Margaret Amritraj Award for the most promising young player of the tournament. ■ K.V. SRINIVASAN

## Ruud proves too hot for Prajnesh in first singles

### DAVIS CUP

SPORTS BUREAU

Casper Ruud gave a rousing start for Norway, as he outgunned Prajnesh Gunneswaran 6-1, 6-4 in just over an hour in the opening singles of the Davis Cup World Group tie at the Hakons Hall, Lillehammer, on Friday.

Though the 32-year-old Prajnesh tried his best, World No. 2 Ruud was a class apart.

Playing his first match after the US Open final against Carlos Alcaraz last Sunday, Ruud continued to show fine form. The indoor hard court surface did not seem to bother him as he raced on his swift legs to execute strokes with precision and consistency.

In contrast, Prajnesh was unable to sustain his high-quality game for long though he did a commendable job of staying in the rally quite a few times.

Ranked a modest 335,



Ruud... a sizzling start.

Prajnesh gave a good account of himself against the 23-year-old Ruud, who has had a phenomenal season by making the French Open final on clay and the summit clash on the outdoor hard courts of New York.

With nothing to lose and a slim chance of improving on his 3-6 win-loss record in Davis Cup, the Chennai left-hander came out swinging.

There was no change to the script, however.

**The result:** Norway leads India 1-0 (Casper Ruud bt Prajnesh Gunneswaran 6-1, 6-4).

## India batters flop, lose series

England women win third T20I by seven wickets

### INDIA IN ENGLAND

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
BRISTOL

The Indian bowlers put up a valiant effort with a below-par total to defend before rookie Alice Capsey held her nerve to guide England to a seven-wicket win in the third women's T20I and clinch the series 2-1.

India put up an inept batting performance, scoring only 122 for eight, courtesy wicketkeeper Richa Ghosh's 22-ball 33 and all-rounder Pooja Vastrakar's unbeaten 19 off 11 deliveries.

The Indian batters were unable to navigate through the England spin bowling as Sophie Ecclestone (three for 25), Sarah Glenn (two for 11) and Bryony Smith accounted for six wickets.

England scored the runs in 18.2 overs, courtesy opener Sophia Dunkley's 49 off 44 and 18-year-old Capsey's unbeaten 38 that took the hosts over the line.

Chasing 123, the home side was off to a brilliant start with both openers Dunkley and Danni Wyatt (22 off 23 balls) sharing a 70-run stand before India triggered a mini collapse by snaring

### SCOREBOARD

#### INDIA

Shafali Verma b Wong 5 (12b), Smriti Mandhana c Ecclestone b Smith 9 (8b, 2x4), S. Meghan c Wyatt b Davies 0 (9b), Harmanpreet Kaur b Glenn 5 (14b), D. Hemalatha c Jones b Glenn 0 (2b), Deepi Sharma c Jones b Ecclestone 24 (25b), Sneh Rana lbw b Ecclestone 8 (15b), Richa Ghosh lbw b Ecclestone 33 (22b, 5x4), Pooja Vastrakar (not out) 19 (11b, 2x4), Radha Yadav (not out) 5 (2b, 1x4); Extras (b-1, w-10); Total (for eight wkts. in 20 overs): 122.

#### FALL OF WICKETS

1-11 (Shafali, 2.4 overs), 2-15 (Smriti, 3.4), 3-19 (Meghana, 5.4), 4-21 (Hemalatha, 6.3), 5-35 (Harmanpreet, 9.5), 6-52 (Sneh, 12.6), 7-75 (Deepi, 16.1), 8-103 (Richa, 18.5).

#### ENGLAND BOWLING

Smith 4-0-19-1, Davies 4-0-35-1, Wong 4-1-24-1, Glenn 0-0-3-0.

#### FALL OF WICKETS

1-10 (Wyatt, 9.5), 2-72 (Dunkley, 11.2), 3-79 (Jones, 12.5).

#### INDIA BOWLING

Renuka 4-0-33-0, Deepi 3.2-0-30-0, Radha 4-1-14-1, Sneh 4-0-32-1, Pooja 3-0-16-1.

#### Toss:

England. **Player-of-the-Match:** Ecclestone.

**FALL OF WICKETS**

1-70 (Wyatt, 9.5), 2-72 (Dunkley, 11.2), 3-79 (Jones, 12.5).

#### INDIA BOWLING

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#### INDIA BOWLING

TN men  
triumph

## JK Tyre Silver Jubilee racing edition this weekend

### SZ BASKETBALL

SPORTS BUREAU

Tamil Nadu men and Kerala women won the titles in the South Zone senior basketball championships at the Rajiv Gandhi indoor stadium at Puducherry on Friday.

Tamil Nadu men beat back a spirited challenge from Kerala in the last league match to triumph.

Telangana, which edged out Andhra Pradesh 73-69, finished third.

Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Telangana qualified for the Nationals. Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka qualified for the senior Nationals.



**Battle royale:** Royal Enfield Continental GT Cup, that has been changed to a new format, the Pro-Am Series, is expected to provide keen competition. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## Maria: the globe-trotting super tennis mom

Believes a sporting career and family can go hand in hand



**Home away from home:** Maria with her daughters at the Chennai Open. ■ K.V. SRINIVASAN

N. SUDARSHAN

CHENNAI  
Tennis has long been hailed as one of the more gender-equal and inclusive sports. Of late, its warm embrace of players who continue to compete after becoming mothers has only added to this reputation.

From Serena Williams to Victoria Azarenka to Sania Mirza, all have made successful comebacks from maternity breaks. One among those is Tatjana Maria, 35 and a mother of two, who reached the semifinals at Wimbledon in July. It was just a year after her second child, Cecilia, was born. In Chennai for the WTA Chennai Open, Maria, the World No. 84, revelled in family time, with her husband and two children in tow, even

as she confounded opponents with her slice and dice game.

"I love to be a mom and travel with my kids. That is one of the most important things for me," Maria said. "This is nice because it is a new tournament. All year long it is the same set of tournaments and it is nice to have a new one in India."

In sport, the notion that players should break out in their early teens, build successful careers and only then look to experience the other pleasures in life is deeply entrenched. But Maria doesn't believe in such strait-jacketing.

"Everybody has to see what is best for them," says the German. "All my life I wanted to have a family. In the end, I was able to have a

family and also play tennis. If I am not with my kids and husband, I will not be playing tennis."

But managing practise, playing time, school time for the children (online classes) and leisure is a tough balancing act. Maria, though, doesn't seem to mind.

"I try to enjoy it as much as I can," she said. "Every morning I am out on the tennis court with my daughter (Charlotte). We are one of the first. After that we have school. All day long there is a programme. But I like it."

"After the second child, I asked Charlotte if she wanted to have a brother or sister. She said 'No. we have to keep travelling.' So to see her enjoy travel and new cultures is great."

## Prolific Kunnummal riding a purple patch

S. DINAKAR  
SALEM

This smooth-stroker with the willow has been gobbling up hundreds since last season. Rohan Kunnummal has a staggering 425 runs in only four Ranji Trophy matches at 106.25 with three hundreds.

On Thursday, Kunnummal added yet another First Class hundred, an innings of 143 on his Duleep Trophy debut against North.

**Initial nervousness**  
The 24-year-old Kerala top-order batter admitted he was a tad nervous and felt the pressure early on in his innings.

"Mayank [Agarwal] bhai helped me out, calming my nerves. Then I began to play my game," Kunnummal told *The Hindu*.

What is the favourite shot of this stroke-maker? "The cover-drive. Even today, the cover-drive I played off Navdeep Saini was my best shot". And he dances down to the spinners, alters their length. "I like to put pressure on the spinners," he said.

Kunnummal credits his tremendous run of scores to all the fitness work he put in ahead of the last season with trainer Vysakh Krishna.

"Physically, I was not strong and it was affecting my performance. I did a lot of work with Vysakh. It helped big time," said Kun-

nummal. "Can't be consistent without being physically fit," he said.

An aggressive opener Kunnummal is influenced by Virender Sehwag. "I like his style, but do not want to copy him."

"Sachin 'Paaji' [Tendulkar] remains his all-time favourite but Kunnummal also admires Suresh Raina "for the number of close matches he has won for India and CSK and the game-changing energy he brings on to the field."

He finds Eoin Morgan's story inspiring. "He came from Ireland, captained England and won the World Cup."

On his remarkable form, Kunnummal said, "Grateful to God. Like to remain in the present and enjoy the moment."

The new kid on the block has sped off the blocks.



Kunnummal. ■ R. RAGU

grid. The other new addition will be the JK Tyre presents Endurance League Cup powered by United CRA.

The FLGB4 grid will witness 25 seasoned racing stars such as Arya Singh (Dark Don Racing), Amir Sayed and T.S. Diljith (both Ahura Racing) and Ruhaan Alva and Mira Erda from Msport battling it out for top honours. But the big name missing will be defending champion Vishnu Prasad.

Besides the premier Formula LGB4 and the JK Tyre Novice Cup, this year's edition will have the format of the Royal Enfield Continental GT Cup changed to the Pro-Am Series with 10 professional and 15 amateur riders competing on the same

"JK Tyre has been the driver of opportunities for the growth of motorsport in India for decades. We are extremely committed to providing the young and budding talent a wide range of opportunities and a definite platform to grow," said Sanjay Sharma, Head of Motorsports, JK Tyre.

"Bearing testimony to our commitment is the fact that we are the only manufacturer to have run a championship in India for 25 continuous years. We're glad to commence the 25th edition of this coveted championship this year and excited to continue to keep growing our legacy," he added.

**Boucher to coach MI**

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
MUMBAI

Outgoing South Africa coach Mark Boucher will coach Mumbai Indians in the next Indian Premier League season, the franchise said on Friday.

He will replace Sri Lanka's Mahela Jayawardene as coach of Mumbai, the IPL's most successful franchise, when the league resumes next year.

**PBKS ropes in Bayliss**

Meanwhile, Punjab Kings appointed Trevor Bayliss as the team's new head coach ahead of the next season.

Bayliss will replace Anil Kumble after the latter's contract was not renewed.

### AROUND THE CITY

Purasawalkam.

**The results: Snooker (best-of-three frames):**

Venkateswara Rao (SVS) bt K. Natarajan (TNBSA) 2-1.

Rajan (TC) bt P.S. Lukshmanen (ABC) 2-0.

Gowri (TC) bt Captain Seran (GYM) 2-0.

Rajababu (Snook City) bt Murali Krishnan (ABC) 2-1.

M. Ramachandran (SLVS) bt Mohammed Ali (YMC) 2-0; C. Sreenivasan (ABC) bt Arunkumar (TNSC) 2-0;

Jai 214/5 in 27 overs (R. Ram Shreyas 60, M. Prasanna Venkatesh 81) bt Mani Memorial 105/6 in 27 overs (R. Ajith 38).

Ibrahim (SSA) bt Sarangarajan (TNSC) 2-0.



S. Ajay Shankar (Royal Gems, 100).

### ENGAGEMENTS

**Cricket: TNCA league, I div, sixth round, day one:** MRC-A vs. India Pistons (SSN); Vijay vs. MCC (IC-Guru Nanak); Nelson SC vs. Alwarpet (Nelson Wahe Guru-A); Grand Slam vs. UFC (T. Nagar) (SRMC, turf); Globe Trotters vs. Sea Hawks (MRF-Pachaiyappa's); Swaraj vs. Jolly Rovers (IITM-Chemplast), 9.30 a.m. III div-A: Bharathi vs. National RC (Jones Krish, turf); Jubilee vs. KMC (SMK Fomra-B); SPIC RC vs. Sir MCT.M Old Boys (VB Nest).  
**Sir Theagaraya RC vs.** Triplicane SC (T-Murugappa); S. Rly SA vs. ICF SA (S. Rly); Reserve Bank RC vs. Madras Aryan Club (Venkateswara) V div-C: Saidapet Gymkhana vs. Triplicane RC (Sumangali Homes); Harnath vs. National (Dhanalakshmi-A); Netaji vs. Ebenezer, OCF ground, 8 a.m. Kancheepuram DCA league, II div: GE (T&D) vs. Blue Bird (7.30 a.m.); Avengers Penetron vs. Syndicate (12.30 p.m.), Dhaanish Ahmed COE (Padappai).  
**Cue Sports:** Associated Brothers Club (ABC) masters State open billiards & 15 Red snooker tournaments, ABC premises (Purasawalkam), 10.30 a.m. onwards.  
**Tennis:** WTA Chennai Open, SDAT stadium (Nungambakkam), 5 p.m.

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# Decoding F1's matrix of success: the interplay between man and machine

A car's inherent characteristics determine its racing destiny, but what the driver brings to the table is pivotal. As Verstappen has demonstrated in 2022, great drivers do not merely extract the best from their car; they also raise its ceiling of development

S. DIPAK RAGAV

In Formula One, although drivers are the heroes who make the sport what it is, the car is the main differentiator in determining who wins a race. A rough but informed estimate of the car-to-driver contribution would peg it at 80:20 in favour of the machinery. So, you can put Lewis Hamilton or Max Verstappen in the slowest car on the grid and they are unlikely to challenge for podiums or consistent point-scoring finishes.

But as we have seen this year, that 20% a driver brings to the table makes a huge difference to a team's fortunes. The quality of this contribution is what separates the elite drivers from the very good and good.

#### Style and substance

While there are universal technical principles drivers use to extract the best possible lap time, there are subtle differences in how they adapt their individual driving styles to what the machines demand; in a sport of such fine margins, this is often pivotal.

In 2022, we have seen wide disparities between team-

mates. Be it Verstappen dominating Sergio Perez at Red Bull or Lando Norris putting Daniel Ricciardo in the shade at McLaren, the gulf between teammates is huge.

A car can have several characteristics based on how it has been developed – like being quick on the straights if it has low drag or sharp through fast corners if it can generate high downforce. Some vehicles will be good through slow corners where traction is important, making the car stable under acceleration and preventing it slipping.

Another trait that commentators often speak about is a car having understeer (car turns less than the steering input) or oversteer (car turns more than the steering input), and this can play a huge role for drivers depending on what they prefer.

It has, to an extent, influenced the way the title fight has unfolded, especially with Verstappen now all set to seal his second World championship.

At the start of the year, Perez and Verstappen were quite evenly matched in a Red Bull that was stable but not as quick as the Ferrari. It was

also heavier than the minimum weight prescribed by the regulations, costing it lap time.

After the Monaco GP, which Perez won, he was trailing his teammate by only 15 points. But as Red Bull developed its car and it began to have a more 'pointy' front end, it started to suit Verstappen more.

"There are some inherent characteristics which are the fundamental basis of the car. It will be designed by the team in the way they think will give the best performance in terms of downforce and outright pace. After that, you can change set-ups in terms of suspension or aero based on driver preference," says Karun Chandhok, India's second F1 driver, when asked how drivers adapt to different cars.

#### The Red Bull case

"When you say Red Bull has a pointy front end, it means when the driver turns the steering wheel, it is very responsive and points quickly. That needs a driver like Max who prefers to have a car [re-

spond] like [that] when they first turn the wheel but also can control the rear from sliding. When the rear slides, it affects the confidence of a driver."

"This year's car was calmer at the start of the year and you saw Perez was closer to Max. As the car has developed with more downforce and they made changes to the original car, it has favoured Max and Checo [Perez] is not able to extract the same level of performance," adds Chandhok.

After his Dutch GP win, Verstappen spoke about the challenge at the start of the year: "When the regulations change then sometimes you have to start over. At the beginning of the year, it was a bit of adaptation, which is not fully to my liking. Also, the car was quite heavy... that doesn't help the balance of the car because it becomes a bit lazy and also [the weight distribution] in the wrong place, and that's why it understeered quite a bit. With reducing the weight it all felt a bit more agile."

Chandhok also explains that greats like Michael Schumacher, Hamilton (especially in his McLaren days) and Ver-

stappen prefer a car with a bit of oversteer as they can use their talent to control the rear end.

This year, Mercedes has loads of performance that they can see in the wind tunnel, but balance issues on track mean it doesn't give the driver confidence to attack the corners. That is an example of why a driver is still very important."

Drivers like Carlos Sainz, on the other hand, prefer understeer – "My driving is really aggressive," Sainz said, "I can make a car rotate myself with the steering wheel and pedals. Give me an understeering car and don't worry, I'll make it turn."

Asked if it is desirable to have an oversteering car, Chandhok says, "Ultimately it's about personal preference. If you have understeer, but he has also been able to drive its development towards his style as the team knows he can extract more out of it."

"The teams exist to achieve the best result possible," says Chandhok, "and what they will naturally gravitate towards is, developing a car that their faster driver can extract performance from. If you have two drivers of similar style, that is the best-case scenario but often one is going to lose out. Teams will use faster drivers to give them the direction to develop the car. That is what has happened with Perez. He was able to extract good lap time in races like Saudi



periods of dominance are not possible without the driver directing the car's evolution.

"It is this ability of a great driver to maximise everything that has taken Verstappen within striking distance of a second title, as he leads Charles Leclerc by 116 points and his teammate by a staggering 125. With a lesser driver than Verstappen, Red Bull would likely have been trailing in both the drivers' and constructors' championships."

As Verstappen himself said, citing Hamilton's 2020 drive in Istanbul, "Your car is super important, but when you are an exceptional driver, like of course Lewis is as well, you make a difference over your teammate. One that stood out was Tukey when it was very slippery – just staying calm, not making mistakes. You end up winning a race like that and that's what good drivers do. They make the difference compared to other fast drivers [who are] not as good. So, yeah, the car is very dominant in Formula 1 but between teammates, only one can win. That's where you have to make the difference."

**Your car is super important, but when you are an exceptional driver... you make a difference... compared to other fast drivers [who are] not as good. So, yeah, the car is very dominant in Formula 1 but between teammates, only one can win**

MAX VERSTAPPEN, reigning F1 champion



## STACKING UP



### ATP Men's Top 15

#	PLAYER	AGE	POINTS	EVENTS
1	Carlos Alcaraz	19	6,740	17
2	Casper Ruud	23	5,850	23
3	Rafael Nadal	36	5,810	10
4	Daniil Medvedev	26	5,065	19
5	Alexander Zverev	25	5,040	19
6	Stefanos Tsitsipas	24	4,810	22
7	Novak Djokovic	35	3,570	11
8	Cameron Norrie	27	3,550	24
9	Andrey Rublev	24	3,390	24
10	Hubert Hurkacz	25	3,355	22
11	Jannik Sinner	21	3,200	21
12	Taylor Fritz	24	3,055	23
13	Felix Auger-Aliassime	22	2,950	24
14	Pablo Carreno Busta	31	2,510	23
15	Matteo Berrettini	26	2,360	18

#### Top Indians ▶

Ramkumar Ramanathan  
Rank 276 ▼ 37 spots

Prajnesh Gunneswaran  
Rank 335 ▼ 6 spots



### F1 Drivers' standings

#	DRIVER	TEAM	POINTS	WINS
1	Max Verstappen	Red Bull Racing	335	11
2	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	219	3
3	Sergio Perez	Red Bull Racing	210	1
4	George Russell	Mercedes	203	0
5	Carlos Sainz	Ferrari	187	1
6	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	168	0
7	Lando Norris	McLaren	88	0
8	Esteban Ocon	Alpine	66	0
9	Fernando Alonso	Alpine	59	0
10	Valtteri Bottas	Alfa Romeo	46	0
11	Pierre Gasly	AlphaTauri	22	0
12	Kevin Magnussen	Haas	22	0
13	Sebastian Vettel	Aston Martin	20	0
14	Daniel Ricciardo	McLaren	19	0
15	Mick Schumacher	Haas	12	0
16	Yuki Tsunoda	AlphaTauri	11	0
17	Zhou Guanyu	Alfa Romeo	6	0
18	Lance Stroll	Aston Martin	5	0
19	Alex Albon	Williams	4	0
20	Nyck de Vries	Williams	0	0
21	Nicholas Latifi	Williams	0	0

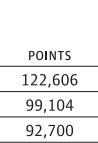
Max Verstappen



### Badminton Men's ranking

#	PLAYER	POINTS	EVENTS
1	Viktor Axelsen	122,606	36
2	Kento Momota	99,104	23
3	Anders Antonsen	92,700	31
4	Lee Zii Jia	91,578	34
5	Chou Tien Chen	91,126	33
6	Anthony Sinisuka Ginting	86,279	30
7	Loh Kean Yew	81,594	27
8	Jonatan Christie	79,662	31
9	Lakshya Sen	75,874	34
10	Kunlavut Vitidsarn	70,849	31
11	Rasmus Gemke	69,701	31
12	K. Srikanth	68,431	39
13	Ng Ka Long Angus	68,307	29
14	Lee Cheuk Yiu	66,461	29
15	Wang Tzu Wei	64,416	34

Lakshya Sen  
Rank 9



### Test Batting

#	PLAYER	RATING	CAREER BEST
1	Joe Root	887	923
2	Marnus Labuschagne	885	936
3	Babar Azam	879	879
4	Steve Smith	848	947
5	Rishabh Pant	801	801
6	Kane Williamson	786	919
7	Usman Khawaja	766	779
8	Dimuth Karunaratne	748	782
9	Rohit Sharma	746	813
10	Jonny Bairstow	719	772

K. Srikanth  
Rank 12



### Badminton Women's ranking

#	PLAYER	POINTS	EVENTS
1	Akane Yamaguchi	112,013	31
2	Tai Tzu Ying	110,845	22
3	Chen Yu Fei	105,406	22
4	An Se Young	105,353	36
5	Carolina Marin	96,080	24
6	Nozomi Okuhara	88,810	18
7	P.V. Sindhu	87,218	34
8	Ratchanok Intanon	86,749	32
9	Pornpawee Chochuwong	78,265	37

# Can wizard Potter survive the Bridge curse?

The 47-year-old tactical miracle-worker takes charge at a critical juncture in Chelsea's life. Will he be afforded the patience previous managers at the football club have been denied?

## THE POTTER FILE

BORN: May 20, 1975 in Solihull, England

### PLAYING CAREER

- Began as a left-back at second-tier Birmingham City in 1992
- Was a part of the Southampton side that recorded a famous 6-3 win over Manchester United during the 1996-97 Premier League season
- Had spells at West Brom, York City and Boston United before ending his career at League Two Macclesfield Town in 2005

### COACHING CAREER

- Worked as technical director for the Ghana women's team at the 2007 World Cup and became assistant coach for Leeds Metropolitan University.
- Named manager of fourth division Swedish side Ostersund in 2010 and guided it to the top flight in 2015-16
- Won the Swedish Cup in 2017 and led Ostersund to the Europa League group stage
- Appointed head coach of Championship club Swansea City ahead of the 2018-19 season, where it finished 10th
- Took over at Brighton & Hove Albion in May 2019 and led it to 15th, 16th and ninth, its highest top-flight finish, in his three seasons there

REUTERS  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

For some, Graham Potter's appointment as Chelsea manager came out of left field. But for those who work within football, have managed against Potter or are fans of the tactical and analytical aspects of the game, it was a no-brainer.

When you get rid of Thomas Tuchel, widely regarded as an astute and influential coaching mind, you cannot afford to skimp on training-ground pedigree. While Potter wasn't the biggest or most fashionable name available, his work – and the respect it has evoked among truly great managers – convinced Chelsea's top bosses.

Potter was confirmed as Chelsea manager last week, replacing Tuchel – the club's Champions League-winning manager from last year – who was ruthlessly fired by chairman Todd Boehly. The American billionaire, who heads the consortium that completed a 4.25 billion

pounds takeover of the club, said he was "thrilled" to bring Potter to Stamford Bridge. "He is a proven coach and an innovator in the Premier League who fits our vision," Boehly said.

Potter was mooted as a candidate for the Manchester United job eventually filled by Erik ten Hag after masterminding Brighton's highest-ever league finish of ninth last season despite operating on a limited budget. Under his stewardship, the Seagulls are fourth this season. But when Chelsea – currently sixth after spending around 250 million pounds in the summer window – came calling, Brighton was unable to stand in his way as he had a release clause in his contract.

### Strong reputation

The 47-year-old Potter, who had spells at Swedish side Ostersund and Swansea City before taking charge of Brighton on England's south coast, has earned a reputation as a coach who can significantly improve his players. He is widely admired as one of the country's best tacticians and coaches a brave, entertaining style that has won plaudits if not trophies.

Potter's teams play fluid, progressive football, driven by slick passing, constant rotation and heavy possession

– even against 'bigger' teams. But while he emphasises a strong creative identity, he also sets his team up to defuse the opposition's weapons. And, importantly, he is an adept coach of pressing and counter-pressing schemes, a non-negotiable in today's game.

Potter's flexible style, innovative methods and attention to detail at Brighton have won many admirers including Pep Guardiola and Jürgen Klopp, two of the game's most successful managers and also two of its most significant figures, given their influence on its evolution.

"He obviously has a clear idea about football and he is doing a brilliant job," Liverpool manager Klopp said of Potter a year ago. "He has brought a clear identity to how he wants his teams to play. He is an innovator and is adventurous."

Manchester City manager Guardiola's praise was even more emphatic. "We were in front of the best English manager right now," Guardiola said after a fixture between City and Brighton. "As a spectator, I like to watch these teams. I like watching Brighton on play. I recognise it. When I was a football player, I would love to play in this team."

With a background in higher education after a modest

playing career – it included eight Premier League appearances at Southampton, but was mostly spent in the lower leagues – Potter is reputed for his out-of-the-box approach to man-management.

Not afraid to push his players outside their comfort zone, he once got his Ostersund squad to perform the ballet Swan Lake for the local community. It was in keeping with his philosophy of challenging his players' mental processes and decision-making under pressure and encouraging them to use dance and music as forms of self-expression.

### A step up

Potter understandably views his move to London as a step forward in his career, an opportunity, after years with a small purse, to show what he can do with an expensively assembled squad. "It's the start of a really exciting period, I think," he said in an interview with the club's website. "[I spoke with] the new ownership who I was really, really excited with and impressed by. The history of the club speaks for itself, but it's about trying to create that again in our own way. And to compete at the top and try and create a winning team, that's a fantastic opportunity for me."

But while Boehly has been

convinced that Potter is the man to instil a long-term ethos and identity throughout the club at the start of the new era, the demands he will face at the Bridge will contrast sharply with those at his previous clubs. Chelsea will give Potter his first taste of dealing with the egos of superstar players, while coping with ultra-demanding new US owners.

"I try to find some common ground, try to build relationships, to try to communicate effectively on a daily basis and build respect, trust and honesty, so my starting point would always be the person first," Potter said, about the challenge of dealing with big egos. "I think that you have to understand that they're human beings first, and the key thing is to try to understand them, understand what motivates them and understand what they're like as people."

### Tricky situation

The Englishman is also assuming charge at a volatile juncture in the club's life. It's the first season after the end of the 19-year tenure of Roman Abramovich, the Russian oligarch who had to sell the London club after being sanctioned by the British government for what it called his enabling of Russian President Vladimir Putin's "brutal and

barbaric invasion" of Ukraine.

Under Boehly, there has been a restructuring at the top, with the removal of senior personnel such as Petr Cech (technical advisor), Bruce Buck (chairman) and Marina Granovskaya (director), seemingly to ensure the club was breaking free from the Abramovich era.

The upheaval hasn't been

confined to the boardroom. There has been significant stress in the dressing room as well. Prior to his sacking, Tuchel's relationships with his players had reportedly deteriorated and there were tensions with the club hierarchy.

It's not the best of circumstances to inherit, and Potter will have to find his feet quickly. "He'll be expected to win every week, to challenge for trophies," said former Chelsea player and assistant coach Jody Morris. "It's totally different to being in a club where you are expected to be mid-table and can go a couple of months without winning a game. You go a couple of games without winning at Chelsea and it'll be totally different."

Potter's first match in charge – a 1-1 draw against RB Salzburg in the Champions League on Wednesday – will have given him a sense of the size of his task. His first night in the Bridge's home dugout

attracted more attention and scrutiny than the rest of his career. He was talked about and judged constantly, with 'experts' attempting to read meaning into his smallest twitches. He will need to win to keep the media off his back. It will also be interesting to observe how much patience the club's owners have with him if the results aren't immediately positive.

### The tenure question

Boehly did hand Potter a five-year contract and spoke about looking forward to "supporting him, his coaching team and the squad in realising their full potential in the coming months and years". But it remains to be seen whether Chelsea, renowned for regularly changing managers during the previous regime and after Tuchel's swift exit under the current dispensation, allows Potter the time to bed in, so his ideas can take root.

**[Potter] obviously has a clear idea about football and he is doing a brilliant job. He has brought a clear identity to how he wants his teams to play. He is an innovator and is adventurous**

JURGEN KLOPP, Liverpool manager

## GAME THEORY

### International cricket's most prolific century-makers

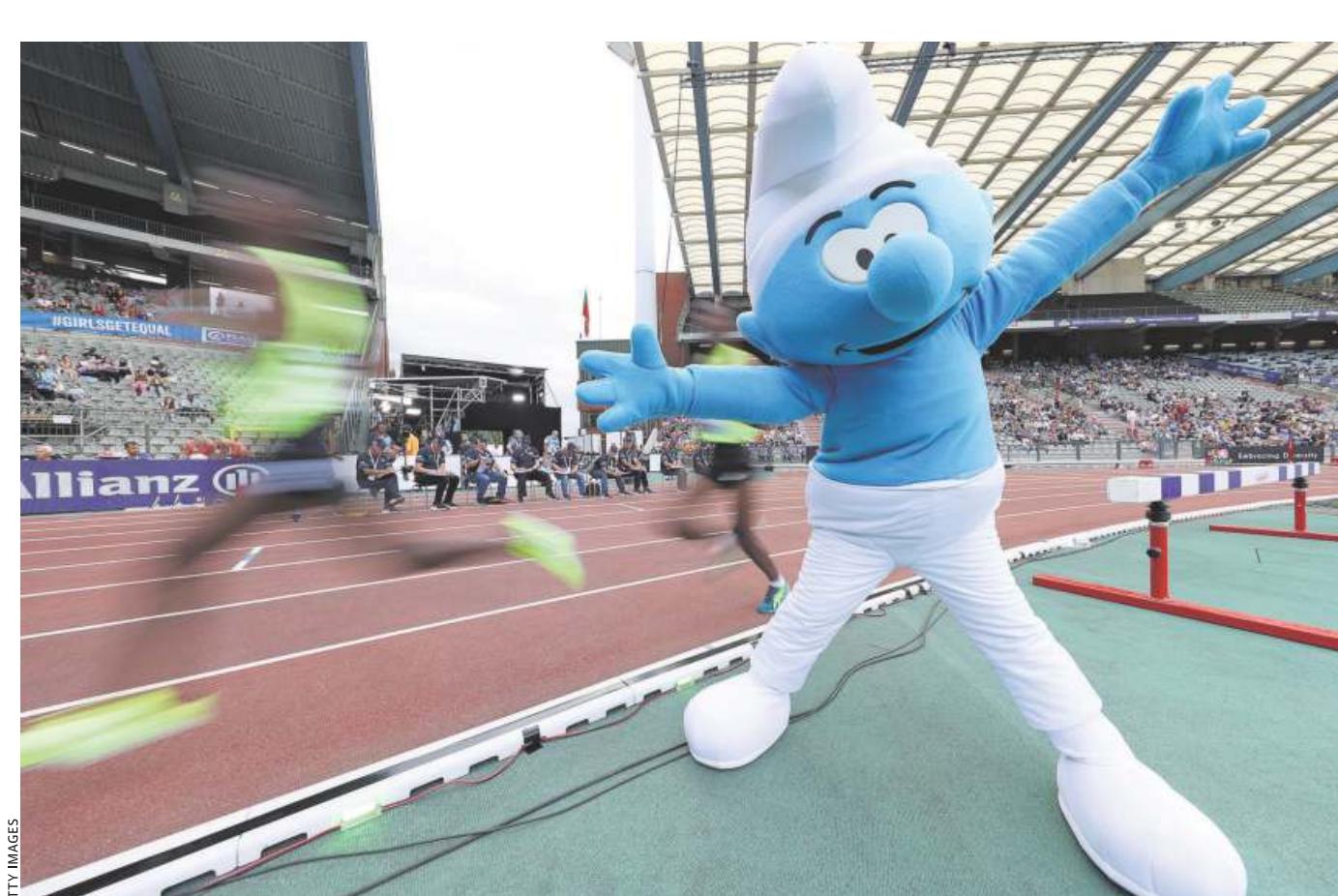
Virat Kohli, who ended a century drought that lasted more than 1,000 days at the Asia Cup, pulled level with Ricky Ponting on the list of batters with the most international hundreds (Tests, ODIs, T20Is). The Indian's first T20I ton was his 71st overall. Only Sachin Tendulkar has more



Player	International innings	100s	Break-up: Tests   ODIs   T20Is	Innings per 100
Sachin Tendulkar	782	100	51   49   0	7.82
Virat Kohli	522	71	27   43   1	7.35
Ricky Ponting	668	71	41   30   0	9.41
Kumar Sangakkara	666	63	38   25   0	10.57
Jacques Kallis	617	62	45   17   0	9.95
Hashim Amla	437	55	28   27   0	7.95
Mahela Jayawardene	725	54	34   19   1	13.43
Brian Lara	521	53	34   19   0	9.83
Rahul Dravid	605	48	36   12   0	12.60
AB de Villiers	484	47	22   25   0	10.30
Joe Root	405	44	28   16   0	9.20
David Warner	403	43	24   18   1	9.37
Chris Gayle	551	42	15   25   2	13.12
Sanath Jayasuriya	651	42	14   28   0	15.50
Rohit Sharma	431	41	8   29   4	10.51
Younis Khan	491	41	34   7   0	11.98
Shivnarine Chanderpaul	553	41	30   11   0	13.49
Matthew Hayden	348	40	30   10   0	8.70
Ross Taylor	510	40	19   21   0	12.75
Steve Smith	320	40	28   12   0	8.00
Mohammad Yousuf	432	39	24   15   0	11.08
Tillakaratne Dilshan	527	39	16   22   1	13.51

SOURCE: espncricinfo.com

## PICTURE THIS



### Comic relief

Papa Smurf, the mascot for the Allianz Memorial Van Damme 2022 in Brussels earlier this month, strikes a pose, as competitors in the 1 Hour Men Final streak past him.

The event, which was part of the 2022 Diamond League series, chose Papa Smurf because of the

character's Belgian connection. He is one of the protagonists of the Smurfs, a Belgian comic franchise, which, as the kids know, deals with the adventures of a fictional colony of small, blue humanoid characters who live in mushroom-shaped homes in the forest.

Mascots are typically animal-inspired characters, played by

human beings in costume.

In sport, mascots have been used by teams and tournaments – most notably by the Olympics, the football World Cup and American franchises – for a variety of reasons.

They give a tangible form to the team or event's identity, spirit and personality. They also bring with them an air of festivity and

are popular with children; many mascots develop a fan following for their high-jinks, designed to entertain the audience during breaks in play.

In addition to their entertainment value, mascots also offer valuable commercial potential – in terms of merchandise sales – especially if they are well-loved.