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ALL-ROUND SHOW
Gill and bowlers give India a 2-1 lead in T20I series

SPORT » PAGE 17

West Bengal suit against CBI probes maintainable: SC

Plea raises 'questions concerning the wider ramifications of federalism', Bench observes, dismissing Centre's claim that the CBI is 'independent'

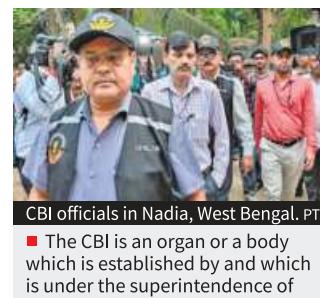
Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday upheld the maintainability of an original suit filed by West Bengal, which accuses the Centre of "constitutional overreach" and violating federalism by unilaterally employing the Central Bureau of Investigation without the State's prior consent.

A Bench of Justices B.R. Gavai and Sandeep Mehta refused to accept the Union government's preliminary objection that it was wrongly made a defendant in the suit as it did not control the CBI. "The very establishment, exercise of

Key takeaways

In rejecting the Centre's claim that it did not control the CBI, the court clarified the hierarchy of operations



- The powers of superintendence of the Centre will not relate to the superintendence of investigation of a particular case
- The CBI will be entitled to investigate the offences independently. However, that will not water down the administrative control and superintendence of the DSPE that vests with the Centre

powers, extension of jurisdiction, the superintendence of the DSPE [Act], all vest with the Government of India," Justice Gavai, authoring the verdict, said.

The court reminded the

Centre that the DSPE Act mandated the State's prior consent to a CBI probe within its jurisdiction.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 12

Divorced Muslim women entitled to secular remedy: SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday held that divorced Muslim women are entitled to maintenance under the "secular" Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

The court agreed with *amicus curiae*, senior advocate Gaurav Agrawal, that a remedy under the secular statutory provision of Section 125 of the Cr.P.C cannot be foreclosed for divorced Muslim women by virtue of enactment of a personal law remedy under the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986. A divorced Muslim woman is entitled to all rights of maintenance available to other equally situated women in the country.

A separate but concurring judgment by a two-judge Bench of Justices B.V.



The top court was hearing an appeal against a Telangana High Court order in the matter.

Nagarathna and Augustine Goerge Masih came on an appeal filed by a Muslim man challenging a Telangana High Court decision upholding though modifying a Family Court order allowing his wife, whom he had divorced via *triple talaq*, interim maintenance under Section 125 of Cr.P.C.

CONTINUED ON
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MORE REPORTS
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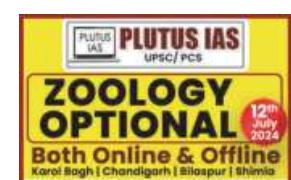
IN BRIEF

Rajasthan budget promises 4 lakh jobs in 5 years

JAIPUR
Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Diya Kumari, who also holds the finance portfolio, on Wednesday presented the State's budget for 2024-25 and announced the creation of four lakh jobs in five years. » Page 4

Ex-police officers chargesheeted in ISRO spying case

KOCHI
The CBI has chargesheeted four former Kerala Police officers and an ex-IB official in connection with the alleged framing of space scientist Nambi Narayanan in the ISRO espionage case. » Page 6



Tragedy on Expressway



The police inspect a bus involved in an accident with a milk tanker on the Lucknow-Agra Expressway in Unnao, U.P., on Wednesday. Eighteen persons were killed and 21 injured. PTI (FULL REPORT ON PAGE 12)

Caste discrimination in prisons must end, says CJI

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday indicated its intention to ask the Union Home Ministry to intervene with the States to overhaul their prison manuals and wipe out hardly acknowledged but existing practices of caste-based discrimination of prisoners.

Though States such as Uttar Pradesh denied caste-based discrimination within their prison walls, a Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud read out portions from its prison documents, which use terms such as "scavenger class". At one point, he referred to a paragraph which said convicts serving simple imprisonment would not be called on to perform me-



The court mooted involving the legal services authorities, at the district and State levels, to do periodic visits to jails to check on prisoners. It reserved the case for judgment.

Earlier, in January, the court had found that prison manuals in more than 10 States, including Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala, continued to have provisions that sanctioned discrimination and forced labour on the grounds of caste in prisons.

Mr. Muralidhar submitted that centuries of caste discrimination continued unabated inside prisons.

"This ground reality has to be altered," Chief Justice Chandrachud remarked.

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CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 12

No material in possession of ED to justify incarceration: Kejriwal to HC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Contesting the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) plea opposing bail to him in a case linked to the now-scraped Delhi excise policy, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday told the High Court here that the Central probe agency implicated him in a "false and concocted story" and there was no material in its possession on the basis of which further incarceration could be justified.

Mr. Kejriwal was arrested by the ED on March 21 on money laundering charges and subsequently by the Central Bureau of Investigation on June 26 in a corruption case linked to the excise policy.

The High Court had stayed the bail granted to him by a trial court on June 20 after the ED approached it.

'Victim of witch-hunt'
In a 130-page reply, the CM said he has been "a victim of witch-hunt" by the agency that "pressured" and "induced" the other co-accused to depose against him in lieu of "not objecting" to their bail.

Mr. Kejriwal said the bail order passed by the trial court "was not only well reasoned but prima facie showed a due application of mind" and the arrest was "illegally made just to harass and humiliate a political opponent".

The High Court listed the matter for further hearing on July 15.

KEJRIWAL IS KINGPIN: ED
» PAGE 2



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IN BRIEF

Prepared to deal with the possibility of floods: Atishi

Public Works Department Minister Atishi on Wednesday visited the Old Railway Bridge and Yamuna Bazar to review monsoon preparedness, and said the government is prepared to deal with any flood-like situation. During the inspection, officials told the Minister that all departments are prepared to set up relief camps in the case of floods, and motorboats, divers and medical teams have also been readied for all possible contingencies. "Even if people have to be evacuated from low-lying areas in the case of a flood, we are ready for that too," she said.

Govt. colluding with discoms, inflating electricity bills: BJP

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva on Wednesday alleged that the Delhi government was "looting" the people of the Capital through inflated electricity bills. "Electricity providers backed by AAP are extorting money from the public in the name of the power purchase adjustment cost," he said. Power Minister Atishi, however, termed the allegations mere "rumours".



Police rescue 100 turtles, nab smuggler from east Delhi

The Delhi police rescued almost 100 turtles and nabbed a smuggler from east Delhi's Geeta Colony. A case has been registered against the accused under the Wildlife Protection Act and Section 11(A) of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. Three Indian-eyed turtles and two Indian softshell turtles, both identified as endangered species, were among those rescued.

Held guilty of contempt, man made to sit in court

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has held a 62-year-old man guilty of contempt of court for using his petition alleging unauthorised construction on certain land parcels situated in Burari as a "weapon" to drive the price of the land down.

As punishment, he was ordered to sit in the court throughout the day.

The court also asked him to deposit ₹1 lakh in the account of the Delhi High Court Legal Service Committee. The man, Pradeep Aggarwal, had filed a petition in 2021 seeking action against unauthorised construction.

Subsequently, one of the parties allegedly carrying out the unauthorised construction claimed that Mr. Aggarwal had demanded a sum of ₹50 lakh from him to withdraw the writ petition.

The court remarked that the status reports filed by the police had revealed that Mr. Aggarwal was in talks with the builders to purchase the property and was, in fact, trying to drive down the price of the land.

'Abuse of court process'
The court, in its July 5 order, said the petitioner's "conduct shows utter disregard and abuse of the court's process, which the court cannot condone".

"Further, even calling

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Material Management Department

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4	38244150	Body side arrangement with flap door	74 Nos.
5	30242435	Lower spring Beam Arrangement	1158 Nos.
6	40245006	60/44/100/ MVA, 132/2x55 KV, 50 Hz single phase Transformer	12 Nos.
7	38242261	Door Hinge Foot For Flap Door of BOXN	17974 Nos.
8	20244667	SET OF CYLINDERS	25 Set.
9	8123WCTP-20A	Manufacture and supply of Curved Switch	557 Set.
10	30241268	NON ASBESTOS BASED "K" TYPE HIGH FRICTION COMPOSITION BRAKE BLOCKS	49688 Nos.
11	40242752	Voltage phase control	376 Nos.
12	40242660	ELECTRONIC RECTIFIER CUM REGULATOR UNIT	04 Nos.
13	40242501	Carbon Brush for TMA 659	4818 Nos.
14	40242765	Anti Vibration Mounting Pad	300 Nos.
15	20232715A	U BOLT M16 FOR SAND PIPE	962 Nos.
16	38244215	APD for Quick coupling	250 Nos.
17	61241621	INDEXABLE INSERTS.TO SANDVIK	188 Nos.
18	38241808	Centre Buffer Coupler Transition arrangement	94 Nos.
19	80241032	Transformer Oil confirming	45671 LTR
20	30241098A	Procurement of 25 micron Electroplated Entire Pin	8500 Nos.
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22	65245003	Design supply erection & commissioning	1 No.
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25	40246588	LED Type Emergency Light	480 Nos.
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27	40242748	Microprocessor controller for Roof mount	124 Nos.
28	20234350C	CONTACTOR FOR TIME RELAY OF MR BLOWER	17 Nos.
29	30241768	PU FOAM LADDER	614 Nos.
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32	40242750	HIGH CAPACITY 500 AMP 750 VOLT	18 Set.
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Principal Chief Material Manager, WCR, Jabalpur

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CM YK

M ND-NDE

AAP chief, accused number 37, was involved in demanding kickbacks from liquor businessmen in exchange for favours in excise policy. Central probe agency says in its seventh supplementary chargesheet: 'South Group' paid ₹100 crore to AAP, which the party used for Goa poll campaign. ED also says

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

AAP members protesting against the arrest of their chief Arvind Kejriwal, in New Delhi. FILE PHOTO

that the excise policy was an outcome of "a conspiracy of quid pro quo" to continuously generate and channel funds to AAP and that the Delhi CM was involved in demanding kickbacks from liquor businessmen in exchange for favours granted in the liquor policy.

The agency said that the now-withdrawn policy was drafted considering favours to be granted to the "South Group", which in return paid ₹100 crore bribe to AAP. It added that the party chief concealed the proceeds of crime using cash transfers and hawala channels.

The agency also said

for comments/suggestions from the public was only an eyewash," the ED added.

In its chargesheet, the probe agency has included statements of AAP's national treasurer and Rajya Sabha member N.D. Gupta, businessman Abhishek Boinpally (a member of the alleged "South Group"), and Buchi Babu, an aide of Bharat Rashtri Samithi leader K. Kavitha, who is also an accused in the case and is currently in judicial custody.

It has also quoted accused-turned-approvers Telugu Desam Party Lok Sabha member Magunta S. Reddy and his son Raghav

Magunta.

The case against the Delhi CM is based on an FIR filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation on the complaint by Lieutenant Governor V.K. Saxena alleging multiple irregularities in the liquor policy.

Others in the cross hairs

The ED has arrested three senior AAP leaders – Mr. Kejriwal, former Deputy CM Manish Sisodia, and party's Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh – in connection with the case. Mr. Singh was granted bail on April 4, while the Delhi CM and his former deputy remain in judicial custody in Tihar Jail.

When will you probe approvers' donations to BJP: AAP to Centre

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Wednesday asked the Union government when it will launch a probe into "crores of rupees paid to the BJP" through electoral bonds by "accused-turned-approvers", one of whom was Mr. Reddy, who went from being the "kingpin" of the alleged scam to a "star approver" and subsequently a "star donor" for the BJP.

Mr. Bharadwaj said the CM had told the trial court about the "dubious donations" to the BJP but no action has been taken so far.

bonds.

Delhi Finance Minister Atishi had also claimed, following Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's arrest on March 21, that the entire case against him was based on the statements of "accused-turned-approvers", one of whom was Mr. Reddy, who went from being the "kingpin" of the alleged scam to a "star approver" and subsequently a "star donor" for the BJP.

Mr. Bharadwaj said the prime accused in the case has turned into the prime witness. This should be investigated," he said.

In the past too, AAP had sought clarification from the BJP over its alleged relationship with Aurobindo Pharma director Sarath Chandra Reddy, an accused-turned-approver in the case who "had donated close to ₹60 crore" to the party through electoral

bonds.

BJP's New Delhi Lok Sabha member Bansuri Swaraj sought a probe against Mr. Bharadwaj, Ms. Atishi and senior AAP leader Durgesh Pathak.

Desperate for a son, man kills twin daughters

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Desperate for a son, a man allegedly killed his three-day-old twin daughters and buried them at a makshikta crematorium near his home in outer Delhi's Sultanpur, the police said on Wednesday.

Neeraj Solanki, 32, a re-

sident of Pooth Kalan, was arrested from Sampla in Haryana's Rohtak on Wednesday after he tried to evade arrest by changing his location several times since the incident on June 3. The accused is a Delhi University graduate and owns multiple rental properties.

The bodies were ex-

humed on June 5, after which a hunt was launched for Mr. Solanki based on a complaint by his wife, said a senior officer.

The police solely relied on technical surveillance to nab him as he kept changing his SIM cards to evade arrest, the officer said.

The complainant told

the police that her in-laws had been allegedly harassing her for dowry since her wedding in 2022 and coerced her into getting a sex determination test.

"She said the accused's family took away her children soon after they were born and told her that they died of an illness," the officer added.

Intensity of rain may increase in coming days'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The intensity of rain is likely to increase in the coming days in the city, the weather department said on Wednesday.

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DELHI

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19 JULY, 8:30 AM
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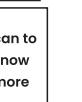
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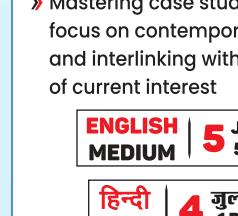
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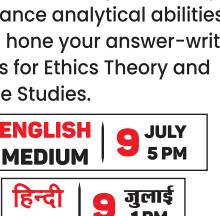
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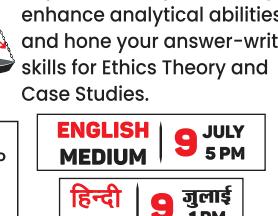
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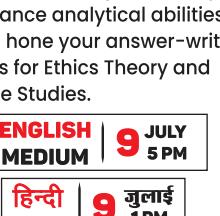
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IN BRIEF



ED summons YouTuber in money laundering case

The Enforcement Directorate has summoned YouTuber Siddharth Yadav alias Elvish Yadav on July 23 for questioning in a money laundering case linked to the suspected use of snake venom as a recreational drug in parties hosted by him, official sources said on Wednesday. The Central probe agency had registered the case in May this year and pressed charges under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after taking cognisance of an FIR and a chargesheet filed against Mr. Yadav and persons linked to the case by the police in Uttar Pradesh's Gautam Buddha Nagar (Noida) district. PTI

Sikkim police form SIT to find missing former State Minister

The Sikkim police on Wednesday set up a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to find 80-year-old former Minister Ram Chandra Poudyal, who went missing on July 7, a police officer said. The octogenarian politician has been reported to be missing after he left home on Sunday morning. He had told his family that he would return by the afternoon that day. The officer said a police team has been sent to Siliguri in neighbouring West Bengal to look for him. The missing former Minister's family members contacted all relatives and friends to locate Mr. Poudyal, but no information on his whereabouts could be found, the officer added. PTI

Open Shambhu border within a week, HC tells Haryana govt.

Press Trust of India
CHANDIGARH

The Punjab and Haryana High Court on Wednesday ordered the Haryana government to remove within a week the barricading set up at the Shambhu border near Ambala, where farmers have been camping since February 13 when their 'Delhi Chalo' march was stopped.

The Haryana government had set up barricades at the Ambala-New Delhi national highway in February when the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM) had announced to move towards Delhi in support of various demands. The directions came on a bunch of petitions filed on farmer-related issues and against the blockade.

Farmers call meeting

Meanwhile, the farmers have called a meeting on July 16 to discuss the matter. Speaking to mediapersons after the hearing, Haryana Additional Advocate General Deepak Sabherwal said the court has directed the Haryana government to remove barricades within seven days. The order is to open the highway, he said.

Rajasthan budget gives boost to health sector, vows job creation

Deputy CM presents ₹4.95-lakh cr. budget with allocation of ₹15,000 cr. for providing tap water connections to 25 lakh rural households, announces new policies to fulfil BJP's promises; party calls it 'welfare document', Oppn. terms it 'disappointing'

Mohammed Iqbal
JAIPUR

Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Diya Kumari on Wednesday presented the State budget for 2024-25 and announced new policies and institutions in sectors such as finance, agriculture, urban development, tourism, transport, and tech-driven economy.

Ms. Kumari, who holds the Finance portfolio, said the full budget with an outlay of ₹4.95 lakh crore would fulfil all major promises of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). She had earlier presented the vote-on-account (interim budget) for the first four months of the financial year on February 8.

Key announcements include allocation of ₹27,000 crore for the health sector and ₹15,000 crore for providing tap water connections to 25 lakh rural households. It also proposed the creation of four lakh jobs in five years, with a large number of them expected to come from reforms, including promoting exports from the State. Ms. Kumari said steps

Who got what

Key takeaways from the budget for 2024-25 presented by Deputy CM Diya Kumari in the Assembly

- ₹15,000 crore for tap water connections to 25 lakh rural households
- ₹27,000 crore to health sector and launch of Rajasthan Digital Health Mission
- Creation of 4 lakh new jobs in the next five years
- Transformation of Rajasthan into a \$350-billion economy by 2047
- Reduction in VAT on CNG and piped natural gas from 14.5% to 10%
- Subsidy of ₹2,500 per hectare to women's self help groups for agricultural works
- 2.08 lakh households, which currently lack electricity, to get domestic connections in 2 years



Rajasthan CM Bhajan Lal Sharma with his deputy Diya Kumari at a press conference in Jaipur on Wednesday. PTI

- Launch of new road projects worth ₹60,000 crore for highways, bypasses and infrastructure enhancement
- co-working stations in selected urban bodies
- 'Green budget' with the target of planting 7 crore trees and engaging 2,000 'Van Mitras'
- WiFi-enabled library

will elicit interest from investors in green infrastructure – will help create new opportunities and bring prosperity to the people.

The budget proposed providing electricity connections to two lakh households, ₹100 crore for construction of a corridor at Khatu Shyam pilgrim centre in Sikar, formation of the Rajasthan Tourism Development Board, construction of nine greenfield expressways, and free tablets with Internet for meritorious school students.

She said the BJP government has taken steps to curb recruitment exam paper leaks, which occurred during the previous regime, and arrested over 100 people in the drive against the paper leak mafia since it came to power.

The BJP termed the budget a "welfare document" focusing on all sections of society, while the Opposition called it "disappointing" and "falling short of public expectations".

CM Bhajan Lal Sharma said the budget presented a vision for the future and aimed at resolving major issues such as water and power shortages.

for fiscal management, creation of "green infrastructure", financing of public sector utilities, and construction of express highways will ensure speedy development and strengthen public welfare.

The budget announced amnesty schemes for energy, transport, value-added tax, mining, stamp, and excise. It estimated revenue receipts of ₹2,64,461 crore, revenue expenditure of ₹2,90,219 crore, and fiscal deficit of ₹70,009 crore,

which is 3.93% of the Gross State Domestic Product.

\$350-billion economy'

Amid repeated disruptions from the Opposition benches, the Deputy CM said the BJP government is committed to making the State a \$350-billion economy as part of the action plan for 'Developed Rajasthan @ 2047', which comprises 10 resolutions. The commitments include infrastructure development, social security, good gover-

nance, and investment promotion, she said.

Congress MLAs disrupted the speech several times seeking a clarification on the government's stand on the Old Pension Scheme, which was restored by the previous regime.

Ms. Kumari said provisions for new tourism, sports, and data centre policies, a proposed Bill for urban development, and a new board for promoting sustainable agriculture and the green budget – which

Hit-and-run case: Mihir Shah remanded in 7-day police custody; father loses Sena post

Ateeq Shaikh
MUMBAI

A court in Sewri on Wednesday remanded Mihir Shah, 24, the prime accused in a hit-and-run case in Mumbai, in seven-day police custody till July 16.

Mr. Shah was arrested from Virar on July 9, two days after he allegedly rammed his luxury car into a two-wheeler, killing the pillion rider, Kaveri Nakawa, and leaving her husband, Pradeep, injured.

The prosecution told the court that the accused had changed his appearance to evade arrest.

Amid mounting pressure from Opposition parties, Shiv Sena secretary Sanjay More issued a statement that the accused's father, Rajesh Shah, has been sacked from his post as deputy leader of the party's Palghar unit on the orders of Chief Minister and party chief Eknath Shinde. The order did not men-



Mihir Shah, the prime accused in the Mumbai hit-and-run case, being produced before a court in Sewri on Wednesday. EMMANUEL YOGIN

tion Mr. Rajesh's removal from the party's primary membership. He was arrested in connection with the case on July 7 and secured bail the next day.

Mr. Shinde assured strict action against the guilty and announced ₹10 lakh aid for the victim's family from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund in addition to legal support.

On the delay in removing Mr. Rajesh from his post, he said, "The govern-

ment will not support the guilty. We have taken action in this case. What is more important? Sacking him or providing support to the family and taking action against the accused?"

'Bulldozer justice'
Shiv Sena (UBT) leader and Worli legislator Aaditya Thackeray met the victim's family and demanded "bulldozer justice".

"In the Pune accident case there was leniency towards the accused due to political connections. The government should ensure that there is no leniency in this case as the accused is affiliated to Shinde's party," NCP (SP) spokesperson Clyde Crasto said.

Ex-AAP Minister Raaj Kumar Anand, party MLA join BJP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Former Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Minister Raaj Kumar Anand, along with the party's Chhattarpur MLA Kartar Singh Tanwar, joined the BJP on Wednesday. Several other AAP leaders, including city councillor Umed Singh Phogat and former AAP in-charge of Himachal Pradesh Ratnesh Gupta, also joined the BJP.

AAP now has 60 MLAs in the 70-member Assembly. The BJP's strength has also reduced from eight to seven after Badarpur legislator Ramvir Singh Bidhuri got elected from the South Delhi Lok Sabha seat.

Mr. Anand was disqualified after he quit AAP on April 10, alleging diversion of funds meant for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

He had also claimed that Dalits were not given adequate representation in the party. He later joined the



Raaj Kumar Anand (right) joins the BJP. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Bahujan Samaj Party and fought the general election from New Delhi Lok Sabha seat on its symbol.

Welcoming the leaders to the BJP, the party's Delhi unit chief, Virendra Sachdeva, said, "Anand could not work for his community and people in the AAP government... We welcome his decision."

Mr. Anand said, "When I was Minister, I realised that people were running around for their work, but the government did not

care. Hence, I resigned."

Responding to the development, AAP claimed that Mr. Anand and Mr. Tanwar joined the BJP under pressure from the Central probe agencies.

"We had said earlier that pressure is being mounted by Central investigation agencies and that he [Anand] will soon join the BJP. Had he gone directly from AAP to the BJP, he would not have been able to abuse Arvind Kejriwal," AAP said in a statement.

The party added that Mr. Anand's leaving AAP and then joining the BSP and fighting the Lok Sabha election to cut AAP's votes was a plan hatched by the BJP.

Regarding Mr. Tanwar, AAP claimed that ₹130 crore of unaccounted cash was recovered from his house in an I-T raid in 2016 and that "the BJP had kept the sword of the probe hanging over his head".



HC questions Karandlaje's claim over cafe blast

Mohamed Imranullah S.
CHENNAI

The Madras High Court on Wednesday questioned the basis on which Union Minister of State for Labour and Employment Shobha Karandlaje had claimed that the bombers in the Rameshwaram Cafe blast in Bengaluru on March 1 had been trained in Tamil Nadu.

Justice G. Jayachandran raised the query during the hearing of a petition filed by the Minister to quash a First Information Report filed against her by the Madurai city cyber crime police on the basis of a complaint lodged by a local resident, C. Thiagarajan, on March 20.

In her petition, the Union Minister denied the charge of having pitted Kannadigas against Tamilians by claiming that the bombers were trained in Tamil Nadu. She said that it was a figment of the complainant's imagination, though her intention was only to raise concerns about the state of internal security in Tamil Nadu.

Ms. Karandlaje also claimed to have apologised to the people of Tamil Nadu and retracted the comments she made to the media through her X handle on March 19.

"Putting the criminal law in motion, despite the clarification, is ex-facie illegal," the Minister said.

Extend SC benefits to Christians: Kerala govt.

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala government has urged the Centre to make necessary amendments to the Constitution of India to extend Scheduled Caste (SC) status to members of the community who converted to Christianity over the years, Minister for Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes O.R. Kelu told the State Assembly on Wednesday.

Currently, the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 provides for only those belonging to Hindu, Sikh or Buddhist communities to be categorised as Scheduled Castes.

In a first, Bihar police to induct three transgender sub-inspectors

Amarnath Tewary
PATNA

For the first time in the State's history, three transgender persons have cleared the recently concluded Bihar Police Subordinate Services Commission (BPSSC) exam and are set to join the police force as sub-inspectors.

The results of the examination, which were announced on Tuesday, saw 1,275 candidates making the cut from more than six lakh aspirants for the police posts. Of them, 822 are men, 450 women, and three belong to the 'third gender' category.

Manvi Madhu Kashyap, a transgender woman, was thrilled with the outcome. "My journey as a transgender person has not been easy. I've had to face taunts from the public, and my fa-



My journey as a transgender person has not been easy, I've had to face taunts, says Manvi Madhu Kashyap. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

my two peers," Ms. Kashyap said.

"She [Ms. Kashyap] was determined to clear the exam, and her hard work finally paid off. I am equally happy for the other two students, and very proud that all three transgender individuals from my coaching institute got selected," said their teacher, Mr. Rahman.

Following a Patna High

Court judgment in 2021, the State government had asked the BPSSC to recruit persons of the third gender into the police services and the Home Department.

The government had also filed an affidavit before a two-member Bench of the High Court, saying that it would post a sub-inspector and four constables from the category in every district of the State.

Numbers challenged

According to the latest State caste survey conducted in 2022, the transgender community makes up only 0.0006% of Bihar's population, with just 825 members.

The numbers, which present a sharp contrast from the 2011 Census that had pegged their number at 40,827 members, have been challenged by several

activists in the State. But the move to induct transgender persons into public service has been lauded by many. "I feel proud of Madhu and her peers. The results will motivate other members of their community to achieve anything they want in life through hard work and dedication," said Patna-based transgender rights activist Reshma Prasad, who works for the upliftment of the community through her organisation Dostana Safar.

Meanwhile, Ms. Kashyap said she hoped her achievement would trigger a change in her village. "I plan to visit home in my police uniform and tell everyone I'm not ashamed of my gender," she said, adding that she hoped she had done her mother and three siblings proud.



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English Medium
22 July | 8 AM

हिंदी माध्यम
29 जुलाई | सुबह 8 बजे



Nitish offers to touch official's feet to expedite road project in Patna

Press Trust of India

A livid Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Wednesday asked a representative of a private company to expedite a road project in Patna, and even offered to touch his feet.

The CM's gesture came at a function in which a stretch of JP Ganga Path, an expressway along the river that promises to ease traffic congestion in the city, was dedicated to the pu-



Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary in Patna on Wednesday. PTI

blic. A presentation on the progress of the project was made at the function, attended by Deputy CMs

Samrat Choudhary and Vijay Kumar Sinha and local MP Ravi Shankar Prasad. Mr. Kumar was visibly

unimpressed and asked the official to ensure that the work was completed by the end of the year.

He sprang to his feet,

saying, "Kahiye to hum aapka pair chhu lete hain (I shall touch your feet if that is what you want.)"

The official scurried back, screaming, "Sir, please don't do this," even as government officials and political leaders got on their feet to prevent the Chief Minister from creating a scene.

Govt. of Bihar											
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Sl.	District	Block	Package No.	New Technolo gy / Bridge	Name of Road / Bridge	Length (in km/ m)	Package wise Amount (Rs. in Lakhs)	Earnest Money (Rs. in Lakhs)	Amount Payable to Works Division		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
1	Kishanganj	Koch Dhaman	BR18P3R 20	Panelled Cement Concrete	MRL42-T01 (PATKOI HAT) TO GANGI HAT VIA KALKALI	6.01	429.21	19.33	8.99	EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-1	
2	Kishanganj	Koch Dhaman	BR18P3R 24	Panelled Cement Concrete	MRL28-DUBRA TO MASTALIYA	5.07	422.28	23.08	8.93	EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-1	
3	Kishanganj	Dighalb ank	BR18P3R 29	Panelled Cement Concrete	MRL06-DORIYA - DHANTOLA - DUBRIKHAS - BARAMASA - TAALBARI - TARABARI SOUTH PATH	12.50	971.88	58.82	20.67	EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-2	
4	Kishanganj	Pothia	BR18P3R 36	Panelled Cement Concrete	MRL36-BIRPUR TO MOLMAGACHH PACHIM TOLA	11.50	600.32	49.79	13.03	EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-2	
5	Kishanganj	Pothia	BR18P3R 43	Panelled Cement Concrete	MRL43-Kttg rcd road talbari chowk to bhuta thana rcd road	7.40	445.78	26.05	9.46	EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-2	
6	Kishanganj	Thakur ganj	BR18P3R 48	Panelled Cement Concrete	MRL42-OLD MECHI (MANGLI CHOWK)TO KARUAMANI	14.25	1,297.3 6	54.70	27.11	EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-2	
7	Kishanganj	Thakur ganj	BR18P3R 55	Panelled Cement Concrete	MRL41-NH32E (PIPRITHAN) TO GOEALDANGGI BENGAL SIMA TAK	14.91	1,455.9 7	58.85	30.37	EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-2	
8	Darbhanga	Bahadurpur	BR10P3R 46	Panelled Cement Concrete	T04-SHAHPUR TO CHINTAMANPUR VIA AHILA, KHERAJPUR	4.21	349.40	26.94	7.55	EE, RWD, Works Division, Darbhanga-1	
9	Kishanganj	Terhagachhi	BR18P3R 77	Bridge	MRL12-RCD ROAD KALIYAGANJ TO GHANIPHSARAI RCC BRIDGE AT RCD ROAD KALIYAGANJ TO GHANIPHSARAI AT CH-0.620KM	17.60	186.87	3.73	3.82	EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-1	
10	Kishanganj	Dighalb ank	BR18P3R 91	Bridge	MRL32-Kast- Tulsia-Gonga mahila- Choudhary basti path RCC BRIDGE AT KAST- TULSIA-GONGA MAHILA- CHODHARY BASTI BASTI PATH AT CH - 1.840KM	40.50	392.99	5.89	8.00	EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-2	
11	Kishanganj	Dighalb ank	BR18P3R 125	Bridge	MRL04-TULSIA CHODHARY BASTI - KACHCHUNALA - BETBAR TO KAMATI PATH RCC BRIDGE AT MRL04-TULSIA CHODHARY BASTI - KACHCHUNALA - BETBAR TO KAMATI PATH AT CH - 2.620KM	40.50	402.23	5.90	8.18	EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-2	
12	Kishanganj	Thakur ganj	BR18P3R 125	Bridge	MRL02-MAHANANDA PUL (SH KTTC) ROAD TO DOGACHHI TETALGURI RCC BRIDGE AT MRL02- MAHANANDA PUL (SH KTTC) ROAD TO DOGACHHI TETALGURI AT CH - 6.506KM	17.50	160.92	3.09	3.29	EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-2	
13	Kishanganj	Thakur ganj	BR18P3R 126	Bridge	MRL02-MAHANANDA PUL (SH KTTC) ROAD TO DOGACHHI TETALGURI RCC BRIDGE AT MAHANANDA PUL (SH KTTC) ROAD TO DOGACHHI TETALGURI AT CH - 7.360KM	36.00	387.03	6.47	7.89	EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-2	
14	Madhubani	Kalauhi	BR21P3R 27	Bridge	T02-NH105 Narar Kothi Chowk to Datuar (Khajauli) Construction Of CRK H. Bridge At Ch 5+575.5m in NH-105 Narar Kothi Chowk to Datuar (Khajauli) Roa	26.33	258.22	1.29	5.20	EE, RWD, Works Division, Madhubani	
15	Kishanganj	Dighalb ank	BR18P3R 61	Panelled Cement Concrete/ Waste Plastics	T14- CHAMARKATTA - TAPPUSCHOOL CHOWK - MAALTOLI - GARWANDANGA - TARABARI PATH	11.20	679.42	50.72	14.64	EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-2	

Date and Time for Downloading of Bidding Documents : From 16.07.2024 (09:30 AM) to 23.07.2024 (12:00 Noon)

Last date and Time of Online Bid Submission : 23.07.2024 up to 15:00 Hours.

(including Scanned copy of Affidavits)

Online Bid Opening Date and Time : 23.07.2024 at 15:30 Hours.

Place, date and time of Pre-Bid Meeting : 19.07.2024 from 15:00 Hours.

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The Cost of Package and Earnest Money is indicative and the actual amount of Earnest Money will be as per uploaded BOQ. Cost of non-refundable Bid Document (Rs.10,00,000 for Bids costing more than Rs. 50 lakh and Rs. 5,000 for Bids costing Rs. 15 lakh to Rs. 50 lakh) and Earnest Money will be submitted online (PMGSY e-tender online Account through PMGSY e-tender portal by Internet Banking only). All concerned please note that the bidding process will not move onward if the Bid Document's Cost (Tender Fee) and Earnest Money is not paid through PMGSY e-tender portal by Internet Banking. No other form of Bid Document cost and Earnest Money will be accepted.

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PR-003653 (R W D) 2024-25

नशे की मार, बर्बाद करें सुखी परिवार।

Engineer-in-Chief-cum- Additional Commissioner-cum-Special Secretary, RWD, Bihar, Patna

CBI chargesheets former Kerala Police, IB officials in ISRO espionage case

The espionage case had stirred a political storm in Kerala in 1994; according to the chargesheet, ex-police officer Vijayan has been booked for assault and use of criminal force against a woman

K.S. Sudhi

KOCHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation has chargesheeted former Kerala Police officers S. Vijayan, Siby Mathews, K. Joshua, and P.S. Jayaprakash and former Intelligence Bureau official R.B. Sreekumar in connection with the alleged framing of space scientist Nambi Narayanan and Maldivian natives Marian Rasheeda and Fausia Hassan in the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) espionage case.

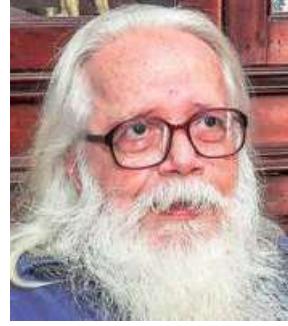
The details of the chargesheet, which was filed last month, were known on Wednesday after copies of the court document were obtained by various parties on the day. The case which began on September 20, 1994 with Mr. Vijayan booking a case

against Ms. Rasheeda had stirred a political storm in Kerala. A section of the Congress leaders, who owed their allegiance to A.K. Antony, used it to secure the resignation of the then Chief Minister K. Karunakaran who allegedly had shielded a senior police officer.

The accused were charged for conspiracy offences, a public servant intentionally creating an incorrect document with the intent to cause harm, fabrication of false evidence, voluntarily causing hurt, voluntarily causing hurt to extort a confession and wrongful confinement.

Mr. Vijayan, the first accused, has also been booked for assault and use of criminal force against a woman with the intent to outrage her modesty, according to the CBI.

The CBI had registered



Nambi Narayanan

The CBI investigation, according to the chargesheet, revealed that Mr. Vijayan played a very active role in the false implication of the victims. He molested Ms. Rasheeda in a hotel room and seized her travel documents without creating any records and obstructed her travel back to Male, it said.

D. Sashikumar, K. Chandersekhar, Mr. Narayanan and K.S. Sharma were arrested on directions from Mr. Mathews without any evidence against them. Mr. Mathews allowed the unlawful interrogation of victims by the Intelligence Bureau officials and allowed their physical and mental torture by the IB officials and created false records, it said. Mr. Sreekumar was responsible for physical and mental torture of arrested victims.

ED searches premises of ex-Minister in Valmiki case

The Hindu Bureau

BENGALURU/KALABURAGI

The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) conducted a simultaneous search of 20 premises linked to accused and suspects in the alleged scam at the Karnataka government-run Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation, where funds up to ₹88 crore were allegedly embezzled.

Premises linked to two ruling Congress MLAs – Ballari Rural MLA B. Nagendra, who resigned as Minister for Scheduled Tribes Welfare on June 6 after the scam broke out, and Raichur Rural MLA Ba-



A view of the apartment complex in Bengaluru, in which the ED held searches at the flat of former Minister B. Nagendra.

sanagouda Daddal, who is the Chairman of the corporation; Parashuram, an accountant at the corporation; and three employees of the Union Bank of India in Bengaluru where the alleged money laundering happened.

sistant to Mr. Nagendra, was detained by the ED team. He was taken to the ED office in Bengaluru and is being questioned, sources said. The searches came a day after Mr. Nagendra and Mr. Daddal were questioned by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the State police on July 9. The SIT has arrested 11 persons and seized ₹14.5 crore.

Others raided include key accused J.J. Padmanabhan, MD of the corporation; Parashuram, an accountant at the corporation; and three employees of the Union Bank of India in Bengaluru where the alleged money laundering happened.

SC refuses to stay HC's pre-arrest bail to Bhavani Revanna

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to immediately stay the anticipatory bail granted to Bhavani Revanna, mother of suspended Janata Dal-Secular MP and rape accused Prajwal Revanna, in a kidnapping case involving one of the victims of her son's alleged sexual assaults. A Bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan pointed out to the Karnataka government and Special Investigation Team, represented by senior advocate Kapil Sibal, that the High Court had granted her protection from arrest on the grounds that she was a 55-year-old woman and could not be punished for her son's alleged crimes.

Mr. Sibal said the High Court's decision to grant her the relief of anticipatory bail was "most unfortunate". The kidnapping would not have possibly happened without her knowledge and participation. "The victim was in captivity under the directions of the family," Mr. Sibal submitted.

The Bench, however, pointed out that the name of the mother did not feature either in the complaint or in the witness statement given to the Magistrate under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. "We are only considering the question of liberty of a woman," the Bench said. Mr. Sibal replied it would be hard to believe that the mother would have been unaware of what was happening.

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM					
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER: PWD: BUILDING: ASSAM: CHANDMARI: GUWAHATI-3.					



एक पेड़ के नाम

महावृक्षारोपण अभियान
11 जुलाई 2024

चलव बनावो हरिपर छत्तीसगढ़

प्रदेश में रोपे जाएंगे करीब 4 करोड़ पौधे

‘आइये जननी और जन्मभूमि के रिश्ते को नई पहचान दें, पौधा लगाकर उसे संरक्षित करें।’

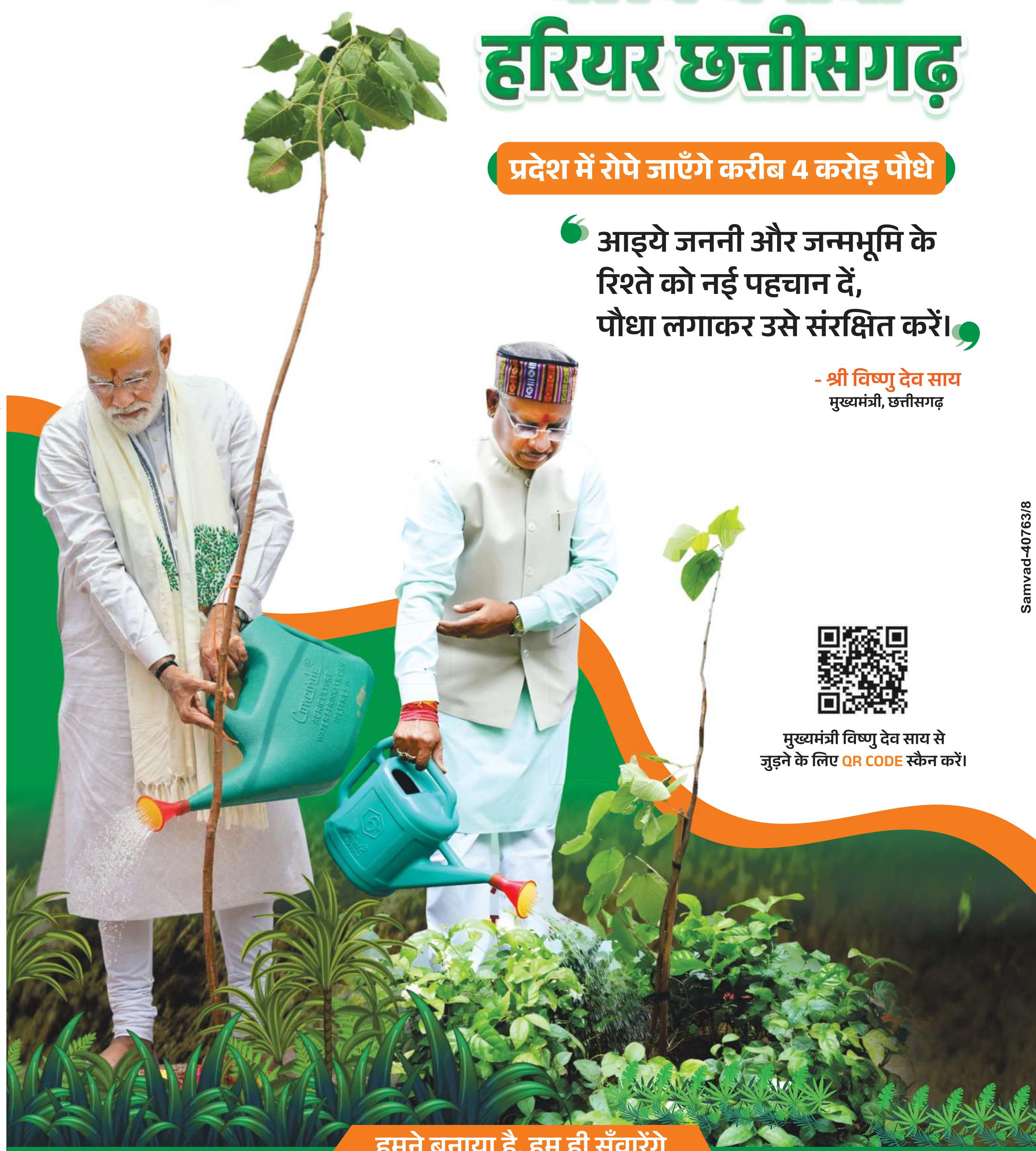
- श्री विष्णु देव साय
मुख्यमंत्री, छत्तीसगढ़

QR CODE

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हमने बनाया है, हम ही सँवारेंगे

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Locked in conflict

Governors and CMs must step back from a political confrontation

In calling for a report from the State government on the action taken against two police officers, West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose has escalated the conflict between Raj Bhavan and the State government. He has written to the Union government and to the Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee, about what he perceives as impropriety by Vineet Goyal, Kolkata City Police Commissioner, and Indira Mukherjee, a Deputy Commissioner of Police. The Governor is aggrieved that they made remarks pertaining to an investigation into a complaint of alleged sexual harassment that a Raj Bhavan employee had made against him. While the complaint has not been acted upon – as Mr. Bose enjoys immunity from proceedings under Article 361 of the Constitution – it has become a thorny issue, with the Governor believing that the police officers had flouted the rules of conduct in speaking about an investigation that cannot be instituted or continued. His consternation is also because he believes the Commissioner had stopped a group of people with grievances about post-election violence from meeting him, even though he had agreed to meet them. The Governor has also demanded a report on the action taken with regard to a woman being disrobed in public, a couple being flogged and other incidents of mob violence, undoubtedly a legitimate request.

The Governor is indeed authorised to seek information from the State government under Article 167. Whether disciplinary action involving central service officers, normally within the domain of the State governments when they are serving the State, can be initiated at the instance of the Governor or the Union government is a separate question altogether. Mr. Bose has cited circumstances surrounding the harassment complaint against him to argue that it is a "concocted allegation", "induced and facilitated" by the police. However, it may not be in anyone's interest to escalate such issues by asking for punitive action against officers. At a time when personal squabbles and institutional conflicts between Governors and Chief Ministers are on the rise, the development is likely to be seen as one more stand-off involving the politicisation of Raj Bhavan by incumbents seeking to undermine elected regimes. The two sides appear locked in perennial conflict, mirroring the antagonism between the Centre and the State. There is the usual one over grant of assent to Bills, and a recent one involves the question who should administer the oath of office to newly elected legislators. And there is a defamation suit the Governor has filed against the Chief Minister. Constitutional functionaries should pull back from the brink before they are sucked into a political rabbit hole.

Even the odd jobs

Gig workers need a comprehensive national law on their employee status

For India's gig workers, who are increasing in numbers but are perched precariously on the edge of the unregulated labour pool, the Karnataka Platform-based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, 2024, offers a welcome reprieve, but still stops short of providing them with the security of being employees. When app-based gig work was introduced a decade ago, courtesy ride-sharing and food delivery apps, the absence of the word 'employee' was actually seen as a positive; it supposedly offered a chance for 'partners' to retain their autonomy and earn good money without being locked into a contract with rigid timings. That illusion soon dissolved as incomes crashed and working hours lengthened, and the lack of a formal 'employee' status left workers at the mercy of the aggregator and all-powerful algorithms, in the absence of safety nets or governmental regulation. Despite this, the gig economy is growing. According to a NITI Aayog report, India had 77 lakh gig workers at the beginning of the decade, and by 2029-30, they are projected to account for 4.1% of income, and 6.7% of the non-agricultural workforce.

A rights-based legislation, the draft Bill aims to prevent arbitrary dismissals, provide human grievance redress mechanisms, and to bring more transparency into the opaque tangle of automated monitoring and algorithm-based payments. It is a step up from the Union government's Code on Social Security, 2020. Karnataka's law also offers social security through a welfare board and fund, with contributions from the government and the aggregator, either through a cut from every transaction on the app, or as a percentage of the platform's turnover in the State. Noting that many of the firms that own these platforms report minimal profits, workers' unions have rightly demanded that the welfare fee is charged as a cess on each transaction. Sceptics note the moribund nature of other unorganised sector welfare boards, but one advantage of mandatory registration with such a board is that it will make gig workers visible in the eyes of the law. Karnataka's Congress government aims to enact the Bill in the monsoon session of the Assembly, and it must quickly formulate rules and establish the welfare board to ensure that the law is in force before the end of the year. A similar legislation in Rajasthan, enacted by the predecessor Congress government, has been effectively put into cold storage by the BJP government. At the national level, comprehensive legislation is needed not just to set minimum wages, reasonable working hours and conditions and robust social security but also to provide gig workers with the coveted status of 'employees'.

As we observe World Population Day on July 11, there is much to look at in India's demographic journey over the decades. It was in 1989 that the United Nations established the day after Dr. K.C. Zachariah, a renowned demographer, had proposed the concept of a 'World Population Day'. The world population had touched five billion in 1987 and challenges such as poverty, health and gender inequality were plaguing the world, developing countries in particular.

The decades of the 1960s and 1970s were scary as the global population was growing at a yearly rate of 2%. For India, there was a prediction of doom. This meant that widespread poverty, hunger and deaths were soon to follow in the next decades. However, despite the predictions, the next decades told a different story altogether. Global fertility rates declined rapidly. Due to improvements in living conditions and medical infrastructure, life expectancy increased. In India too, fertility rates began to fall since the 1970s and at present is below the replacement level. India's progress in many health parameters has been outstanding. There have been significant reductions in maternal and child mortality.

In 2015, the UN adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which were soon recognised as important metrics in assessing the progress of nations. With 2030, the target year, drawing closer, India's progress in the SDGs should be understood particularly in light of its population dynamics.

India's population dynamics

Three components, namely fertility, mortality, and migration, play a pivotal role in shaping India's demographic landscape. India has made significant strides in reducing its fertility. According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-5, India's total fertility rate (TFR) decreased from 3.4 to 2 between 1992 and 2021, dropping below the replacement level of 2.1. There has been a significant drop in the mortality rate as well. The average life expectancy of Indians has also increased over time. With this, India is experiencing a demographic shift, towards an ageing population. According to the 2011 Census, individuals aged 60 years and above constituted 8.6% of the total population. The figure is projected to rise up to 19.5% by 2050. But what do these changing dynamics signify?

India's population dynamics is intertwined with its 'development' scenario. The reduction in fertility signifies a transition toward smaller family norms. This can reduce the proportion of the dependent population and result in a demographic dividend – a period where the working-age population is larger than the dependent population. India can harness the potential of its young workforce by creating employment. The decline in mortality and increase in life expectancy are reflections of a robust health-care system and increased living



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From pulling back from the brink of a demographic disaster to striving to reach the target year of 2030 for the Sustainable Development Goals, there is much to look at in the country

standards. The issue of population ageing, however, requires a long-term plan – focusing on geriatric care and providing social security benefits. Migration and urbanisation are also critical issues. Rapid rural to urban migration is posing a threat to the existing urban infrastructure. Among all these, gender equality also finds an important place. Women labour force participation, which is struggling, their notable absence from political representation and their unending plight within society are the silent issues which can sabotage India's path to 2030.

With six years in hand to meet the targets, India's road to 2030 crosses the path with its population dynamics. Population issues such as gender equality and socio-cultural divides cannot be ignored in the journey to achieve SDGs. It is only with a thorough understanding that India will be able to achieve a 'development' which is sustainable in its truest sense.

The country's SDG journey
'Development' in the simplest way means ensuring the basic requirements of food, shelter and health for all. 'No Poverty, Zero Hunger and Good Health' are the three most important SDGs which form the core of 'development'. India's journey from the brink of a demographic disaster to striving towards the 2030 goal of 'leaving no one behind' has seen a couple of hits and misses.

India made great leaps towards the goal of eradicating poverty. The proportion of the population living below the poverty line reduced from 48% to 10% between 1990 and 2019. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) that came into effect in 2006 played a critical role in addressing rural poverty. The Janani Suraksha Yojana of 2005 – it provides cash benefits to pregnant women – not only accentuated institutional deliveries but also saved poor families from hefty health expenditures.

In his controversial book, *The Population Bomb* (1968), Paul R. Ehrlich raised serious questions about India's ability to feed its population in the years to come. With the Green Revolution, India became self-sufficient in crop production and averted a catastrophe. The proportion of the population suffering from hunger reduced from 18.3% in 2001 to 16.6% in 2021. However, India's nutrition picture is not completely rosy. India contributes a third of the global burden of malnutrition. Though the Indian government launched the Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment (POSHAN) Abhiyaan in 2018, it will still require a miracle to fulfil the target of 'Zero Hunger' by 2030.

Health is one sector in India where progress made has been remarkable. All the critical mortality indicators have seen steady declines. The Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) decreased

from 384.4 in 2000 to 102.7 in 2020. The mortality rate for children under five reduced significantly post 2000s. The infant mortality rate also reduced from 66.7 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2000 to 25.5 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2021. Although India is still not near reaching the targets, it seems to be on the right track. These achievements show that there has been a significant improvement in the quality and coverage of health care.

Despite these achievements, India's road towards 2030 is not easy.

According to Oxfam, the top 10% of India's population holds 77% of the national wealth. If the fruits of

development are not equitably distributed and if development does not percolate to the poorest of the poor and the wealth scenario remains so skewed as it is now, 'sustainable development' can never be achieved in its truest sense. Absolute growth in GDP numbers has limited importance for a country where the top 1% holds 40% of the total wealth. Hunger and nutrition is another sector in crisis. In the Global Hunger Index (2023), India's rank was 111 out of 125 countries. In terms of nutrition, stunting, wasting and underweight among children below five years and anaemia among women pose serious challenges. India's epidemiological trajectory shows that the country has a double burden of communicable and non-communicable diseases (NCD). This is a serious challenge for India which also combats the early onset of NCDs and the rising health needs of the elderly.

What needs looking into

For India to achieve the SDGs, the changing population dynamics has to be acknowledged while forming policies. India needs to address income inequality, harness its demographic dividend by creating job opportunities for the youth of India and address changing health needs. NCDs, which incur high out-of-pocket expenditures, are catastrophic for some families. India needs a stronger safety net to save these families from slipping into utter poverty. The nutrition scenario should be set right by strengthening programmes. This will require an increase in budgetary allocation for the health and nutrition sectors. Another, but often missed, paradigm of this entire development discussion is gender equality. A gender equal approach and empowerment of vulnerable women can solve most issues and propel India's progress in the SDGs.

India still has a long journey to cover in order to meet all the targets of the SDGs. This will require multi-sectoral collaboration and political will. India's progress in SDGs is directly proportional to the well-being of its population and the route to progress lies in a better understanding of its population dynamics and addressing the issues.

forums on India's right to grow economically to alleviate poverty as early as possible.

Global South and growth

The Narendra Modi government has articulated this even more forcefully by expanding the definition of the Circular Economy framework in the G-20 New Delhi Declaration of September 2023: "In order to endeavour to decouple our economic growth from environmental degradation and enhance sustainable consumption and production, including primary resource consumption while supporting economic growth, we acknowledge the critical role played by circular economy, extended producer responsibility and resource efficiency in achieving sustainable development".

This is an explicit statement of intent to maintain the economic growth of the Global South nations, a term used for all developing nations as a group. India is looked upon by the nations of the Global South in their efforts to maintain economic growth in their respective nations as the first priority, followed by measures to achieve net zero. India has fixed the year 2070 to achieve this, compared to the European Union's target of reaching net zero by 2050. But India would strive for zero poverty within the next decade.

The next few decades will see developing nations focusing on eradicating persistent poverty among their people rather than responding to population growth doomsday "experts" who have so far not been proved right. As Tamil poet C. Subramania Bharati said nearly 100 years ago, "*Thani oruvanukku unavillai enil, inda jagathinai azhithiduvom* (even if one person does not have food to eat, we will destroy the world)" So, it is the welfare of average citizen which matters and not population numbers at the macro level.

The views expressed are personal

A case of people versus population



S. Ramasundaram

a retired Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer and a United States-trained demographer

and poverty reduction among Indian States is among the top priorities of the central and State governments and beyond the scope of this article.

Impact of climate change

But a far more serious issue facing the people of India is the adverse effects of climate change which do not recognise national boundaries. This is where the population versus people dichotomy becomes apparent. The debate on historical emissions (advanced by developing countries) versus current emissions (advanced by the developed world) is closely linked to the population versus people divergence. This is because the per capita consumption of both natural resources and manufactured products directly correlates with the per capita income of the people.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries with a per capita income of \$40,000 and a total population of 1.39 billion, together produce and consume \$55.6 trillion worth of natural resources and manufactured goods. In comparison, India, with a per capita GDP of \$2,400 and a population of 1.44 billion, produces and consumes just \$3.5 trillion worth of natural resources and manufactured goods. In other words, the OECD countries with a population slightly less than that of India consume nearly 16 times of what the whole of India consumes. This has been the major cause of global warming over the past few decades, resulting in unpredictable weather changes. In turn this has adversely affected the poor in developing nations more severely than people in developed nations with much better housing and civic infrastructure.

With 11% of its people still below the poverty line, India will continue to accord priority to economic growth over climate change mitigation measures, and rightly so. That responsibility lies majorly with the OECD countries, and now increasingly with China. Successive Indian governments have negotiated hard at global



It is the welfare of the average citizen which matters and not macro-level population numbers



Disease threats

It is of great concern that the spectrum of microbial threats is widening. In the past two decades, India has seen a rise in outbreaks of emerging and re-emerging viral, bacterial, and other

infectious diseases. A study in a top scientific journal says that over half of known pathogenic diseases can be aggravated by climate change.

Dr. Biju C. Mathew, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Russia visit

The successful visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Moscow bolsters the fact that Russia still remains India's robust, special and privileged strategic partner. It would be prudent and

responsible if India strives to defuse the ongoing war in Ukraine by bringing the two sides to the negotiation table by using its acclaimed global image.

M. Rishidev, Dindigul, Tamil Nadu

Can the visit be called a success from a foreign policy angle? Is foreign policy only about economic interest? Is there no space for humanitarian and just concerns? India should have called a spade a spade,

which requires moral courage. India failed to play a lead role in strongly calling for the war to end. The world was watching the visit very closely.

S.V. Venkatakrishnan, San Jose, California, U.S.

Disease threats

It is of great concern that the spectrum of microbial threats is widening. In the past two decades, India has seen a rise in outbreaks of emerging and re-emerging viral, bacterial, and other

A pathway for the most populous nation

The world population is expected to touch 8.5 billion by the end of this decade. While Asia is expected to be overpopulated, Europe, it is said, will be underpopulated. Due to falling fertility levels and rising longevity, the future population could have a higher number and share of older people. Thus, the two significant transformations are expected to be an imbalanced distribution of the population across regions and a skewed age structure.

The population today is more centred in urban areas. By 2030, it is estimated that two-third of the people will inhabit urban spaces, which will put a strain on infrastructure and amenities. This, in turn, could compromise the quality of life of urban citizens.

Women's health and rights
The theme of this world population day is 'women's sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights', marking the 30th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). This gives us an opportunity to accelerate efforts to realise the ICPD's programme of action. While there has been reasonable progress in three decades – women have greater access to modern contraceptives today and maternal deaths have declined considerably since 2000 – there are still unequal results across regions. It is unacceptable that each day, 800 women die globally from preventable causes relating to pregnancy and child birth. A disproportionate share of these deaths occur in developing countries. Reduced maternal mortality levels need to be associated with reduced fertility levels because lower fertility reduces exposure to maternity. However, decline in fertility levels is also associated with delayed childbearing among women.

World population day has obvious significance for India. The most populated country in the world with a median age of 28



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years could help balance the population-deficit regions. Lowering fertility levels and rising longevity also transforms the size and composition of households. There will soon be an uneven distribution of children and the elderly within households, which will have implications for inequality, an important concern for India. For instance, the Kerala Migration Survey 2023 reports that 42% of households have no elderly people whereas 37% of households have one elderly person, 20% have two, and 1% have three elderly people.

The accommodation of elderly people and children is uneven across rich and poor households. This gives rise to a lower dependency burden (the ratio of dependent young and old to the population of working age) in rich households compared with poorer ones. In addition, the care burden in households is also shaped by the presence of children and the elderly. Due to societal stereotypes, the burden of care falls on women. This leaves women with less time to participate in paid work.

Migration trends

The distribution of the population in the future will continue to be shaped by migration. In recent decades, we have seen greater mobility of people. People often migrate due to poor development and infrastructure in their regions. A study estimates that 60 crore Indians migrate within the country annually, and 2 crore migrate abroad. Given the potential of India's future urbanisation, it is important to encourage the emergence of new cities in order to release pressure on existing mega cities. These need to have the same kinds of infrastructure and public amenities as the mega cities. We talk about smart cities, but are Indian cities 'smart'?

It is clear that cities are the



drivers of the global economy. At present, 600 urban centres drive 60% of the world's GDP. An assessment of global cities by Oxford Economics resulted in the Global Cities Index, which ranked the top cities in the world based on five categories: economics, human capital, quality of life, environment and governance. This exercise evaluates the urban quality of life, which needs to be studied so that the trends of rapid urbanisation and growing migration can be understood.

Unfortunately, not a single Indian city appears in the top 50 ranking of world cities. The best-ranking Indian city is Delhi, which occupies the 350th position out of 1,000 cities in the world. This poor performance is due to India's poor environment and quality of life, which undoubtedly threaten the sustainability of its cities. To make India's urban spaces livable, we need to address all these challenges.

It is also noteworthy that the most populous country of the world does not have a realistic count of its population. Most projections of India's population are based on decades-old data. Until India conducts its census, we will only have estimates. It is important to know the exact count and the demographic make-up so that we can draft better policies.

World population day is significant for India since we have a global footprint. Despite more countries adopting stringent immigration policies, more Indians will continue to emigrate, at least in the near future. At the same time, India needs to seriously prepare its workforce for the global labour market. It is said that the 21st century belongs to India. But this statement will be validated only if India prepares its workforce to keep up with the evolving global needs. The world should count on us as much as we count on ourselves.

India needs to seriously prepare its workforce for the global labour market

It is clear that cities are the

The Congress's many woes in Karnataka

The party is bogged down by in-fighting and corruption charges

STATE OF PLAY

Nagesh Prabhu
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The Congress's below-par performance in the Lok Sabha elections in Karnataka has highlighted the cracks in the party. There has been political shadow boxing between two factions – one supporting Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and the other, his deputy D.K. Shivakumar – with supporters of each leader issuing statements to undermine the other. The situation came to a head on June 27 when a Vokkaliga seer, Chandrashekaranatha Swami, requested Mr. Siddaramaiah to give up the Chief Minister's post to Mr. Shivakumar.

The Congress fought the Lok Sabha elections in unity, banking on its five 'guarantees'. However, it put up a poor show, particularly in the Old Mysore region, which is often described as the 'Vokkaliga belt' owing to the electoral dominance of the Vokkaliga community to which Mr. Shivakumar belongs. This gave rise to the old demand of appointing more deputy chief ministers. The Congress had swept this region in the 2023 Assembly polls.

The Chief Minister's loyalists, particularly Cooperation Minister K.N. Rajanna, renewed the demand for the appointment of three deputy chief ministers representing the Veerashaiva-Lingayat, Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe, and minority communities to ensure more electoral support to the party. Given that the party high command had announced in 2023 that Mr. Shivakumar, who holds the post of Congress State chief, would be replaced after the Lok Sabha elections, Mr.



Rajanna has also said that a new Congress State chief should be appointed. Other senior leaders, such as Home Minister G. Parameshwara, see nothing wrong in this demand based on the 'one person, one post' principle, as Mr. Shivakumar holds multiple portfolios.

The call for more deputy chief ministers was made after the 2023 Assembly results too. A section of Congress leaders believe that it is part of a strategy by Mr. Siddaramaiah's loyalists to keep Mr. Shivakumar in check amid talks that he might seek the Chief Minister's post after 30 months of this government's tenure. They also say that the demand is being made to counter Mr. Shivakumar's influence, both in the government and in the party. Party leaders have not ruled out a mid-term reshuffle in the government.

In the general elections, the Congress won nine out of 28 seats against one seat in 2019. It fell short of expectations that it would win at least 15 seats. The party's vote share increased to 45.43% from 31.88%. A survey of the results in each Assembly constituency shows that more than a dozen ministers were unable to provide leads for the party's candidates. Mr. Shivakumar suffered a major setback when his brother D.K. Suresh was defeated in Bengaluru Rural.

This is why the ministers not only renewed their de-

mand for more deputy chief ministers, but also for the replacement of Shivakumar as Congress State chief. The Vokkaliga seer's request to Mr. Siddaramaiah intensified the war of words between the loyalists of the two leaders. After his statement, Veerashaiva-Lingayat seers urged the party to consider leaders from their community for the top post or for the post of deputy chief minister in the event of a change of guard. Meanwhile, AHINDA, an outfit representing minorities, backward classes, and Dalits, warned of a State-wide agitation against any move to replace Mr. Siddaramaiah, who belongs to the Other Backward Classes community.

In the midst of this leadership struggle, the Congress is fighting other battles too. The party which came to power levelling corruption charges against the Bharatiya Janata Party is now facing allegations of fraud. Congress Minister B. Nagendra was forced to resign for allegedly swindling funds from the Karnataka Maharsi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation. There have also been allegations of irregularities in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority scheme. In this case, allotments made to Mr. Siddaramaiah's wife have come under the scanner. Janata Dal (Secular) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy has insinuated that the scam was exposed by "someone who is eyeing the Chief Minister's post".

In this context, the upcoming by-elections to three Assembly constituencies and the elections to urban and local bodies will be an acid test for the Congress. Providing a clean administration and keeping the party and government united will be the party's major challenges.

Extreme events in the capital

With the wettest-ever June day and hottest-ever May day, an unusual spate of maximal weather has roiled Delhi

DATA POINT

Jasmin Nihalani

In the past two months, Delhi has witnessed two extreme weather events: days of unrelenting heat in May followed by heavy rains in June. The capital also experienced the hottest-ever nights in June and year-round pollution, making it a tough year.

On June 28, the much-awaited arrival of the south-west monsoon turned into a nightmare when houses and streets got flooded. At least five people lost their lives, including a taxi driver who died when a canopy at the airport collapsed on him. According to the India Meteorological Department's gridded data, the city received the highest-ever rainfall for a day in June (150.7 mm) since 1951 (Chart 1). The previous high for a day in June was 97.3 mm of rainfall – over 50mm lower than the latest record – which occurred on June 30, 1981.

Just a month earlier, Delhi was sweltering under record-breaking heat. A report by a non-profit organisation, Centre for Holistic Development, stated that 192 homeless people died due to a heatwave in the capital (June 11-19). In May and June this year, for 38 consecutive days, the city's maximum temperatures crossed the 40°C mark. On May 28, Delhi recorded a maximum temperature of 47.5°C, the highest-ever for a day in May in the capital since 1951 (Chart 2). The second-highest (47.3°C) was recorded on May 29, the next day.

Nights did not provide relief either. The average minimum temperature for June this year was 29.6°C, the highest for any month since 1951 (Chart 3).

Moreover, PM2.5 levels above India's permissible limit of 60 micrograms per cubic metre were recorded on nearly all the days of November, December, and January (Chart 4). This was the case during many days of August too, when pollution is otherwise low.

Sweltering heat, torrential rains

The charts are based on data sourced from the India Meteorological Department's gridded data. Data for PM 2.5 levels was sourced from the Central Pollution Control Board

Chart 4: The chart shows average daily PM2.5 levels recorded in Anand Vihar station. The grey dotted line indicates India's permissible limit of 60 micrograms per cubic metre

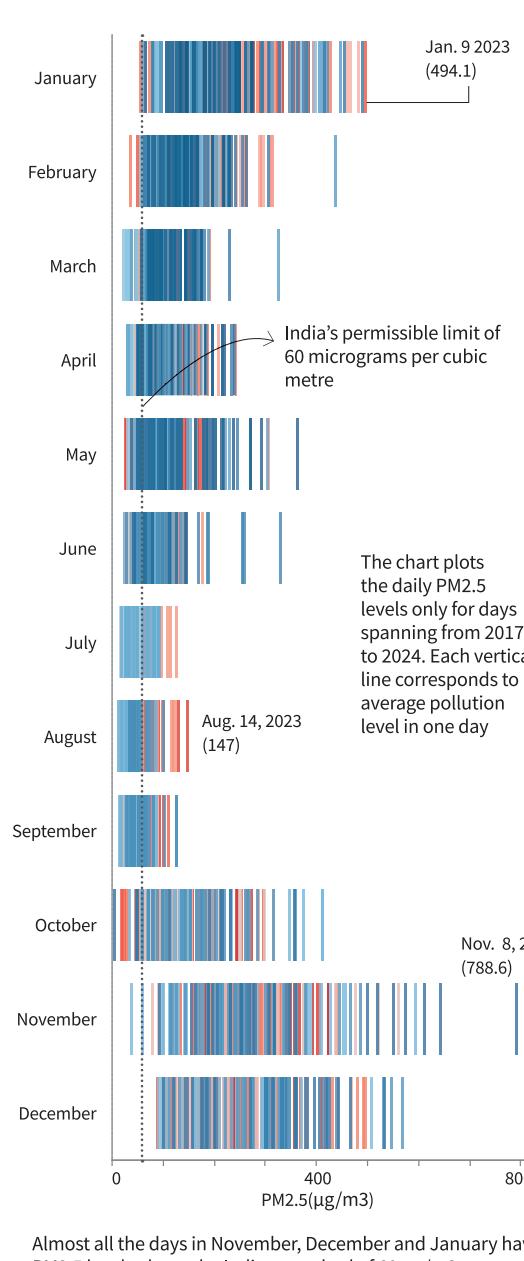


Chart 1: The chart shows the daily rainfall received by Delhi on every June day since 1951. Each dot corresponds to rainfall recorded in each June day between 1951 and 2024

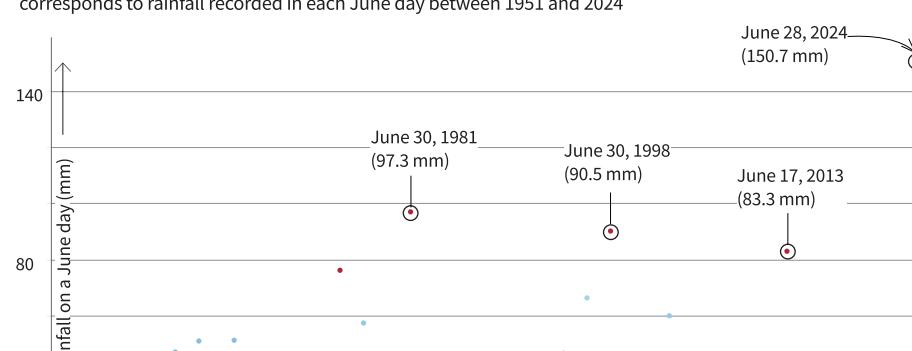


Chart 2: The chart shows the daily maximum temperature in Delhi on every May day since 1951. Each dot corresponds to maximum temperature recorded in each May day between 1951 and 2024

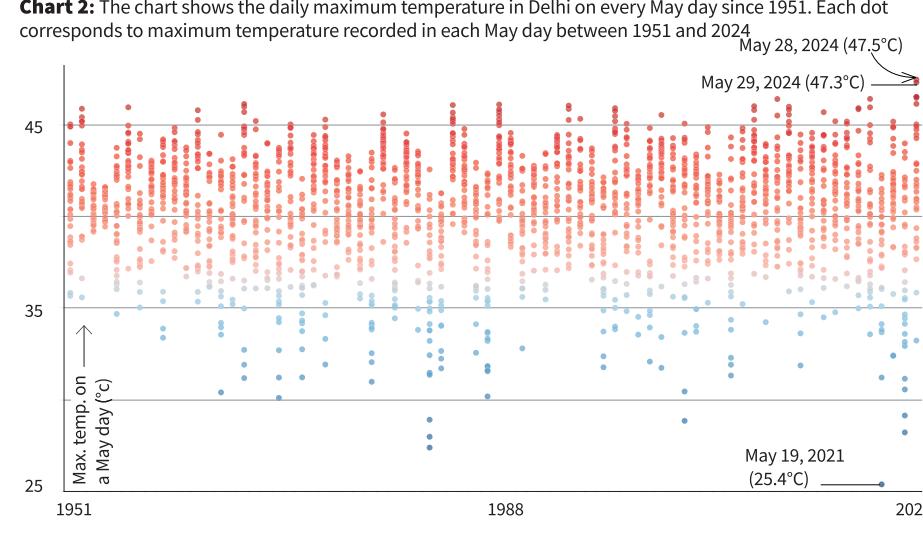
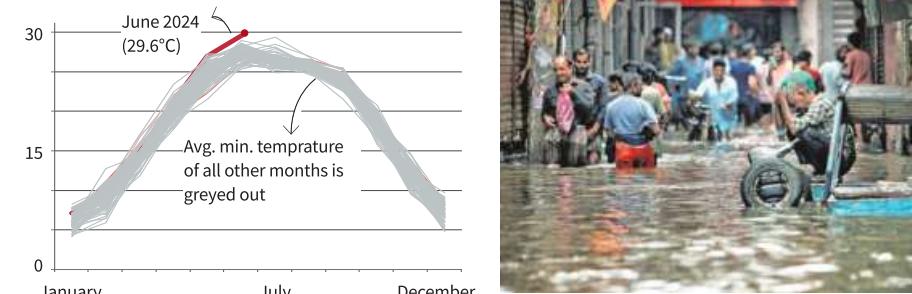


Chart 3: The chart shows the average minimum temperature for all months since 1951



FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 11, 1974

Kerala's concern over slow rice movement into State

Cochin, July 10: The rationing system in Kerala will collapse unless the Central Government rushes rice supplies to the State on an "emergency footing", it is feared.

The Food Corporation of India godowns in the State now contain hardly three weeks' supplies. The rice arrivals are "unsatisfactory and dwindling". Normally, it takes at least two weeks for foodgrains released by the FCI to reach the retail shops via the wholesalers.

Reliable sources said that rice movement in the State had been slow for nearly a month now. Even after the withdrawal of the Railway strike rice movement had not picked up. The State Government had been constantly urging the Union Government to help the State in meeting its ration committee, but the Centre's replies "have been unhelpful, unimaginative and routine."

The Union Government was committed to supply 80,000 tonnes of rice to Kerala per month, and if the commitment was to be fulfilled, the daily arrivals should average 2,500 tonnes. Actually however just 1,000 tonnes a day were being received in the State for some weeks now. Frantic messages sent to the Centre only brought forth replies that the Southern Railway authorities were being alerted to move supplies. Unless about 5,000 tonnes of foodgrains arrived in the State daily, the rationing system might break down.

It was further pointed out that if unfortunately the rationing system broke down the consequences would be terrible and the entire responsibility for it would lie with the Union Government.

With the lean months ahead additional quantities of foodgrains were required by the State but even normal supplies were not available now, the sources pointed out.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 11, 1924

Taxi fares in Bombay

Bombay, July 10: It is proposed to introduce revised taxi fares in Bombay in August. The rate for first class taxis will be Rs 8 for the first four-fifths of a mile instead of Rs 10 as at present, and for second class vehicles the rate will remain at Rs 8 per mile. The rates for subsequent distances will be unaltered.

Text & Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Ease in retail inflation for industrial workers in May

3.86 in per cent. Retail inflation for industrial workers eased compared to 4.42% in the same month a year ago. The Consumer Price Index-Industrial Workers was 3.87% in April 2024, according to the Labour Ministry. PTI

Amount paid as dividend to govt. by PSU banks

6,481 in ₹ crore. Four public sector banks, including Canara Bank and Indian Bank, presented dividend cheques to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for financial year 2023-24. PTI

Students get free admission to higher education in Assam

95 In thousand. As part of the 'Pragyan Bharati Scheme', Assam Chief Minister, Himanta Biswa Sarma distributed ₹68.44 crore among 349 colleges and varsities to give free admission to poor students from underprivileged sections. PTI

The worth of Stinger missile contract signed by NATO

700 in \$ million. NATO signed the contract to have member countries produce more Stinger missiles, one of many steps the alliance is pressing at the summit to get each country to boost its weapons production capabilities. AP

Pakistan extends stay of Afghan refugees after UN visit

1.45 in million. Pakistan announced it is extending the stay of Afghan refugees who legally reside in the country, a day after a visit by the UN refugee agency. AP

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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The case for a caste Census

The Census Act, 1948 should be amended to make enumeration by caste mandatory, instead of leaving it to the whims of the Union executive. Such data can be collected as part of the regular Census, with a few pertinent queries added to the questionnaire

FULL CONTEXT

K. Ashok Vardhan Shetty

Peter Drucker famously said, "Only what gets measured gets managed." The problems of social groups that have been historically discriminated against (be it by caste, race, religion, gender, disability etc.) cannot be resolved without collecting data group-identity wise. Doing so is not a capitulation to identity politics but a vital step towards informed policy making and inclusive development.

For instance, Germany's census does not enumerate people by race. This has worked to the disadvantage of its Black people who started a private, country-wide, online survey called Afrozensus in 2020. Its results showed that anti-Black racism is widespread and institutionally entrenched in Germany.

Applying Cicero's test of *cui bono* (who benefits?), it can be said that the demand for enumeration generally emanates from the victims of discrimination and is resisted by vested interests.

Why a caste Census?

A caste Census is crucial for four reasons – one, it is a social imperative. Caste continues to be a foundational social construct in India. Only about 5% of Indian marriages were inter-caste as of 2011-12. The use of caste surnames and caste marks is still widespread. Residential segregation by caste persists. Choices of candidates for elections and ministers for Cabinets continue to be dictated by caste considerations.

Two, it is a legal imperative. Constitutionally-mandated policies of social justice which include reservations in electoral constituencies, education and public employment cannot be pursued effectively without detailed caste-wise data. Even though the Constitution uses the word class instead of caste, various rulings of the Supreme Court have held caste as a 'relevant criterion', 'sole criterion' or 'dominant criterion' for defining a backward class, and have demanded detailed caste-wise data for upholding reservation policies.

Three, it is an administrative imperative. Detailed caste-wise data is necessary to avoid/correct wrongfully inclusions of undeserving castes and exclusions of deserving castes, and to guard against a few dominant castes in a reserved category crowding out others. It is also needed for sub-categorising castes within a reserved category and to determine the income/wealth criterion for the creamy layer.

Four, it is a moral imperative. The absence of detailed caste-wise data has helped a coterie of elites, among upper castes and dominant Other Backward Classes (OBCs), to corner a disproportionate share of the nation's assets, incomes, and positions of power.

Censuses in British India between 1881 and 1931 enumerated all castes. In the first Census conducted after Independence in 1951, the Government of India (GOI) ordered that caste should not be enumerated. However, an exception was made for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) which have been enumerated in every Census since 1951. In 1961, the GOI advised States to conduct their own surveys and draw up State-specific OBC lists if they so desired. There was no reservation for OBCs in the Centre and its undertakings then.

The arguments against caste Census

There are multiple views against the caste Census. These include:



Number game: Supporters celebrate the release of Bihar's caste Census report, in Patna, in 2023. PTI

First, that it is socially divisive. India's social divisions predate Census efforts by nearly 3,000 years. The Census counts of the SCs and STs since 1951 have not led to any conflicts among these castes or tribes. Further, India's Census enumerates religion, language, and region which are as divisive as caste, if not more. Casteism will not wither away by not counting caste in the Census, any more than communalism, and regionalism will disappear by not enumerating religion, language and region.

Second, that it is an administrative nightmare. Unlike race which is a fuzzy concept, but is still enumerated in many countries such as the U.S., there is little or no ambiguity about anyone's caste. The GOI has been able to smoothly enumerate 1,234 castes in the SC category and 698 tribes in the ST category. Therefore, it is difficult to understand why the enumeration of the 4,000-odd other castes, most of which are State-specific, should pose an intractable problem.

Third, that it would fuel demands for increased reservations. On the contrary, the availability of caste-wise Census data would help curb arbitrary demands from caste groups and capricious decision-making by governments. Policy makers would be able to objectively debate and address the claims of, say, the Marathas, Patidars, Jats, or any other groups for reservations. But governments prefer fuzzy data because it gives them the latitude to implement reservations arbitrarily for electoral considerations.

The case for OBC inclusion in Census

Like the SCs and STs, the Constitution permits reservation for the OBCs in education (Article 15(4)) and public employment (Article 16(4)). After the implementation of the Mandal Commission recommendations, the OBCs

enjoy reservations in the Central government and its undertakings as well. In the *Indra Sawhney* case (1992), the Supreme Court ruled that the OBC list, based on the 1931 Census, should be revised periodically.

The OBCs do not have reservation in electoral constituencies for MPs and MLAs like the SCs and the STs. But after the 73rd and 74th amendments (1993), the Constitution provides for reservations in electoral constituencies in panchayats and municipalities not only for SCs and STs but also for OBCs (Articles 243D(6) and 243T(6)). For this, caste-wise, area-wise Census data of the OBCs is essential. Therefore, the GOI should have enumerated the OBCs at least in the 2001 Census. But it did not.

Whenever States like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Odisha and Jharkhand tried to implement reservations for the OBCs in elections to local bodies, the High Courts and the Supreme Court stayed the same, on the ground that there was no caste-wise data of OBCs. While one arm of the State – the judiciary – demands caste-wise data to uphold reservations, another – the executive – has avoided enumerating the very same data.

However, the 10% reservation for economically weaker sections (EWS) among those other than the OBCs, SCs and STs (effectively, the upper castes) was upheld by the Supreme Court in 2022 despite the absence of any supporting empirical data. In view of the EWS reservation, the Census should now enumerate all castes including the upper castes as it did till 1931.

While Census is a Union subject, the Collection of Statistics Act, 2008 empowers States and even local bodies to gather the necessary statistics. So, individual States can always do Caste

surveys like Karnataka (2015) and Bihar (2023) did. But Census data carries more authority and is less contested. The government's reluctance to enumerate caste as part of the Census is legally indefensible and administratively unwise.

How an attempt at caste Census failed

After considerable lobbying by OBC leaders, in 2010, the Parliament passed a unanimous resolution (with both Congress and BJP on board) calling for caste to be enumerated as part of the 2011 Census. As per the 1931 Census when caste was last enumerated, there were 4,147 castes in India apart from the depressed classes/untouchables (as they were called then). Unfortunately, the Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC)-2011 was poorly designed and executed, throwing up a ludicrous figure of 46 lakh castes and the results were never released.

The SECC-2011's failure was because of the fact that it was not conducted under the Census Act, 1948 as the Act was not amended to include caste as a parameter. It was conducted through the Union Ministries of Rural Development and Urban Development which did not have prior experience of conducting sociological/anthropological surveys. Additionally, the questionnaire was poorly designed and asked open-ended questions about caste. The enumerators couldn't distinguish between genuine castes, alternative caste names, larger caste groups, sub-castes, surnames, clan names, gotras, etc. In contrast, the Bihar government's Caste Survey in 2023, provided enumerators the list of 214 caste names specific to Bihar, with the 215th category labelled "Other Castes" and came up with better results.

Despite the unanimous Parliamentary resolution of 2010, the Central government announced in 2021 that it would not enumerate caste as part of the next Census. It reiterated this stand before the Supreme Court in a case filed by the Maharashtra government seeking a direction to the Centre to enumerate OBCs in the 2021 Census. The Supreme Court judgment dismissing the Maharashtra government's plea in December 2021 is questionable, considering its own past rulings.

What is the way forward?

Learning from the SECC-2011 failures, the Census Act, 1948 should be amended to make enumeration by caste mandatory instead of leaving it to the whims of the Union executive. Caste should be enumerated as part of the regular Census by the Census Commissioner only, with a few pertinent questions added to the questionnaire. Additionally, the government should enlist sociological/anthropological experts to draw up a draft list of castes specific to each State, publish the draft list online, inviting suggestions and comments from the public before finalising it, and give only that list to the enumerators. The questionnaire should be so designed as to ask the names of the sub-caste, caste, larger caste group, and the caste surname of the respondent. Internet-enabled hand-held devices preloaded with these details and limiting the enumerator's role to one of choosing the correct option will make the task easy and foolproof.

Interested States must move the apex Court to review its 2021 judgment. It is farcical to implement OBC reservation based on 1931 Census data and EWS reservation with no empirical data. The next Census must enumerate caste.

The writer is former IAS officer of Tamil Nadu cadre and former Vice Chancellor, Indian Maritime University, Chennai.

THE GIST

▼ The problems of social groups that have been historically discriminated against (be it by caste, race, religion, gender, disability etc.) cannot be resolved without collecting data group-identity wise.

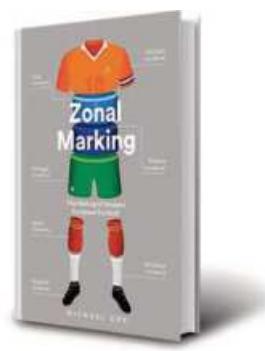
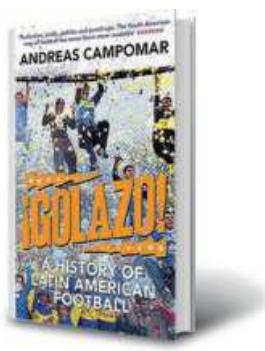
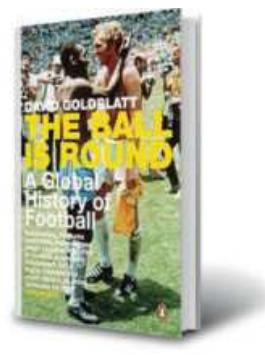
▼ The availability of caste-wise Census data would help curb arbitrary demands from caste groups and capricious decision-making by governments. Policy makers would be able to objectively debate and address the claims of, say, the Marathas, Patidars, Jats, or any other groups for reservations.

▼ The government should enlist sociological/anthropological experts to draw up a draft list of castes (together with alternative caste names and the names of sub-castes and larger caste groups) specific to each State, publish the draft list online, inviting suggestions and comments from the public before finalising it, and give only that list to the enumerators.

BIBLIOGRAPHY



Grand spectacle: Spain's Lamine Yamal, scores his side's first goal during a match between Spain and France at the Euro 2024 tournament in Munich, Germany, on July 9. AP



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subrahmanian

"Appropriate replies when someone says 'sorry' (D. N. Kishore Sharma, Visakhapatnam)"

Your reply will depend on the situation and your relationship with the person concerned. For example, if your friend says 'sorry' for stepping on your toe, your response could be any one of the following: 'doesn't matter,' 'don't worry,' 'it's o.k.' If the person who steps on your toe happens to be your boss and she apologizes, then your response could be, 'that's all right,' it doesn't matter at all.' But if you think you were partly responsible for your friend or boss stepping on your toe, then your response to their 'sorry' could be another 'sorry.' If you invite your friend to a restaurant and he turns up late, you could brush aside his apology with a simple 'forget it.' But if your boss comes late and apologizes in a similar situation, you could say, 'You're not really late' or 'don't worry' or 'no need to apologize, I just got here myself.' The responses given are some of the usual ones and these are not the only ones."

"Emotional, emotive (K. K. Nair, Kottayam)"

In 1926, Fowler considered 'emotive' a 'superfluous' word. He felt that it was unnecessary as the word 'emotional' served the purpose. In the 1965 revised edition of Fowler's Modern English Usage, Sir Ernest Gowers says: "Emotional" means not only given to emotion but also like 'emotive,' appealing to the emotions. But modern usage has differentiated the words usefully by assigning 'emotive' to the cause and 'emotional' to the effect."

An emotive speech is a speech appealing to the emotions, one that aims at evoking an emotional response. An emotional speech is a speech that is marked by emotions. Good writers maintain the distinction between the two. Nowadays most native speakers do not make a distinction between the two words and based on general usage, some recent dictionaries give the same meaning for both."

"Can the word 'savvy' be used as an adjective? (Thanga Kuberan, Madurai)"

"Savvy can be used as a noun, a verb and an adjective. When used as a noun, it means 'common sense, understanding, shrewdness.'

Promod is a man with a lot of savvy.

When used as verb, it means 'to understand.'

I am the boss here, savvy?

Annie, do as I tell you, savvy?

As a verb, 'savvy' is used in the imperative or the present tense. 'No savvy' means 'I don't understand.' When used as an adjective, the word means 'astute' or shrewd.'

Rita is a savvy reporter from Bombay.

The savvy lawyer was able to see through her lies.

Our college has a good cricket team. What we need is a savvy captain to make it a winning team.

The first syllable 'sa' is pronounced like the 'sa' in 'sand'. The second syllable 'vyy' is pronounced like the 'vi' in 'village'. The stress is on the first syllable. 'Savvy' is a slang word.

Published in The Hindu on August 25, 1992.

Fever pitch: why football stories are also about society and politics

With Copa America and the European Championships on, dip into some sweeping histories of football in the North and South Americas, and books on the European game, which provide a window to the world beyond the playing field

N. Sudarshan

The footballing universe is conveniently split into two strands. On one side is the glitz, glamour and the magic associated with Latin and South American football, and on the other is the geeky and bookish domain of European football. And every four years these two worlds come together at the FIFA World Cup, and fans and pundits decipher and judge which of the two is stronger.

In the leap year – like 2024 – these two find concurrent prominence with their respective continental championships on at the same time. While Lionel Messi & Co. dazzle at the Copa America, the tournament for the Americas (North and South), Kylian Mbappe and the likes of 16-year-old Lamine Yamal (Spain) are busy uplifting the Euros, the event for European nations. Aficionados marvel at the genius of American stars while keeping a beady eye on the latest tactical trends emerging from Italy, Germany and The Netherlands.

Ties that bind

The books written, at least of the popular variety, largely mimic this dichotomy. There are sweeping histories of football in the Latin and South Americas, and also about individual countries, with the underlying themes being society and

politics, and the place of football in this. In contrast, books on the European game do provide a window to the world beyond the pitch, but there always seems to be an attempt to create a totem pole of contributions and thus form a hierarchy.

Could it be because Europe, a continent replete with nations that colonised the world, saw football as an instrument of establishing supremacy while for the oppressed nations of the Americas it was a tool of self expression? Andreas Campomar certainly thinks so.

The Uruguayan author, in *Golazo!: A History of Latin American Football*, shows how football that started as a pastime of a few expats became a national identity.

"Football had long become our bond," Campomar wrote in *The Guardian* in 2015. "It was the language we spoke together. We loved the flashier aspects of the game: the bicycle kick, the deft back-heel and the art of dribbling. (Our defenders had to have the gall to dribble in their own penalty area, even if it ended in failure.) We wanted guile and skill to trump Anglo-Saxon notions of tenacity and courage."

"Of course this was rather a colonial position to take, but I recognised it was one of the few ways that we, as South Americans, could still compete. Every four years the World Cup allowed Latin America to be remembered for its excellence. The continent's soul was

reflected in her football."

A way of life

Christopher Hylland's *Tears at La Bombonera: Stories from a Six-Year Sojourn in South America* takes a similar line though it is not a treatise but more of a chronicle. Jonathan Wilson's *Angels with Dirty Faces*, the history of Argentinian football, Alex Bellos' *Futebol: The Brazilian Way of Life* and David Goldblatt's *Futebol Nation* are compelling accounts which add to the genre.

It is not that Europe doesn't tell similar football stories in an engaging manner. David Winner's *Brilliant Orange: The Neurotic Genius of Dutch Football* and Phil Ball's *Morbo: The Story of Spanish Football* are stellar works. The complicated relationship regions like Catalonia and Basque Country share with the Spanish national team are very well documented by Ball. Similarly, books about the sport during the time of the Nazis in Germany and the Fascists in Italy have seen the light of day. But they are more about how the identity of each country shaped the game rather than the other way round.

Interestingly, books that have a global bandwidth seem to tell European football stories rather well. Four books headline this list – *Football in Sun and Shadow* by Eduardo Galeano, *Football Against the Enemy* by Simon Kuper, *The Ball is Round* by Goldblatt and *Inverting the Pyramid* by

Wilson. Galeano's effort "celebrates the glory of the game" through anecdotes, stories surrounding the origins of the game and different World Cups, and fleeting sketches of individual footballers. Kuper travels to more than 20 countries across the world to find out about the role of football in shaping them. Goldblatt's is a comprehensive history of the sport, which has acquired the status of a gold standard against which every other work will be measured. Wilson's is a history of tactics, a continuously evolving subject.

Club culture

The present era of football is driven by clubs. The franchises are where new ideas and ways of playing are taking shape. There used to be a time, like Wilson wrote in *The Guardian* in 2010, wherein "the World Cup served almost as a conference at which delegates arrived from all round the world and exchanged ideas."

But now, international football lags behind club football, and Europe is the epicentre of this shift. Michael Cox's *Zonal Marking: The Making of Modern European Football* offers a fascinating assessment of these tactical developments. Rory Smith's recent work, *Expected Goals: The Story of How Data Conquered Football and Changed the Game Forever* is another one for footballing nerds, in line with the perceived studiousness of Europe vis-a-vis the Latin and South Americas.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Considered one of the greatest novels of all time, Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* was published on this day in 1960. Here is a quiz on the book

Sindhu Nagaraj

QUESTION 1
A classic of modern American literature, this book won this prize, considered one of the most coveted awards in literary achievements, a year after it was published. What was the award?

QUESTION 2
This character, a lawyer in the book, has served as a moral hero for many readers and as a model of integrity for lawyers. Name the character.

QUESTION 3
Which genre does this novel belong to, given that it focuses on the psychological and moral growth of the protagonist from

childhood to adulthood, most commonly known as 'coming-of-age'?

QUESTION 4
The book was made into a film in 1962, winning three Academy Awards. Who won the award for best actor, for portraying the leading role (answer to Q2)?

QUESTION 5
This character Dill Harris is the best friend of the Finch children in the novel. He is believed to be based on a childhood friend of Harper Lee, who was a novelist and playwright himself. Who was it?

QUESTION 6
What is the metaphor behind the title of the novel?



Visual question:
In this image, the sign that reads watchman refers to Harper Lee's only other book that was published years later. What is the name of the book, that the sign refers to?

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. Sunil Gavaskar is the only player to have scored a century in the first innings and a double century in the second innings against this team. **Ans:** Against West Indies at the Queen's park oval, port of Spain in 1971

2. Gavaskar scored his only century in the ODIs against this team. **Ans:** Against New Zealand at the Vidarbha Cricket Association Ground, Nagpur

3. Gavaskar played for this English county in 1980. **Ans:** Somerset

4. Gavaskar got dismissed in successive test matches against this team. **Ans:** Sri Lanka in 1985

5. This bowler has dismissed the maestro most times in tests. **Ans:** Derek Underwood (12 times)

6. Gavaskar has been involved in triple century partnership in tests with this person. **Ans:** Dillip Vengsarkar

7. Identify this batsman. **Ans:** Mohammad Azharuddin

Early Birds: Tamal Biswas| Sadhan Kumar Panda| Abhay Krishan

Word of the day

Chockablock:

packed full to capacity

Synonyms: chock-full, cram full, crowded

Usage: The shelves were chockablock with books and papers.

Pronunciation: bit.ly/chockablockpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /tʃɒkəblɒk/

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

From Page One

Bengal suit against CBI probes maintainable: SC

The judgment noted that the Union government was "vitally concerned" with the CBI, saying that this was plainly evident from the fact that only offences notified by the Centre could be investigated by the CBI under the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, the statute which governs the premier probe agency.

"Under Section 4 of the DSPE Act, except the offences under the Prevention of Corruption Act, the superintendence of the DSPE in all other matters would vest with the Central government," Justice Gavai noted.

Justice Gavai, however, clarified that these observations were only made to meet the preliminary objections raised by the Union government. They will have no bearing on the merits of the suit.

The Bench set August 13 as the date for hearing framing issues with regard to West Bengal's suit.

The Centre, represented by Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, had earlier contended that the CBI too could not be made a defendant in the suit as the agency was not the 'Government of India'. Original suits filed directly in the Supreme Court under Article 131 of the Constitution exclusively deal with disputes involving the Union and the States, Mr. Mehta had reasoned.

The law officer had pressed the court to dismiss the West Bengal suit on these preliminary grounds without going into its merits. However, the Bench on Wednesday said the suit raised "serious questions concerning the wider ramifications of federalism".

West Bengal, represented by senior advocate Kapil Sibal, had made specific contentions that the CBI had acted on the Centre's directions.

Divorced Muslim women entitled to maintenance'

Mohammad Abdul Samad, in his appeal, said his wife had to exclusively take recourse under the 1986 Act rather than Section 125 Cr.PC. He had argued that the 1986 Act was a special law and overrode the Cr.PC provision. He contended that a divorced Muslim woman's application for maintenance under Section 125 was not maintainable.

Besides, the court pointed out that Section 3 of the 1986 Act requires a man to provide for a "reasonable and fair provision of maintenance" to his divorced Muslim wife only during the *iddat* period. Once the *iddat* period expires, the personal law obligation to maintain the divorced Muslim woman ceases.

On the other hand, Section 125 mandates a husband to provide monthly maintenance to his divorced wife, irrespective of her faith. "Any divorced wife who has not remarried is entitled to maintenance by her ex-husband who has sufficient means but has neglected or refused to maintain her," Justice Nagarathna pointed out.

Maintenance for children

Further, the 1986 Act holds a Muslim man liable to pay his divorced wife maintenance for their children for only a period of two years from birth. Section 125 requires a husband to pay for their children till they attain the age of majority. Again, there is no upper limit fixed for payment of maintenance under Section 125, making it a more beneficial provision compared to the 1986 law.

Justice Masih, in his opinion, said Section 125 manifested the constitutional commitment towards special measures to ensure a life of dignity for women at all stages of their lives, irrespective of their faith.

Harmonious interpretation

He observed that Section 125 and the 1986 Act were not at loggerheads with each other. The 1986 Act did not extinguish the right of a divorced Muslim woman, who is unable to maintain herself, to seek maintenance under Section 125. The choice is left to the Muslim woman to apply for maintenance either under Section 125 or the 1986 Act. If a Muslim woman is unable to maintain herself, she could apply for maintenance under Section 125. If, on the other hand, she is able to take care of herself financially, she could very well seek maintenance under the 1986 Act till the expiry of the *iddat* period. Courts have to give both laws a harmonious and purposive interpretation, Justice Masih observed.

Caste discrimination in prisons must end: CJI

Labour was segregated on the basis of caste. Modern manuals promoting reforms in prisons seemed not to have entered the prison walls, Mr. Muralidhar noted.

"Dalits even have a separate ward in prisons... Despite changes in the prison manuals, caste discrimination continues. These provisions in the prison manuals of the States should be repealed," the senior lawyer had submitted.

The petition cited how the Rajasthan Prison Rules, 1951 had assigned Mehtars to the latrines while the Brahmins or "sufficiently high caste Hindu prisoners" were assigned to the kitchens.

"The separation of Thevars, Nadars and Pallars who are allotted different sections in Palayamkottai Central Jail in Tamil Nadu provides a glaring instance of caste-based segregation of barracks," the petition noted.

ITBP seizes 108 kg of gold biscuits near China border

It is the first time that an alleged gold smuggling racket has been exposed in the area; two people were intercepted by an ITBP team that was on a patrol in the border areas in eastern Ladakh

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) arrested two men near the China border in eastern Ladakh on Tuesday for allegedly smuggling 108 kg of gold biscuits from China. While smuggling of smaller items was common, it is the first time that an alleged gold smuggling racket has been exposed in the area with the arrest of two local persons. Another person has been detained, an ITBP official said.

The accused were intercepted by an ITBP team that was on a long-range patrol in the border areas in the Southern Sub-Sector (SSS) in eastern Ladakh to check infiltration and smuggling, amid specific inputs of smuggling in the area near Sirigaple, Ladakh.

An operation code-named *Jazba* was launched on July 7 and 8 from either directions of the SSS,



Large haul: The gold biscuits were seized by the ITBP during a long-range patrol in eastern Ladakh on Wednesday. ANI

which is a defined border and not unmarked as in other areas of eastern Ladakh along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) where Indian and Chinese troops have been in a stand-off since May 2020.

A team headed by Deputy Commandant Deepak Bhatt intercepted two persons with mules within one kilometre of the China border in the SSS comprising the general areas of Chisimule, Narbula Top, Zakra

and Zakla. "On being stopped, the suspects tried to run away but the patrol party chased them and reached the area where they had pitched tents. Initially, the suspects said they are collecting medicinal plants, but later patrol party found huge quantity of gold and other items," said Clay Khongsai, Inspector-General, ITBP. He added that this was the largest haul of gold ever by the ITBP.

The suspects were identified as Tsering Chambla, 69, and Tenzin Targy, 40, residents of Hanle. The ITBP recovered a pair of binoculars, food items such as cake and milk from China, knives, mobile phones, and two ponies other than the 108 pieces of gold biscuits weighing 1 kg each with "Gulf Gold Refinery" embossed on them.

Curb smuggling

The ITBP has been authorised by the Union Home Ministry to carry out search and seizures. The ITBP Act allows the force to exercise the powers of the Customs Department on the border to keep a check on smuggling.

Joint interrogation of the suspects will be carried out by the police, the Intelligence Bureau, the Customs Department, and the ITBP. The seized items and the suspects have been handed over to the Customs Department for further questioning.

rentically examined.

An Apple spokesperson in India did not have an immediate comment to offer on the alerts. While the alert did not say that the attack was state-based, it named the Pegasus spyware as an example.

Pegasus, a suite of snooping tools developed by the Israeli NSO Group Technologies, is only sold to governments. The Union government never confirmed or denied purchasing and using the Pegasus hardware and refused to participate in a Supreme Court-ordered investigation into the use of the spyware.

Previous instances

This is the first time in months that such spyware alerts have been issued by Apple. The last time similar cases were documented was in October 2023, when Apple devices belonging to Siddharth Varadarajan, founding editor of *The Wire*, and Anand Mangalore, South Asia editor at the Organised Crime and Corruption Report Project, received such alerts.

Sheena Bora's remains lying in CBI's Delhi office: email

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

Weeks after it informed that parts of the purported skeleton of murder victim Sheena Bora were untraceable, the prosecution on Wednesday told the trial court here that they were lying at the CBI's office in New Delhi.

Sheena Bora (24) was allegedly murdered by her mother Indrani Mukerjea and others in 2012.

The revelation comes on a day when the trial court received an email alleging that Sheena's bones had not gone missing but were in the possession of a forensic expert who had examined the skeleton and who was depositing before the court as a witness. This witness had suddenly amassed wealth, the email further alleged.

18 killed, 21 injured as bus from Bihar rams milk tanker on Expressway in Unnao district

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

At least 18 people were killed and 21 injured when a bus rammed a milk tanker from behind near Garha village on the Lucknow-Agra Expressway in Unnao district of Uttar Pradesh around 5.30 a.m. on Wednesday, the police said. The force of the impact was such that the passengers were flung out of the bus.

Local officials said the bus was carrying mostly migrant workers and their families from Sheohar and East Champaran in Bihar to Delhi. The injured have been rushed to nearby government hospitals. Three of them in a critical condition have been shifted to Lucknow. District officials rushed to the site to extricate victims and transport the injured to hospitals.



Urgent care: A patient injured in bus accident being treated at a hospital in Unnao on Wednesday. PTI

The district administration issued helpline numbers — 051-2970767, 9651432703, 9454417447, 8887713617, 8081211289 — for better coordination

with victims' families.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi described the incident as extremely painful. "The road accident in Unnao is extremely pain-

ful. My condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. The local administration is engaged in helping the victims in every possible way," he said.

"The loss of life in a road accident in Unnao district is extremely sad and heart-wrenching. My condolences are with the bereaved families. District administration officials have been instructed to reach the spot and speed up the relief work. I pray to Lord Shri Ram to give a place to the departed souls" Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath posted on X.

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav dubbed the incident negligence of the BJP government. "It is a matter of investigation that: Despite there being a dedicated parking zone on the expressway, why was a vehicle parked on the middle of the road; how did the monitoring of the parked vehicle go wrong despite the presence of CCTV cameras," Mr. Yadav asked in a post on X.

Duty hours of loco pilots monitored, and rest provided after trips: Railway Minister

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said on Wednesday that there had been a lot of theatrics by the Opposition parties to demote train loco pilots.

"Duty hours of loco pilots are carefully monitored, and rest is provided meticulously after trips. The average duty hours are less than eight hours in June. Only under exigencies, the trip duration exceeds prescribed hours," Mr. Vaishnav said on X.

Mr. Vaishnav's clarifications come following Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi's interaction with loco pilots, weeks after the Kanchenjunga Express train accident in West Bengal claimed lives of at least 10 persons.

Mr. Gandhi stated earlier on X that many loco pilots had complained about long working hours and double duty.



According to an RTI reply, between July 7, 2021 and June 17, 2024, 131 train accidents took place, of which 92 were derailments.

activist Ajoy Bose stated.

Mr. Vaishnav said loco pilots operated train locomotives from loco cabs. "Before 2014, cabs were in a bad shape. Now, cabs have been improved with ergonomic seats and more than 7,000 loco cabs are air-conditioned."

He said that off-duty resting facilities of loco pilots had been improved. The Minister said a major drive for recruitment was completed and 34,000 running staff had been recruited.

Ground handlers at airports will now have to obtain safety clearance from the DGCA

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Ground handling service providers at airports that perform activities such as boarding passengers, loading cargo, marshalling aircraft on the apron, and check-in services will now be required to obtain a safety clearance from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), according to the new regulations framed by it.

The DGCA has published a new set of rules, also known as Civil Aviation Requirement, prescribing the framework for safe operations by service providers after a consultation process with various stakeholders.

Service providers will now have to obtain a safety clearance from the DGCA within six months.

Ground handling agencies will also have to develop, implement and maintain a training programme

for its personnel and ensure they complete initial and on-the-job training following which they must each be issued a certificate of competency.

Recurrent training will also have to be conducted within a period of three years.

These agencies will have to maintain training records and make them available for review by the DGCA.

Calling for some relaxation in the timeline for implementation, Celebi Avia-



The DGCA's new set of rules, known as Civil Aviation Requirement, prescribes framework for safe operations by service providers. PTI

tion's India CEO Murali Ramachandran welcomed the move.

Ground handling safety events can cause injuries and deaths, and result in operational delays as well as damage to aircraft and equipment.

According to the International Air Transport Association, which represents over 300 airlines globally, as many as 40% of ground damage incidents involve cargo loaders, passenger stairs and passenger boarding bridges.

BJP lauds SC verdict, says it ended 'threat' to the Constitution

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Wednesday praised the Supreme Court verdict which declared that a divorced Muslim woman was entitled to maintenance from her husband under Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

Addressing a press conference at the BJP's national headquarters, party spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi said the order had "ended" a threat to the Constitution by the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986, passed by a Congress government in the past.

"Whenever the Congress has been in power, the Constitution was under threat. It was under the Rajiv Gandhi government that a decision was taken which gave primacy to *Sharia* over the Constitution. The prestige of the Constitution which was crushed during the Congress government has been restored by this order. The verdict has ended one of the big threats posed to the Constitution," he said.

In what is popularly known as the *Shah Bano* case, the Supreme Court in 1985 had allowed her plea for alimony from her hus-

It says said verdict should be seen in light of restoration of equal rights rather than religion

band after she was divorced. However, the then Congress government passed a law in Parliament to overrule the verdict following protests from conservative Muslim groups.

Mr. Trivedi said the verdict should be seen in light of the restoration of equal rights rather than religion. "There is no secular state where *Sharia* provisions such as *halala*, triple talaq and Haj subsidy were allowed and the then government by enacting a law had turned India into a partial Islamic state," he claimed.

Mr. Trivedi also lauded the fact that Russia's highest state award, Order of St Andrew the Apostle, was conferred on Prime Minister Narendra Modi by Russian President Vladimir Putin during his recent visit.

Taking a swipe at the Opposition parties, who have questioned Mr. Modi over foreign affairs issues, including the Ukraine war, he said they had the habit of casting doubts on every auspicious occasion.

SC judge says men should share funds to empower their homemaker wives

Justice Nagarathna says empowerment of 'vulnerable wife' will make her more secure in family; she made the observations in a separate opinion upholding Muslim women's right to maintenance

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

Justice B.V. Nagarathna of the Supreme Court, in a judgment on Wednesday, said men should share their financial resources with their 'homemaker' wives who did not have an independent source of income, to empower them.

"An Indian married man must become conscious of the fact that he will have to financially empower and provide for his wife, who does not have an independent source of income, by making available financial resources particularly towards her personal needs; in other words, giving access to his financial resources," Justice Nagarathna observed in a separate opinion upholding a divorced Muslim women's right to maintenance under a secular Section 125 of the erstwhile Code of Criminal Procedure.

Justice Nagarathna said such "financial empowerment" of a "vulnerable



Q An Indian married man must become conscious of the fact that he will have to financially empower and provide for his wife, who does not have an independent source of income

JUSTICE B.V. NAGARATHNA
Supreme Court Judge

wife" would make her more secure in the family.

"Those Indian married men who are conscious of this aspect and who make available their financial resources for their spouse towards their personal expenses, apart from household expenditure, possibly by having a joint bank account or via an ATM card, must be acknowledged," the Supreme Court judge wrote.

Draws a distinction

She drew a distinction between financially independent or employed married women and those who remain at home without

memaker' wives, whose request for expenses may be bluntly turned down by them or their family. Some husbands are not conscious of the fact that the wife who has no independent source of finance is dependent on them not only emotionally but also financially, the judge said.

"On the other hand, a wife who is referred to as a homemaker is working throughout the day for the welfare of the family without expecting anything in return except possibly love and affection, a sense of comfort and respect from her husband and his family which are towards her emotional security. This may also be lacking in certain households," Justice Nagarathna said.

Justice Nagarathna also referred to the vulnerability of a married woman with regard to the "security of residence" in her matrimonial home.

She concluded that only a strong Indian family and society would make a stronger nation.

IN BRIEF



SIT report on stampede seems politically motivated: BSP chief

Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati on Wednesday alleged that the SIT report presented on the Hathras stampede seems politically motivated. She said the silent approach towards chief organiser Narayan Sakar Hari (Bhole Baba) in the report was a cause for concern and it seemed that an attempt had been made to give him a clean chit. "The tragic death of 121 innocent people, including women and children, in the stampede in Hathras district is a living proof of government negligence. The government must pay attention so that such incidents do not reoccur," she said in a post.

Jarange-Patil tries for peace between Marathas, Dhangars

Exhorting the Maratha community to maintain peace with the Other Backward Classes, quota activist Manoj Jarange-Patil on Wednesday said people from all castes and religions were backing their demand for Maratha quota. Addressing "peace" rallies in Latur and Dharashiv, Mr. Jarange-Patil again singled out OBC leader and Minister Chhagan Bhujbal, accusing him of attempting to foment trouble between the Marathas and the OBCs in the State. The activist reiterated that he supported reservation for the Dhanger and Muslim communities, and promised he would take up their cause once the Maratha quota issue was satisfactorily dealt with by the State government.

Assembly bypolls held in 13 seats; violence in Bengal, Uttarakhand

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Amarwara in Madhya Pradesh recorded the highest voter turnout of 78.71% in the Assembly byelections held in 13 constituencies across seven States on Wednesday. The lowest turnout of 49.80% was seen in Badrinath in Uttarakhand. Sporadic incidents of violence were reported from Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

The byelections are being held in Bihar, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, and Himachal Pradesh.

Of the 13 seats, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Congress and Trinamool Congress had each held two, while one seat each had been held by the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Janata Dal(U), Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP).

Independents held the remaining three.

The byelections are being keenly watched, especially in Himachal Pradesh, where polling took place in the three seats of Dehra,



Making a choice: Voters showing their ID cards as they wait to cast their votes in the Ranaghat-Dakshin Assembly byelection. PTI

Hamirpur, and Nalagarh, vacated by Independent MLAs who joined the BJP. These constituencies recorded voter turnouts of 65.42%, 67.50%, and 78.82% respectively.

Minor clashes

Some violence was reported from Manglaur in Uttarakhand, where four people were injured in a clash between workers of different political parties at a polling booth.

Congress leaders, including former Chief Minister Harish Rawat, Leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly Yashpal Arya, and Congress MP Imran Masood, condemned

the violence.

More than 67% of the voters exercised their franchise in Manglaur, where a bypoll was necessitated by the death of sitting BSP MLA Sarwat Karim Ansari last October. The Badrinath seat fell vacant after sitting Congress MLA Rajendra Bhandari resigned and switched to the BJP in March.

In West Bengal, violence was reported from the Bagdah and Ranaghat Dakshin constituencies, which saw turnouts of 65.15% and 65.37%, respectively. BJP candidates Manoj Kumar Biswas and Binay Kumar Biswas, from Ranaghat-Dakshin and Bagdah res-

pectively, said they were not allowed to visit some polling booths. The Trinamool Congress dubbed the allegation as "baseless".

The other two West Bengal seats of Raiganj and Maniktala recorded voter turnouts of 71.29% and 51.39%, respectively.

Switched loyalties

In Punjab, the bypoll to the Jalandhar West seat saw 54.90% of the electorate casting their vote. The seat fell vacant after Sheetal Angul resigns as an AAP MLA and joined the BJP.

In Bihar, the Rupauli constituency recorded a voter turnout of 52.75%. The bypoll was necessitated by the resignation of Bima Bharti, who has won the seat for the JD(U) several times in the past, but recently quit the party to contest the Lok Sabha election on Rashtriya Janata Dal ticket. Independent MP Rajesh Ranjan, alias Pappu Yadav, announced "full support" to the RJD candidate Bima Bharti, whom he had defeated in the Lok Sabha election.

Tamil Nadu's Vikravandi Assembly constituency saw a 82.48% turnout.

Russia, India agree to go ahead with trade in national currency: diplomat

Kallol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

India and Russia have decided to establish a system for national currency settlement, Roman Babushkin, Chargé d'Affaires of the Russian Embassy, said on Wednesday.

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi ended his two-day visit to Russia, Mr. Babushkin described the visit as "historic and game-changing", and slammed the Western powers for supporting Ukraine.

He described the recently concluded peace conference in Switzerland as a *tamasha* (charade). He said that Russia's friendship with China should not be a cause of concern for India.

"Russia is the fourth largest trading partner of In-



Q Let us be very clear, we have never wanted Indians in the Russian Army. You will never see any announcement by Russian authorities

ROMAN BABUSHKIN
Chargé d'Affaires

pidly expanded after Western sanctions were imposed on Russia following the launch of the "special military operation" against Ukraine in February 2022.

The two leaders also discussed the issue of Indian nationals who were fraudulently inducted into the Russian fighting forces and deployed for action on the Russia-Ukraine border.

Echoing Moscow's assurance, Mr. Babushkin said that the Indian men would be sent back "soon", but he argued that Russia did not want Indians to be part of the Russian forces.

"Let us be very clear, we have never wanted Indians to be part of the Russian Army. You would never see any announcement by Russian authorities on this," he said.

dia, and we have a very optimistic scenario that we will continue our successful and mutually beneficial partnership with India. The most important point of the Joint Statement was that we have decided to go ahead with the establishment of the national currencies settlement system," Mr. Babushkin said, presenting an overview of the discussion between the Indian and Russian delegations in Moscow during the visit of Mr. Modi.

Mr. Modi visited Moscow on July 8 and 9 and held both delegation-level talks as well as one-on-one discussions with President Vladimir Putin. Mr. Babushkin said the discussions were focused on economic aspects as Russia's trade with India has grown many times in the past two years especially because of the trade in energy that ra-

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS : TIRUPATI
CHIEF EDITOR OFFICE

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Office of The Director, Mines & Geology, Udaipur

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NIT No.- 01/2024-25
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Bids are invited for the supply & installation of Machinery/ Laboratory equipments. Tenders are to be submitted "online" in to envelop based, Technical bid & Financial bid, from the interested Bidders up to 01:00 pm, 22 July 2024. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on website <https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in/>, <https://sppr.rajasthan.gov.in/>, <https://mines.rajasthan.gov.in/> The approximate value of tender is Rs. 4,70,20,00/- ADA DMG UDAIPUR

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IN BRIEF



HC orders Patanjali to deposit ₹50 lakh for flouting its order

The Bombay High Court on Monday directed Patanjali Ayurved to deposit ₹50 lakh for an alleged violation of an ad-interim order restraining the firm from selling its camphor products related to a trademark infringement allegation filed by Mangalam Organics Ltd. A copy of the order was made available on Wednesday. On June 2 this year, Patanjali Ayurved, in an affidavit, issued an unconditional apology and an undertaking to abide by the orders of the court but in the same affidavit, Rajneesh Mishra, Director of Patanjali Ayurved, admitted to breaching the ad-interim order and accepted to selling camphor products worth ₹49,57,861 after the injunction order.

Bombay High Court rejects discharge plea of Naxal leader

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday rejected the petition filed by 73-year-old Satyanarayana Rani, an alleged Naxal operative, in connection with the 2019 Gadchiroli blast incident in which 15 police personnel and one civilian were killed. The court was hearing two appeals filed by Mr. Rani against an order passed by the Special National Investigation Agency Court in Mumbai that gave authority to the agency to hand over some additional documents to the court. The Court rejected the plea. Mr. Rani was granted bail by the High Court in July 2022. He had later filed a petition seeking his discharge from the case, claiming there was no evidence against him that could prove his involvement in it.

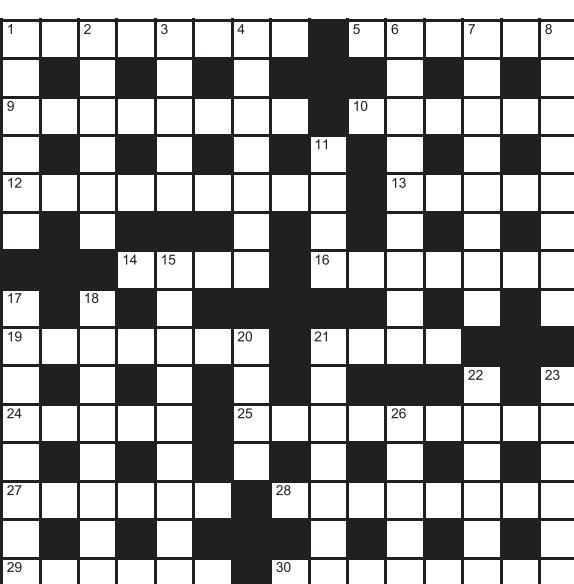
New textbooks for Class 6 to be made available by July-end, clarifies NCERT

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) said on Wednesday that new textbooks for Class 6 will be made available by July-end.

In response to a story published by *The Hindu* on July 9, the NCERT stated that all Grade 6 textbooks would be made available by the NCERT this month and that the two-month timeline referred to in the article was incorrect.

In States such as Tamil Nadu, where the new academic year begins in June, the non-availability of Class 6 textbooks had raised concern among schools. In several other States, the academic year starts only in July.

TH CROSSWORD + 14224
(set by KrisKross)

Across

- Architectural structure in India covered with gypsum (8)
- Call KrisKross about some strong medicine (6)
- Girlfriend initially dismissed diamonds as unfashionable (8)
- Everyone welcoming saint - you and I too (2,4)
- Advertisement describing soap solution for fabric (9)
- In counter, see puris (Indian bread) (5)

13 In counter, see puris (Indian bread) (5)

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



SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to previous puzzle

W	A	D	F	E	A	E
P	I	G	S	W	I	L
T	T	V	I	E	C	C
H	I	E	V	E	P	R
O	R	I	A	S	T	S
J	A	C	K	O	N	M
M	A	C	O	N	E	N
P	I	C	N	E	M	O
M	A	N	E	N	T	O
C	I	A	R	R	O	Q
M	A	N	E	T	A	R
B	E	I	E	S	T	A
B	L	O	O	K	U	N
E	Y	N	L	N	R	E

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

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NGO working on rights issues loses FCRA registration

Ministry tells CACIM that cancellation is due to incorrect filings of returns in 2018 and 2019; Centre for Financial Accountability is one of its projects

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry on Wednesday cancelled the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) registration of the parent entity of the non-profit Centre for Financial Accountability (CFA), which monitors and critically analyses the role of financial institutions and their impact on development, human rights, and the environment.

In a recent report, the CFA had highlighted how additional projects sanctioned in a Special Economic Zone operated by the Adani Group in the Kutch region of Gujarat "will compound environmental hazards and increase health risks for the people while further polluting the environment and accelerating degradation of the ecology".

In December 2023, the CFA organised an online meeting with the All-India Bank Officers Confederation to discuss the issues



faced by public sector banks and the road ahead.

Speaking with *The Hindu*, Joe Athialy, Executive Director, CFA said they were yet to receive the orders cancelling the FCRA registration of CACIM (India Institute for Critical Action Centre in Movement), but they had been informed online. CFA is one of the projects of CACIM.

"We have been told that the cancellation is due to the incorrect filings [of return] of financial years 2018 and 2019. This may be just an excuse, as they had all the years to ask us to rectify the mistakes. We certainly believe that the work we did has contributed to this action," Mr. Athialy said. He said the government want-

ed to throttle the organisations that were critical of its work.

"We are not going to get bogged down by such actions. We will continue our work. We recognise that the government wanted to throttle our work. We will find innovative ways to carry forward our work, which includes domestic donations. There is a life beyond FCRA," he said.

Earlier in January, the Ministry cancelled the FCRA registration of Centre for Policy Research (CPR), a leading public policy research institution in New Delhi.

Since 2015, the FCRA registration of more than 16,000 NGOs have been cancelled on account of "violation." As on Wednesday, there were 15,946 FCRA-registered NGOs active in the country. The FCRA registration of nearly 6,000 NGOs had ceased to operate from January 1, 2022 as the Ministry either refused to renew their application or the NGOs did not apply for renewal.

Centre asks States to raise awareness of cadaver donations

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

Amid a shortage of cadavers for academic and research purposes at medical colleges across the country, the Union Health Ministry has appealed to the States and Union Territories to encourage donation of bodies in the event of deaths happening outside hospitals.

In a note to the Health Secretaries, the Director-General of Health Services, Atul Goel, said the Union government was committed to promoting and augmenting organ donation to save the lives of those with organ failures. In most of the cases, organ donation was feasible only from patients certified as brain stem dead (before the heart stops).

On many occasions, it was noted that organ donations were not possible in situations where deaths happened outside the hospital, cardiac deaths occurring before the patient got admitted to the intensive care unit, and deaths before the completion of brain stem death certification.

Body donation possible
In such situations and also in deaths happening at home, body donation is

The donated bodies will aid in better teaching of medical professionals

possible. "The donated human bodies are required for academic and research purposes, which aids in better teaching of medical professionals. We have a shortage of human cadavers required for teaching in the country," Professor Goel said.

Asking the State Health Secretaries to instruct the stakeholders accordingly, he said in scenarios where organ donation was not possible, the option of body donation could be explored and family members encouraged and facilitated for the same. "This will go a long way in offsetting the shortage of human cadavers in medical institutions."

In a separate communication, the Health Ministry informed that as part of the Indian Organ Donation Day on August 3, it had been decided to organise a public awareness campaign in the name of *Angaadaan Jan Jagrutha Abhiyaan*.

"One organ donor can save up to eight or nine lives," Union Health Secretary Apurva Chandra said.

'Hospitals that turn medical colleges won't lose funding'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Health Secretary Apurva Chandra has written to certain States and Union Territories reassuring them of funding, amid apprehension that existing hospitals which are being converted into medical colleges, will stop receiving funds from the National Health Mission (NHM).

Mr. Chandra has clarified that district or referral hospitals which are being converted into medical colleges will continue their roles and obligations under the NHM and will continue to receive funding support from the Centre.

The letter came in view of demands made by the States and U.T.s for construction of additional district and referral hospitals, due to fears that the existing ones may lose funding.

Three phases of a Centrally Sponsored Scheme have been implemented, to date, under which 157 colleges have been sanctioned in line with the objective of increasing medical professionals. As of now, of these 157 medical colleges, 108 have become functional, with 40 of these (157) being located in the aspirational districts, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare stated.

IIT-Madras ruled out mass malpractice in NEET

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday submitted an affidavit in the Supreme Court referring to a data analytics report submitted by the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, ruling out "mass malpractice" or a localised set of candidates having benefited in the NEET-UG 2024 exam, leading to abnormal scores.

The IIT-Madras was assigned the task of suggesting modalities which could be followed to segregate students suspected of using unfair means from other students.

In a separate affidavit, the National Testing Agency (NTA), which holds the test, said the total number of actual candidates whose final scores reflected perfect 720 marks was 61 only. The NTA denied allegations of petitioners that 67 candidates scored perfect marks as "fallacious and



Nationwide exercise: NEET-UG was conducted at 4,750 exam centres in 511 cities. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

incorrect".

It said six of the 67 scored 720 marks in view of the grace marks awarded due to loss of time at a centre in Jhajjar. Of the 61 candidates, only 17 obtained 720 out of 720 based on provisional answer keys and 44 on account of the revision in one answer key of physics.

Thus the actual candidates without revision of the answer key were only 17 candidates which is not significantly higher than previous years... These 17

candidates are distributed among 16 centres located in 15 cities," the NTA said.

Future security options under consideration include replacing the mode of conduct of examination from the pen-and-paper mode (OMR mode) to a computer-based test mode.

Referring to allegations that the question paper was leaked through a Telegram channel, the NTA said the video was fake.

"The timestamp was manipulated to create a false

impression of an early leak. Images in the video were edited. The date was intentionally modified to suggest a May 4 leak," it said.

On the logistics and security features of conducting the 2024 exam, the NTA said the movement of the question papers was tracked on a real-time basis. Transportation of the papers was done under CCTV coverage and the footage was preserved.

Any breach in security would be recorded and reported to the NTA. Not only the place where the breach took place, but the place, time, and stage at which it occurred would be reported.

The question papers were stored in trunks in safety deposit vaults of the State Bank of India and the Canara Bank of the districts concerned where the exam was held.

On the preparation of the questions, the NTA said experts were invited to a

restricted area in the NTA office. Workshops were held and a total of 140 subject experts participated in the exercise between August and December 2023.

The work of the experts was sealed at the end of each day and returned to them the next day.

Ten subject experts combined the questions into question papers between February 16 and February 28. A minimum of two fully independent question papers were made. Subject experts were different for each subject question paper.

Questions papers were solved by another nine subject experts who gave their feedback. This exercise was held between March 1 and 7.

The question papers were printed in confidential press and logs maintained. Translations of the questions were done into 12 languages by a team of 101 translators between March 8 and 31.



IN BRIEF



Hyundai Motor India unveils Exter Knight at ₹8.38 lakh

Hyundai Motor India Ltd. (HMIL) has unveiled the 'bold & sporty' Exter Knight to mark the first anniversary celebrations of the Exter SUV, at prices ranging from ₹8.38 lakh to ₹10.42,800 (ex-showroom). The Exter Knight is based on the SX and SX(O) Connect variants of the Exter. The SUV is available in two powertrain options - 1.2 litre Kappa petrol engine with choice of 5-speed MT and Smart Auto AMT, and 7 colours including three new exclusive colours, HMIL said.

TVS Motor opens bookings for Apache Racing Edition

TVS Motor Company (TVSM) has commenced bookings for its 2024 TVS Apache RTR 160 Racing Edition at ₹1,28,720 (ex-showroom, Delhi). The motorcycle comes equipped with "the most powerful" 160cc air-cooled engine, delivering an impressive 16.04 PS @ 8750 RPM and three ride modes (Sport, Urban, and Rain), a digital LCD cluster with TVS SmartXonnect, LED headlamp and tail lamp, and Glide Through Technology, TVSM said in a statement.

EV maker River says talking to States for land acquisition

EV start-up River said it is in discussion with the governments of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana for acquiring 25-50 acres in one of these States to set up a factory with a capacity to manufacture 5 lakh electric scooters. "We are actively talking to the governments... for the next factory we want to set up on our land," co-founder and CEO Aravind Mani said. River is in talks as it expects to run out of capacity at the existing facility near Bengaluru, by early 2026.

'MSMEs need outlays for technology upgrades, to aid in green transition'

BUDGET IN FOCUS

A. Sakthivel

Recently, Union Minister for MSMEs Jitendra Singh said six pillars were identified as focus areas for the growth of the MSME sector – formalisation and access to credit, increased access to market and e-commerce adoption, higher productivity through modern technology, enhanced skill levels and digitalisation in the service sector, support to Khadi, Village and Coir industry to globalise them, and empowerment of women and artisans through enterprise creation.

While the interim Union Budget presented in February this year maintained stability, the upcoming Budget must strike a balance to fuel growth, curb inflation, generate employment, promote MSMEs, support ease of doing business, and promote the manufacturing sector.

The other important area that must be prioritised is infrastructure development for sustainable economic growth, especially in industrial clusters.

Raising employment
The Government did well for the economy with exports clocking a Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 8.5% in the last six years moving from \$478 billion in FY18 to \$778 billion in FY24.

We are now aiming to reach \$2 trillion by FY30, which requires a CAGR of 14.4%. This is a challenge in the current geopolitical situation but within the realm of reach. It requires supporting exporters and the MSME sector by pro-



Need of the hour: The Budget must consider reintroducing the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme. V. SREENIVASA MURTHY

viding an enabling and supportive ecosystem.

The importance of bolstering MSMEs is more important in the current situation as the sector is the backbone of the Indian economy and a key employment generator. For this sector to sustain and grow in the current challenging situation, one strong demand by the MSMEs is that the non-performing asset (NPA) timeline be extended to 180 days from 90 days. It will provide relief to the sector as many MSMEs are struggling because of this. The Credit Guarantee Scheme for micro and small enterprises in the manufacturing sector must also be revamped.

The Interest Equalisation Scheme emphatically supports exports. This scheme may be extended for a period of five years. Coming to the rise in interest rates consequent to the increase in repo rate from 4.4% to 6.5% in the last two years, the subvention rates may be restored from 3% to 5% for manufacturers in MSMEs and from 2% to 3% for all in respect of 410 ta-

Unless the payment from buyers are realised by exporters, it will be difficult to pay MSME workers, which will create fund flow issues for exporters.

Another flagship scheme of the government is the PLI Scheme, which is working well for large-

scale industries. For the textile and garment sector, the investment limit under the PLI scheme must be raised to ₹25 crore and the turnover limit must be reduced to ₹70 crore. This will help MSME exporters to upgrade their technologies and compete in the international market.

Green transition, R&D
Another significant area of concern is climate change. This has impacted MSMEs severely. Hence more soft funds must be made available for MSMEs to attempt a green transition and to fuel growth with green resources. MSME clusters like Tirupur can tap into significant export potential with this support.

Research development and innovation are key to sustaining exports. R&D globally is incentivised and 35 out of 38 OECD countries provide either lower taxes or higher deductions on R&D expenditure.

We expect that the weighted tax deduction under Section 35(2)(AB) may be increased to 300% and the benefit under Section 35(2)(AB) also be extended to limited liability partnerships (LLP), partnership firms and proprietary firms, as MSME units largely fall in these categories.

With schemes that provide funds for infrastructure creation, technology upgradation and climate change adaptation, the MSME sector will be able to contribute even more for the economy.

(A. Sakthivel is honorary chairman of Tirupur Exporters Association and a former chairman of both the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) and the Apparel Export Promotion Council)

Goyal asks industry to offer ideas to simplify compliance

Minister says pursuing second iteration of Jan Vishwas law to reduce compliance burden for businesses, decriminalise laws so as to ease investment inflows; prods industry to be proactive

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In a bid to ease investment inflows, the government is pursuing a second iteration of the Jan Vishwas law to reduce businesses' compliance burden and decriminalise laws, but is grappling with a lack of industry inputs about the pain points that need addressing. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal lamented on Wednesday, pleading with businesses to come forward and share ideas.

"We are trying to make



Self interest: Goyal urges industry and associations to be far more demanding in sharing pain points that need addressing. ANI

the Indian investment journey easier by working on reducing the compliance burden and decriminalis-

ing laws, but I would urge industry and associations to be far more demanding, be far more proactive," Mr.

Goyal said addressing industry body FICCI's national executive committee. "I am struggling to prepare Jan Vishwas 2.0, as we are not getting enough ideas, either from industry or in our different ministerial consultations," the minister added.

Net inward Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows slid to \$26.5 billion in 2023-24, from \$42 billion in 2022-23, the RBI reported in its Annual Report.

"We need all of you to come forward and give a balanced view on what is necessary," he said.

SBI raises ₹10,000 crore from infra bond issue

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

State Bank of India (SBI), said it raised ₹10,000 crore at a coupon rate of 7.36% payable annually for a 15-year term, through its sixth infrastructure bond issue.

"The issue attracted overwhelming response from investors with bids in excess of ₹18,145 crore and was oversubscribed by around 3.6 times against the base issue size of ₹5,000 crore," it said.

Pension, PF, mutual funds and insurance firms invested, SBI said, adding proceeds would be used for affordable housing and infrastructure.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	WEDNESDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	79,925	-0.53
US Dollar	83.51	-0.02
Gold	75,050	-2.37
Brent oil	85.49	0.89

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter.	3096.00	-14.75
Adani Ports.	1487.80	9.80
Apollo Hosp.	6375.70	55.40
Asian Paints	2996.45	91.45
Axis Bank	1291.65	2.25
Bajaj Auto	9542.45	8.35
Bajaj FinServ	1582.55	0.95
Bajaj Finance	7054.95	-13.10
Bharti Airtel	1445.05	9.50
BPCL	300.35	0.15
Britannia Ind.	5755.55	86.70
Cipla	1513.20	1.15
Coal India	490.75	-3.05
Divis Lab.	4636.55	85.00
Dr Reddy's Lab.	6592.55	9.70
Eicher Motors	4849.15	20.45
Grasim Ind.	2802.15	-40.35
HCL Tech.	1509.95	-21.15
HDFC Bank	1626.10	-10.40
HDFC Life	632.75	9.10
Hero MotoCorp	5508.75	-80.40
Hindalco	693.00	-13.70
Hindu Unilever	2610.45	20.30
ICICI Bank	1243.20	-5.05
IndusInd Bank	1425.95	-8.30
Infosys	1648.25	-8.90
ITC	451.45	-1.15
JSW Steel	925.40	9.90
Kotak Bank	1829.85	-18.00
L&T	3650.05	-16.05
LTMindtree Ltd.	5376.25	-0.90
M&M	2732.00	-135.30
Maruti Suzuki	12772.80	-54.90
NestleIndia	2616.45	-16.65
NTPC	381.40	4.35
ONGC	298.15	0.70
PowerGrid Corp.	346.05	4.90
Reliance Ind.	3168.45	-12.10
SBI Life	1558.80	34.05
State Bank.	849.00	-12.30
Shriram Finance Ltd.	2762.10	-29.90
Sun Pharma	1598.55	13.15
Tata ConsumerProduct	1150.80	8.60
Tata Motors	1005.50	-9.45
Tata Steel	167.98	-3.82
TCS	3909.15	-76.35
Tech Mahindra	1463.35	-2.40
Titan	3225.00	9.85
UltraTech Cement	11634.25	-45.55
Wipro	535.55	-5.45

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on July 10

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	83.32	83.64
Euro	90.15	90.51
British Pound	106.73	107.15
Japanese Yen (100)	51.58	51.78
Chinese Yuan	11.50	11.50
Swiss Franc	92.79	93.15
Singapore Dollar	61.75	61.99
Canadian Dollar	61.11	61.35
Malaysian Ringgit	17.72	17.80
Australian Dollar	56.16	56.38

Source: Indian Bank

'CV industry heading toward a 3-6% degrowth in FY25'

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

After witnessing year-on-year volume growth of 30.7% in FY22 and 28.7% in FY23, and a muted growth of 0.7% in FY24, India's commercial vehicles (CV) industry is headed to degrowth by up to 6% in FY25, rating agency CareEdge said in a study.

"Several factors contribute to this, including general election-related disruptions, elevated vehicle costs, and high channel inventory levels," said Arti

Roy, Associate Director, CareEdge Ratings.

'Possible improvement'
"However, there is hope for improvement in H2 of FY25, as infrastructure projects pick up pace post-monsoon and anticipated interest rate cuts provide some relief," she added.

Hardik Shah, Director, CareEdge said the CV industry witnessed its highest ever sales in FY19. Post COVID the industry will surpass FY19 performance due to improvement in sales in FY22 and FY23.

Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department

"AUCTION NOTICE"

Sealed tenders for the disposal of following condemned Vehicles/machines 'as on where is basis' laying in the premises as detailed below are hereby invited by the Executive Engineer Mechanical Division HPPWD Kullu on behalf of Governor of H.P for the following works from all interested parties. The tenders should reach this office on or before 31.07.2024 up to 10:30 A.M. and technical bids shall be opened on the same day at 11:00 A.M. in the presence of tenders or their authorized representative who wish to be present. The telegraphic and conditional tenders shall not be accepted. The tender forms can be had from this office against cash payment of Rs 350/- (Non-refundable) up to 4:00 p.m. on 30.07.2024. The undersigned reserve the right to reject the tender without assigning any reasons. If holiday falls on date of opening of tender it will be opened on next working day.

If any machine/vehicle remain unsold in tenders as per our fixed reserve price then the open auction of the same old Vehicles/Machinery will be held on the same day in the office premises of the Executive Engineer Mechanical Division HPPWD Kullu as per details given below at the site on the basis of 'As IT IS WHERE IT IS' basis.

Sr. No

YEREVAN

Armenia and Azerbaijan to hold U.S.-mediated talks in Washington



Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan will meet on Wednesday in Washington for a fresh round of U.S.-mediated talks, Yerevan and Washington announced, as the arch-foe neighbours negotiate a peace agreement. The meeting will take place on the sidelines of the NATO summit in Washington. AFP

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan says 1.45 million Afghan refugees can stay for another year



Pakistan announced it is extending the stay of 1.45 million Afghan refugees who legally reside in the country, a day after a visit by the U.N. refugee agency. Afghan refugees with proper documentation will be able to remain in Pakistan until June 30, 2025, according to a statement issued by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's office. AP

BEIJING

Bangladesh, China sign 21 deals, MoU, as Hasina meets Xi Jinping



Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina met President Xi Jinping and her Chinese counterpart Li Qiang here on Wednesday as the two countries signed 21 agreements, MoUs and announced seven more projects to further elevate their strategic cooperative ties. The talks also featured Rohingya issue, business and investments. PTI

MOSCOW

Russia outlaws activities of *The Moscow Times* news outlet



Russia on Wednesday named *The Moscow Times* news outlet an "undesirable organisation", outlawing its activities inside Russia and leaving anybody who cooperates with them open to criminal prosecution. Moscow has escalated a campaign against independent media since it launched the Ukraine war in 2022. AFP

Israeli Army asks Gaza City residents to evacuate as it steps up offensive

It warns that the urban area, previously home to half a million people, will 'remain a dangerous combat zone' and sets out designated escape routes to the south; an upsurge in fighting comes as mediator Qatar is due to resume truce talks

Agence France-Presse

GAZA STRIP

The Israeli Army dropped thousands of leaflets over Gaza City on Wednesday urging all residents to flee a heavy offensive that has rocked the main city of the besieged Palestinian territory.

The leaflets, addressed to "everyone in Gaza City", set out designated escape routes to the south and warned that the urban area, previously home to more than half a million people, would "remain a dangerous combat zone".

The warning follows three partial evacuation orders and came as Israeli



Final glimpse: A woman inspects the damage, after Israeli troops withdrew from Shejaiya in eastern part of Gaza City. REUTERS

troops, backed by tanks and aircraft, have fought Hamas and Islamic Jihad militants in the heaviest combat operations the city has seen in months.

In one operation, the

deadly strikes have hit four schools used as shelters in four days, sparking international outrage.

The upsurge in fighting and displacement came as mediator Qatar was due to resume talks on Wednesday toward a truce and hostage release deal to end the war, now grinding on into its 10th month.

Time for talks

An Israeli delegation led by Mossad chief David Barnea arrived in Doha for the talks, a source with knowledge of the negotiations said, speaking on condition of anonymity because of their sensitivity. CIA director William Burns was also expected in the Qatari

capital, after holding talks in Cairo on Tuesday.

The latest fighting in Gaza has newly displaced 3,500 civilians, said UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini, who spoke before the latest leaflet drop and said "there is absolutely no safe space in Gaza".

One woman carrying her scant belongings through the bombed-out wasteland, Nirm al-Jamal, told AFP on Tuesday that "this is the 12th time" her family has had to flee.

Hamas, whose October 7 attack started the war, has accused Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of escalating the fighting to derail the latest ceasefire talks.

Myanmar rebel group seizes town along road to China

Agence France-Presse

YANGON

Myanmar ethnic minority fighters said on Wednesday they had seized a town along a key trade highway to China following days of clashes, in another blow to the military.

Northern Shan State has been rocked by fighting since late last month, when an alliance of ethnic armed groups renewed an offensive against the military along the highway to China's Yunnan province.

The clashes have shredded a Beijing-brokered truce that in January halted an offensive by the alliance of the Arakan Army (AA), the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDA) and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA).

The town of Naungcho



Incremental gain: The Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) said the town of Naungcho 'is totally ours'. AFP

"is totally ours", General Tar Phone Kyaw of the TNLA said.

Earlier on Wednesday, a military source said that ethnic minority fighters were in control of "most" of the town.

Naungcho is around 50 km down the highway from the former British hill station of Pyin Oo Lwin, home to the military's elite

officer training academy.

Another road from the town leads to Taunggyi, the capital of Shan state.

On Tuesday the junta said 18 civilians in Lashio had been killed and 24 wounded in shelling, rocket and drone attacks by the alliance. The military has carried out several air strikes around the town of about 1,50,000 people.

Bangladesh suspends job reservations after protests by students

Agence France-Presse

DHAKA

Bangladesh's top court on Wednesday temporarily suspended quotas for coveted government jobs after thousands of students staged nationwide protests against what they call a discriminatory system, lawyers said.

The quota system reserves more than half of well-paid and massively over-subscribed civil service posts, totalling hundreds of thousands of government jobs, for specific

groups including children of liberation heroes.

Students launched protests earlier this month, demanding a merit-based system.

The quota system was abolished in 2018 after weeks of protests, but reinstated in June by Dhaka's High Court, sparking fury from students.

The Supreme Court on Wednesday suspended that order for a month.

Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan had also requested that students return to class.

Trump doubles down on Biden, accuses Democrats of lying to protect President

Agence France-Presse

DORAL



Donald Trump

Donald Trump unleashed a torrent of invective against U.S. President Joe Biden on Tuesday, mercilessly assailing the embattled Democrat as he faces down calls to end his re-election bid after a disastrous debate performance.

Mr. Trump's speech in Florida was his first public appearance since the claim for Mr. Biden's withdrawal began gaining momentum, and the gloves were emphatically off as the Republican accused

Democrats of lying to protect the President.

"It's the biggest cover up in political history," Mr. Trump thundered near the start of a 75-minute speech, which focused almost entirely on his 81-year-old election rival.

"As you know, they are

all co-conspirators in the

'Missing President'

In a typically bombastic speech peppered with multiple exaggerations and falsehoods, Mr. Trump accused Mr. Biden of going missing regularly from the Oval Office while his son Hunter, a convicted felon, runs the government aided by First Lady Jill Biden.

"Joe Biden doesn't have time for Donald Trump's weird antics – he's busy leading America and defending the free world," it said.

"Donald Trump is a liar, a convict, and a fraud only out for himself par for the course."

the edge of catastrophe and describing a world facing a race against the clock to avert nuclear armageddon.

The pair had previously sparred over who had a better long game during the debate, and the Biden campaign's response to the latest challenge came in the form of a golf pun.

"Joe Biden doesn't have time for Donald Trump's weird antics – he's busy leading America and defending the free world," it said.

"Donald Trump is a liar, a convict, and a fraud only out for himself par for the course."

Iraq court condemns to death widow of IS leader al-Baghdadi

Agence France-Presse

BAGHDAD

working with the Daesh terrorist group and detaining Yazidi women in her house," the Supreme Judicial Council said.

The slain leader's wife detained the Yazidis who "were later kidnapped" by IS fighters in the Sinjar district of northern Iraq, it added.

A judicial source identified her as Asma Mohammed.

Washington announced in 2019 that U.S. troops had killed Baghdadi in an operation in northwestern Syria.

Alvarez and Messi's goals take Argentina to the cusp of defending its Copa America crown

Reuters

EAST RUTHERFORD

Defending champion Argentina booked its place in the Copa America final after goals from Julian Alvarez and Lionel Messi gave it a 2-0 win over Canada in the semifinal at New Jersey on Tuesday.

After soaking up some early pressure, Argentina went ahead when Rodrigo De Paul played through Alvarez, who ghosted in between two defenders to score with a tidy finish in the 22nd minute.

Messi scored Argentina's second in the 51st minute when he stuck out a boot to divert Enzo Fernandez's shot from the edge of the area past Canada goalkeeper Maxime Crepeau.



Record effort: Messi's 109th strike for Argentina put him second in the all-time international scoring charts. AFP

The goal moved Messi to joint fifth in the all-time Copa America scoring charts, level with Peru's Paolo Guerrero and Chile's Eduardo Vargas on 14. The 37-year-old's 109th

goal for Argentina also saw him surpass Iran's Ali Daei on the all-time international scoring charts.

Messi is second behind the prolific Cristiano Ronaldo, who has netted 130 times for Portugal.

The result (first semifinal):

Argentina 2 (Alvarez 22, Messi 51) bt Canada 0.

Second semifinal: Uruguay vs. Colombia, Charlotte, 5.30 a.m.

Sport

Alvarez and Messi's goals take Argentina to the cusp of defending its Copa America crown



Record effort: Messi's 109th strike for Argentina put him second in the all-time international scoring charts. AFP

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Lions now have the oldest and youngest paddlers

UTT

MUMBAI



Ready to rock: Sharath Kamal, Yashaswini, Sathiyan, and Thakkar during the UTT 2024 player draft. EMMANUEL YOGINI

consistent singles players in 2023, joining captain Harmeet Desai.

While PBG Bengaluru Smashers struck gold by adding Spanish southpaw Alvaro Robles and USA's aggressive female paddler Lily Zhang along with the retained Manika Batra, the new teams – Jaipur Patriots and Ahmedabad SG Pipers – will rely on Indian stars.

Three Indian paddlers – Archana Kamath, Payas Jain, and Suhana Das – have decided to give this edition a miss.

The squads: Ahmedabad SG Pipers:

Manish Shah, Bernadette Szocs (Rom), Lilian Bardet (Fra), T. Reeth Rishya, Baskar, Maria Xiao (Esp).
PBG Bengaluru Smashers: Manika Batra, Alvaro Robles (Esp), Lily Zhang (USA), Jeet Chandra, Taneesha Kotche, Anthony Almalraj.
Puneri Paltan Table Tennis: Ayhika Mukherjee, Nina Mittelham (Ger), Joao Monteiro (Por), Ankur Bhattacharjee, Anirban Ghosh, Yashini Sivashankar.
U Mumba TT: Manav Thakkar, Sutirtha Mukherjee, Aruna Quadri (Ngr), Akash Pal, Kavyasree Baskar, Maria Xiao (Esp).

VILLAIN IN THE PLOT

Djokovic is Wimbledon's 'Darth Vader': McEnroe



John McEnroe says fans are treating Djokovic with the same suspicion reserved for a Star Wars villain. "He's like the Darth Vader compared to the classy Nadal and Federer. Who can compare to them in terms of what they brought to the table? Nobody. And then this guy Djokovic spoils the party. So then how about respecting him after all this!"

GREAT GESTURE

Former India head coach Dravid refuses T20 World Cup bonus



Former India head coach Rahul Dravid has refused to take the additional bonus amount of ₹2.5 crore offered to him by the BCCI following the recent T20 World Cup triumph in the Americas. Dravid was happy to settle for the due amount similar to other coaching staff.

SPECIAL ONE

Spanish coach de la Fuente labels Yamal a 'genius'



Spain coach Luis de la Fuente said seeing Lamine Yamal's performance against France was like watching 'a genius'. "We have seen a genius. He's a player we have to take care of. I have to give him advice to keep working with the same humility and keep his feet on the floor," said de la Fuente.

POOR SHOW

'We didn't do enough', says France captain Mbappe



France captain Kylian Mbappe said his side "didn't do enough" in Tuesday's 2-1 semi-final loss to Spain and admitted he was disappointed after underperforming at Euro 2024. "They (Spain) played better than us, they deserved to go through and we are going home."

Krejcikova roars past Ostapenko in battle of French Open champs

The Czech blunts the Latvian's power-packed game to make it to the last four for the first time at the grasscourt Major; Musetti overcomes Fritz's challenge to reach his first Slam semifinal while Djokovic progresses without hitting a ball

WIMBLEDON

N. Sudarshan
LONDON

Jelena Ostapenko hits a tennis ball as if there is no tomorrow. When she won the Roland-Garros singles title in 2017, she struck a whopping 54 winners but made as many errors on the slow and languid Parisian clay.

The thrill-a-minute high-risk strategy has since carried her to quarterfinals or better at each of the other three Slams. But on Wednesday, Barbara Krejcikova's controlled aggression proved the perfect riposte as the Czech triumphed 6-4, 7-6(4) to enter her maiden Wimbledon singles semifinal.

Delightful day

It was a sweet result for Krejcikova, who, after reaching the 2024 Australian Open quarters, spent five months battling injuries and winning just three matches.

She will now play 2022 champion Elena Rybakina – who blasted past Elina Svitolina 6-3, 6-2 – for a spot in the final.

"I don't have any words," Krejcikova said later.

"I had decided that I was going to leave everything I had on the court and I am happy I did it. It's a

great moment in my career."

The 28-year-old was at her best in the opening set. It was the first day in many when play on the show courts didn't start with roofs closed. Soon Wimbledon park was bathed in sunlight and by the time the spectators basked a bit outdoors and settled into their seats, Krejcikova had raced to a 3-1 lead. She would soon pocket the set, winning 20 of her 23 service points and all 12 in her last three holds.

Not distracted

The Latvian's power and panache didn't bother her. Neither was she distracted by Ostapenko's return stance, wherein the latter pranced like a football goalkeeper ahead of a spot-kick routine. With a high backswing, Krejcikova clobbered the ball, into zones from where Ostapenko could do nothing.

In the second set, Krejcikova's game regressed to the mean and Ostapenko's did not lift. What ensued was a scrap. The pair traded breaks and fought each other to a standstill to 4-4.

Krejcikova struggled with her timing and also seemed to lose her footing at the baseline quite a few times.

The 2021 French Open champion even fluffed the opportunity to serve out

the match after breaking Ostapenko to 5-4.

However, she summoned her best game just in time, holding to love to take the set into a tie-break and running up a 6-3 lead once there. She eventually clinched the contest on her second match-point when Ostapenko sent a forehand return long.

In about four hours after Krejcikova's moment under the sun, it was the turn of Lorenzo Musetti to experience the warmth as he ousted American Taylor Fritz 3-6, 7-6(5), 6-2, 3-6, 6-1 to make his first Major semifinal.

The Italian, seeded 25th, continued his rich form on grass – final at Queen's Club and semifinals in Stuttgart – to set up a clash against second seed and seven-time champion Novak Djokovic.

The Serbian progressed after the World No. 9 from Australia, Alex de Minaur, withdrew because of the hip injury he suffered in the closing stages of his fourth-round victory over Arthur Fils.

THE RESULTS

Quarterfinals: Men: 2-Djokovic (SRB) w.o. 9-De Minaur (Aus); 25-Musetti (Ita) bt 13-Fritz (USA) 3-6, 7-6(5), 6-2, 3-6, 6-1.

Women: 31-Krejcikova (Cze) bt 13-Ostapenko (Lat) 6-4, 7-6(4); 4-Rybka (Kaz) bt 21-Svitolina (Ukr) 6-3, 6-2.



Moving closer: Krejcikova, who entered the semifinal, will look to go the distance. GETTY IMAGES



Leading from the front: Gill's knock was the launchpad for what proved a match-winning total. X@BCCI

Gill, Ruturaj shine as India takes 2-1 lead

INDIA IN ZIMBABWE**Press Trust of India**

HARARE

Shubman Gill and Ruturaj Gaikwad produced high-quality knocks before the bowlers did their part as India outplayed Zimbabwe here on Wednesday.

Gill (66 off 49), Yashasvi Jaiswal (36 off 27) and Ruturaj (49 off 28) propelled India to 182 for four after the visitors opted to bat.

Entertaining effort
Zimbabwe was never really in the run chase despite an entertaining effort from Dion Myers (65 not out), ending at 159 for six.

Washington Sundar struck thrice while Avesh Khan took a couple of wickets.

After Avesh Khan bounced out opener Wessly Madhevere in the second over, the wickets kept falling for the home team.

Zimbabwe did well to stave the ship after losing its first five wickets for 39 runs.

The 77-run stand off 57

balls between Myers and Clive Madande (37 off 26) put much needed life into the game.

Earlier India inducted World Cup winners Jaiswal, Sanju Samson and Shiva Dube into the playing eleven, leaving out the likes of Riyan Parag in the middle order.

Blessing Muzarabani (two for 25) was the pick of the bowlers.

Ruturaj was able to milk the spinners in the middle overs and ended with four boundaries and three sixes.

SCOREBOARD**INDIA**

Yashwanth Jaiswal c Bennett b Raza 36 (27b, 4x4, 2x6), Shubman Gill c Raza b Muzarabani 66 (49b, 7x4, 3x6), Abhishek Sharma c Marumani b Raza 10 (9b, 1x4), Ruturaj Gaikwad c Madhevere b Muzarabani 49 (28b, 4x4, 3x6), Sanju Samson (not out) 12 (7b, 2x4), Rinku Singh (not out) 1 (1b); Extras (b-4, lb-1, w-2, nb-1); 8; Total (for four wkts. in 20 overs): 182.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-67 (Jaiswal, 8.1 overs), 2-81 (Abhishek, 10.3), 3-153 (Gill, 17.5), 4-177 (Ruturaj, 19.4).

ZIMBABWE BOWLING

Bennett 1-0-15-0, Ngarava 4-0-39-0, Chatara 3-0-30-0, Muzarabani 4-0-24-2, Masakadza 3-0-25-0, Madhevere 1-0-19-0.

ZIMBABWE

Wessly Madhevere c Abhishek b Avesh 1 (2b), Tadiwanashe Marumani c Dube b Khaleel 13 (10b, 3x4), Brian Bennett c Bishnoi b Avesh 4 (5b, 1x4), Dion Myers (not out) 65 (49b, 7x4, 1x6), Sikandar Raza c Rinku b Washington 15 (16b, 3x4), Johnathan Campbell c sub (Parag) b Washington 1 (2b), Clive Madande c Rinku b Washington 37 (26b, 2x4, 2x6), Wellington Masakadza (not out) 18 (10b, 1x4, 4-30 p.m. IST).

Spanish armada turns it around to sink France in the semifinal



Reuters
MUNICH

Spain struck twice in five minutes in a pulsating first half to secure a 2-1 comeback win over France on Tuesday as a record-breaking goal from teenager Lamine Yamal and a Dani Olmo effort propelled it into the Euro 2024 final.

The 16-year-old Yamal cancelled out Randal Kolo Muani's opener with a sublime shot in the 21st minute before Olmo added another in the 25th for his third goal in the knockout stage.

The Spaniards, who have won every game of the tournament so far, will now hunt a record-breaking fourth European



Prodigy: Yamal's sublime equaliser for Spain made him the youngest-ever scorer in a Euro or World Cup. X@UEFA

crown. Spain had an early chance when Yamal, the youngest player to feature in a World Cup or Euro semifinal, floated a cross but Fabian Ruiz headed over the bar.

France did better from an almost identical move in the ninth minute with Kylian Mbappe crossing for

Kolo Muani to head in his first goal from open play at Euro 2024.

But the Spaniards quickly turned the game around. Yamal curled a stunning left-footed effort from 25 metres in off the post to break another record held by Pele, as youngest scorer in a Euro or World Cup.

Before France had any time to recover, Olmo com-

pleted the lightning-quick comeback with a shot that was turned in by France's Jules Kounde. After the break, France had chances through Mbappe and Theo Hernandez, but could not carve out an equaliser.

The result (semifinal):

Spain 2 (Yamal 21, Olmo 25) bt France 1 (Muani 9).

IN BRIEF



Vingegaard edges Pogacar in thrilling Tour de France duel

Jonas Vingegaard edged Tadej Pogacar as a battle between the four Tour de France favourites played out over a series of hills in the central Cantal region on Wednesday. Defending champion Vingegaard reeled in Slovenian Pogacar's ferocious attacks before a thrilling finish on stage 11 with Remco Evenepoel in third at 25sec and Primoz Roglic fourth at 45sec despite a late accident.



Suryakumar remains second among T20I batters

Star batter Suryakumar Yadav remained second in the latest ICC men's T20I batting rankings. Suryakumar is placed second with 821 rating points behind Travis Head, who has 844 rating points. Phil Salt is placed third with 797 points, ahead of Babar Azam (755), Mohammad Rizwan (746) and Jos Buttler (716).



Padukone set to travel to Paris as badminton squad mentor

The legendary Prakash Padukone is set to travel as a mentor along with the 15-member Indian badminton squad for the Paris Olympics, beginning on July 26. P. Gopi Chand, Gururaj Dutt, Agus Santosa, Vimal Kumar, and Mathias Boe will be the coaches travelling to Paris, while Prakash Padukone will go as a mentor. The badminton events begin on July 27.

Injured Kenyan marathon star Kosgei pulls out of Olympics

Kenya's former marathon world record holder and Olympic silver medallist Brigid Kosgei has pulled out of the Paris Olympics because of injury, team officials said on Wednesday. The 30-year-old Kosgei, who set a world record of 2hrs 14min 04sec for the women's marathon in Chicago 2019, was hoping to make her second Olympic appearance. Kosgei has been replaced by Sharon Lokedi, the 2022 New York Marathon champion. "It's during one of the regular monitoring sessions that Olympic silver medallist Brigid Kosgei expressed an injury concern to the technical team," Kenya's Olympic Committee said in a statement.

Jasmine knocks out top seed Snigdha in pre-quarterfinals

Jasmine Kaur knocked out top seed Snigdha Patibandla 6-4, 6-1 in the under-18 girls' pre-quarterfinals of the HPCL Mittal AITA National series junior tennis at the CLTA Complex, Chandigarh, on Wednesday.

The results (pre-quarterfinals): Boys: Rian Sharma bt Varun Singh 6-3, 6-0; Arav Chawla bt Shreyas Dogil 7-5, 6-2; Gurbaaz Narang bt Neeraj Ringangankar 6-7(5), 6-2, 6-1; Armaan Walia bt Yashasvi Balhara 6-3, 7-6(6); Aditya Mor bt Jevin Kanani 6-1, 6-2; Mayan Sharma bt Kartik Tyagi 6-2, 7-5; Vishvajeet Sanas bt Akshit Kaushik 7-5, 6-1; Tarush Ghildyal bt Aryan Chauhan 6-2, 3-0 (retired).

Girls: Jasmine Kaur bt Snigdha Patibandla 6-4, 6-1; Sataki Choudhary bt Radha Sahira 6-7(5), 6-2, 6-1; Tamanna Walia bt Priyanshi Kaital 6-2, 6-1; Sherry Sharma bt Vaishnavi Singh 7-6(8), 7-5; Mahika Khanna bt Princy Mandagala 6-4, 6-4; Mansi Singh bt Shravasti Kundilya 6-0, 7-6(4); Dhatri Dave bt Pratishtha Saini 6-0, 6-0; Rubani Kaur Sidhu bt Hansika Singh 6-2, 6-2.

LIVE TELECAST

England vs West Indies: 1st Test, day 2, Sony Sports Ten 1 (SD & HD) & LIV, 3.30 p.m.

Wimbledon: SS Select 1, 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 6.30 p.m.

TNPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & FanCode, 7.15 p.m.

Cycling: Tour de France, Eurosport (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.

Athletics team to train at three different venues to cap off preparations

Olympic Sports Centre in Poland, Antalya in Turkey, and St. Moritz in Switzerland are the chosen sites; the athletes will assemble in Paris four days before the start of track and field events

PARIS OLYMPICS

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The 30-member Indian athletics team for the Olympics will train at three different venues abroad in their last leg of preparations before assembling in Paris on July 28, four days before the start of track and field competitions.

The Olympic Sports Centre in Spala, Poland; Antalya in Turkey; and St. Moritz in Switzerland are the three foreign destinations where the Indian athletes will train in their last leg of preparations.

"The members of the national athletics team will be training at different venues to prepare for the Olympic Games, but will have to assemble in Paris on July 28," chief coach Radhakrishnan Nair said.

Olympic and world champion javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra will be based in Antalya in Turkey. "He (Chopra) has already reached Turkey and will reach Paris on July 28," Nair said.

The Indian athletics team grew to 30 members with the addition of long jumper Jeswin Aldrin and 500m runner Ankita Dhanya-



Star attraction: Neeraj will be based at Antalya in Turkey. FILE PHOTO: K.R. DEEPAK

Neeraj is in Turkey and will reach Paris on July 28. Sable and Parul will join the group of athletes in Poland on July 24 and then go to Paris. All members of the 4x400m relay team (men and women) will leave for Poland on Thursday.

ni, based on their rankings in the World Athletics Road to Paris system. Four race walkers – Akshdeep Singh, Parameet Singh Bisht, Viresh Singh, Suraj Panwar – and triple jumper Abdulla

Aboobacker are currently based at the Sports Authority of India (SAI) centre in Bengaluru, while Avinash Sable and Parul Chaudhary will train in St. Moritz in Switzerland.

"Sable and Parul will join the group of athletes in Poland on July 24 and then go to Paris," Nair said.

Ankita in Bengaluru "Ankita (5,000m) is currently based out of Bengaluru."

All the members of the

4x400m relay team (men and women) will leave for Poland on Thursday.

Four athletes – Kishore Kumar Jena (javelin), Jyothi Yarragi (100m hurdles), Jeswin Aldrin (long jump) and Praveen Chithravel (triple jump) – reached Poland earlier this week.

"Annu Rani (javelin), Tarsempal Singh Toor (shot put) and Abha Khatua (shot put) will also leave for Poland on Thursday," the chief coach added.

Nayar in fray to join Gambhir's support staff

CRICKET

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

A day after Gautam Gambhir was officially announced as India head coach, Abhishek Nayar – Gambhir's colleague as part of the Kolkata Knight Riders' support staff – is tipped to join Team India as the assistant coach.

Nayar is understood to be among the list of names suggested by Gambhir for various positions in the team's support staff.

According to a BCCI official, Nayar has been sounded out and preliminary discussions have been positive of him being elevated to the national team set-up. Being a close friend of India captain Rohit Sharma



Nayar. FILE PHOTO

ma could also work in his favour.

For bowling coach, feelers have been sent to R. Vinay Kumar and L. Balaji.

There is a school of thought in the BCCI hierarchy that to ensure continuity in the thought-process, at least one of the current coaching staff members should be retained. It will be interesting

to see if Gambhir is asked to work with either Vikram Rathour (batting) or Paras Mhambre (bowling) or T. Dilip (fielding).

Selection dilemma

With time running out for the selection meeting for the limited overs' tour to Sri Lanka, starting on July 27, the BCCI is yet to announce a new selector. It's been three weeks since the Cricket Advisory Committee interviewed candidates for the selector's post.

Interestingly, the BCCI has still not made the outgoing selector's name public. While it is widely believed that Salil Ankola will make way for an incoming selector from the north zone, chief selector Ajit Agarkar has served out his 12-month tenure at the end of the T20 World Cup.

This time, there's 256 women on the 460-member team that will represent Australia in 33 sports.

It's the third consecutive Summer Olympics where Australia contains more women than men.

It's the third-largest Australian team to compete at an Olympics staged overseas, behind Tokyo 2020

(486) and Athens 2004 (482). The AOC said the Australian team is also likely to be the third-largest delegation in Paris – despite its relatively small population of 27 million.

Ten Indigenous athletes are on the team, with NBA star Patty Mills the first five-time Indigenous Olympian from Australia.

The Australian team is predicted to win 48 medals overall, and 13 gold, in a forecast by Nielsen's GraceNotes.

Chef de mission Anna Meares, a two-time Olympic champion track cyclist, says it's extraordinary that Australia consistently fields athletes across so many sports.

Rachin gets central contract from New Zealand Cricket

Press Trust of India
AUCKLAND

Young New Zealand all-rounder of Indian-origin Rachin Ravindra's success in the past one year, including the ODI World Cup, has earned him his first central contract.

The 24-year-old figures in the list of 20 cricketers offered contracts on Wednesday for the 2024-25 season following a breakthrough season where he finished as the fourth leading run-scorer with 578 runs.

Special feeling
Ravindra said receiving his first central contract was special.

this year after being bought for ₹1.8 crore.

The top-order batter's rise was rewarded in January when he was named the ICC Emerging Player of the Year for 2023.

In March, he became the youngest recipient of the Sir Richard Hadlee Medal.

Special feeling
Ravindra said receiving his first central contract was special.

"Growing up, you'd see those contract lists come out each year and think it would be cool to be on that list one day – and for it to eventuate now is a pinch-myself moment," he told New Zealand Cricket (NZC).

"Playing a game you love with your mates for a

living is something very special, and I hold it close to my heart," added Ravindra.

Three new faces

Three more new faces – Ben Sears, Will O'Rourke and Jacob Duffy – figure in the list of 20 players offered contracts.

Ravindra has scored 519 runs in seven Tests, including a century, while he has three ODI tons in 25 games.

Sears, who played alongside Ravindra at the 2016 ICC Under-19 World Cup, featured in 11 T20Is for New Zealand during the 2023-24 season, claiming 13 wickets at an average of 22.

The pacer was also a travelling reserve in the New Zealand squad for the recently-concluded T20

World Cup in the West Indies and USA.

Pacer O'Rourke, who has made his international debut in all three formats in the past one year, has played three ODIs, three T20Is and two Tests.

Twenty-nine-year-old right-arm quick Duffy has featured for New Zealand in 14 T20Is and six ODIs and was recently involved in the drawn T20I series against Pakistan in April.

Players offered central contracts for 2024-25: Finn Allen, Tom Blundell, Michael Bracewell, Mark Chapman, Devon Conway, Jacob Duffy, Matt Henry, Kyle Jamieson, Tom Latham, Daryl Mitchell.

Henry Nicholls, Will O'Rourke, Ajaz Patel, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Mitchell Santner, Ben Sears, Ish Sodhi, Tim Southee and Will Young.

Sriram Balaji enters doubles quarterfinals

TENNIS

Sports Bureau

Sriram Balaji, seeded No.1 with Gonzalo Escobar of Ecuador, cruised into the doubles quarterfinals with a 6-3, 6-0 win over Boris Arias and Federico Zeballos in the €148,625 Challenger tennis tournament in Braunschweig, Germany, on Wednesday.

Women: First round: Punin Kovaputtipan (Tha) bt Pooya Ingale 6-2, 6-2; Honoka Kobayashi (Jpn) bt Abhaya Venuri 6-0, 4-6, 6-4; Akanksha Nitrite bt Sofia Nagornaya (Isr) 7-5, 3-6, 6-2.

\$40,000 ITF women, Corroios-Seixal, Portugal:

First round: Gabriela Knutson (Cze) bt Riya Bhatia 6-0, 6-2.

Doubles: Pre-quarterfinals:

Matwe Middelkoop (Ned) & Denys Molchanov (Ukr) bt Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan & Vijay Sundar Prashanth 4-6, 6-2, [10-5].

€148,625 Challenger, Salzburg: Doubles:

Pre-quarterfinals: Jakob Schnaitter & Mark Wallner (Ger) bt Mateus Alves (Bra) & Divij Sharan 7-6(2), 3-6, [10-5].

\$25,000 ITF women, Aschaffenburg, Germany:

First round: Julie Struplova (Cze) bt Zeel Desai 6-1, 7-5.

Doubles: Pre-quarterfinals:

Stefania Bojica (Rou) & Zeel Desai bt Tessa Brockmann & Julia Middendorf (Ger) 6-4, 6-2.

\$15,000 ITF women, Lakewood, USA: Doubles:

Pre-quarterfinals: Amelia Honer (USA) & Teja Tirunelveli bt Meghna Arunkumar & Patsy Daughters (USA) 6-1, 6-3.

Jackson suffers apparent injury

Associated Press

(HUNGARY)

World 200m champion Shericka Jackson pulled up with an apparent injury late in a race on Tuesday as part of the Hungarian Athletics Grand Prix.

The Jamaicans are already missing Elaine Thompson-Herah for the Paris Games, who recently said she has a small tear in her Achilles tendon.

The Paris Games start later this month. Jackson has the second-fastest time ever in the event.

The Jamaicans are already missing Elaine Thompson-Herah for the Paris Games, who recently said she has a small tear in her Achilles tendon.

She was in front and nearing the finish line when she suddenly shut it down. Jackson appeared to

Women outnumber men in Australia's Olympics team

Associated Press
SYDNEY

The Australian Olympic team will head to the Paris Games with its highest-ever percentage of women – 55.6%. The Australian Olympic Committee on Wednesday said that when the Olympics were last held in Paris in 1924, no women were on the team.

This time, there's 256

women on the 460-member team that will represent Australia in 33 sports.

It's the third consecutive Summer Olympics where Australia contains more women than men.

It's the third-largest Australian team to compete at an Olympics staged overseas, behind Tokyo 2020</

Changing lives – one at a time

My mission is to educate parents and players on what it takes to become a champion, how they should view sports and emphasise the importance of playing sports:
Through our programme in Hyderabad, we aim at children developing a love for physical activity which leads to a healthy lifestyle, says Sreekar

Kamesh Srinivasan

Playing cricket for India is a dream career. No other job in the country gets as much attention! With India winning the T20 World Cup for the second time, in such a breathtaking fashion and the emotional scenes thereafter, it has been reinforced that cricket's power to unite is unparalleled in the nation.

And what a reception the team got upon returning home!

Yet, for every dream that finds its path to glory, there are many million that lose track along the way. There are no guarantees that if you follow a time-tested trajectory, you will achieve success. It is as much true in sports, as in life.

Indian cricket has a fabulous structure. If you have the talent and the determination, you can indeed find your way forward. But, the process is not easy. For most, everything is new, and before they get on the right track, they go astray, for lack of guidance.

The champions do tell their stories, but their pathway is hard to follow. Their stories are also far too good to relate for everyone.

More than the success stories, it is the failures that fetch us the best lessons.

That point is so beautifully proven by Sreekar Mothukuri, a computer engineer, who could not fulfil his dream of playing cricket for the national team.

Passion for life

It was not just in India that he could not make progress in cricket, but missed the bus despite being in the USA for 10 years, playing cricket all the time.

"I played leather ball and tennis ball cricket matches on weekends in every State I lived – Arizona, Atlanta, St. Louis, Columbus and Houston – in the USA. During weekdays I played tennis and volleyball," he recalled.

Sreekar returned to India in 2016, before cricket became this big in America.

"I am still in touch with my friends. I heard that some of the players currently in the US team also played in the team that I was part of, in Atlanta," Sreekar recalls with pride.

There is no doubt that cricket has a brilliant future in America.

"The leagues are becoming bigger and better year by year. Parents are investing a lot in their child's cricketing career. A lot of infrastructure is being built to accommodate many teams playing their matches on weekends. When I was there, every house had a nice backyard with a barbecue setup. Whereas now, most parents are installing cricket nets in their backyard to make their children practice cricket. Every weekends, parents are taking their children to different cities for tournaments," said Sreekar, giving an insight to the fascinating stage of cricket in the United States.

It is a regular practice in India that parents put their children in cricket academies for about two months during the summer vacation.

"From what I have heard from friends in Atlanta, there is a push to introduce cricket at the school level," he said.

As a kid growing up in Telangana, Sreekar fell madly in love with cricket after watching Sachin Tendulkar play.

However he did not have any guidance about pursuing a career in professional cricket. With him being not so good in studies, his parents put him in a boarding school.

Familiar tale for all

When he was in the seventh grade, Sreekar started persuading his parents, both government employees, to register him in a cricket academy.

"My parents and family members told me that it was already too late, citing the fact that Sachin Tendulkar started playing for India when he was in the tenth standard," he remembered.

Every time he made a request to get into cricket, his parents kept asking him to focus on his studies, first tenth grade, then twelfth, a degree and a job, before he could get into cricket.

"I was unhappy at that point, but now I understand their concern, considering how risky it was to become a cricketer, especially back then when there weren't many opportunities or leagues like we have today," he opined.

Sreekar did get a chance to try cricket for a year before he took up a job. However, he recalls that seven of the 14 matches in the season were rained off, in the league he played in in Hyderabad.

"I was 21. I realised that becoming a cricketer was not a one-year affair. I took up a job and worked in the corporate world for 14 years in India and USA. Despite earning well, I always looked forward to playing tennis in the evenings and cricket on weekends," said Sreekar.



The unfulfilled dream made Sreekar reflect on his journey and realise that lack of guidance as the major stumbling block. He had visited libraries but could not find a book that could show the way in sports.

Problem-solver

So, he chose to write the books himself. He has done three of them, each one a superb effort in its own way, in throwing light on the path to sports.

He had been researching for over a decade, travelling and meeting many champions in different games, coaches and other experts, interviewing them to gather precious knowledge. He put them all into well-structured books that "aims to help aspiring sports parents and players with the information necessary to nurture a champion."

The first book, *Behind a Sports Champion*, features interviews with players, parents, coaches and other experts about their journey.

"This book is intended for parents and children who are already on their journey and seek guidance," he said, grateful to all the experts who readily shared their knowledge to benefit future generations.

The second, *Child to Champion*, is meant for parents who are at the start of the sporting journey of their children.

"It provides a step-by-step process on what parents should do at different age groups and warn them about the potential pitfalls along the journey," he pointed out.

The third, *Pathway to cricketing excellence and beyond*, is a real firecracker. A book that lends tremendous clarity on every aspect and stage, with tons of inspiring quotes that make it spellbinding reading.

"This book targets children, parents and coaches, the three crucial pillars of a champion's success. It discusses the qualities and roles each must fulfil on their sporting journey," he said, capturing the essence of the dynamic book.

The third book is in fact a logical book to develop any career, not just cricket. Sreekar has written the book with the cricket coach and mentor of several cricketers, Jwala Singh.

"It is easy for anyone in India to connect to cricket and that is the target of the book, to package knowledge in a form that is sought."

"This book provides a 360-degree coverage in every aspect of life. It includes numerous cricket stories. By simply changing the stories, you can apply this book to any sport or aspect of life. The focus of the book is achieving excellence in anything you pursue," said Sreekar.

While one could race through the book owing to its gripping nature, it may not be that easy for everyone in today's time where reading is not a popular habit, especially for the young generation.

"The book will be improved with more photos and illustrations. I need to find the right team to execute the plan. In fact my goal is to write short storybooks for children with illustrations and sports as a medium to reach life lessons, targeting the 8-14 age group", he said.

Of course, with online sale, distribution of any book is not an issue. Sreekar has books selling well both in India and the USA.

Sreekar is also toying with the idea of making short video clips to spread precious knowledge.

From being a cricket fanatic, Sreekar had grown into a sports fanatic, but the call from his co-author Jwala Singh helped him get back to the universal language that is cricket in India.

"I first met Jwala sir in 2019 when I went to Mumbai to interview him for my first book. Later, I sent him a copy of that book. In 2022, I got a call from him saying that he wanted to write a book and needed help. I was excited. We put both



The first goal should be to stay healthy and active. Then, learn the life lessons that sports teach. If the children become champions in the process, it is the icing on the cake

our experience into the book. It was launched in Mumbai by Dilip Vengsarkar, Chaminda Vaas and Wasim Jaffer," said Sreekar, quite pleased to have come a full circle with the fascinating willow game.

New beginnings

Wedded to sports, Sreekar runs a company called, "Its PlayTime", that offers sports readiness program for children in the 3-8 age group in schools in Hyderabad.

"Today many parents are encouraging their children to pursue sports due to the rise of various sports leagues, Indian athletes performing well on the international stage, and increased career opportunities.

"However, there is still a lack of system or resources to guide them in the right direction. As a result, many parents make costly mistakes, wasting time, energy and resources," said Sreekar as his perennial concern is to provide the best guidance, without viewing it all as an exciting business opportunity.

"My mission is to educate parents and players on what it takes to become a champion, how they should view sports and emphasise the importance of playing sports. Through my program in Hyderabad, we aim at children developing a love for physical activity which leads to a healthy life style. After all, how can they enjoy success in their careers without being in good health," asked Sreekar.

It will be hard to understand Sreekar's passion for cricket till we know what he packed when he left for the USA.

"Generally, when anyone goes to the USA for the first time for college or job, they carry cooking utensils and a few groceries in one piece of luggage, and their clothes in another. I packed only one bag at home, and my parents kept asking about my other bag so that they could pack the utensils. I told them that one of



When I was there, every house had a nice backyard with a barbecue setup. Whereas now, most parents are installing cricket nets in their backyard to make their children practice cricket.

my friends had it and would bring it directly to the airport. When my friend brought the bag to the airport, they were surprised to see my cricket kit. I had prepared it and left it at my friend's place. Another friend had told me that they did play cricket in USA," recalled Sreekar.

Now, we all know that cricket is played in the USA, and the American team is capable of taking the big strides as evidenced by its landmark win against Pakistan in the T20 World Cup.

With Los Angeles set to have cricket in the 2028 Olympics, America has already been sold on the cricket dream. The T20 World Cup further boosted it for the Americans.

For all those aspiring to make a mark, there is a ready reckoner in Sreekar's work.

"I was fulfilling a long-term dream and started playing tennis. I first saw Roger Federer on TV in 2005 and was mesmerised by his game. I used to attend the US Open and Cincinnati Open to watch him play," he said.

He did meet Federer a few times. Of course, he gave himself the opportunity to meet a myriad of Indian sports stars, Kapil Dev, Sachin Tendulkar, PV Sindhu and a few dozen others, not just for his project of unravelling sporting champions and understanding their journeys, but also as a huge sports fan.

Getting into sports is always a win-win situation in Sreekar's perspective.

"The first goal should be to stay healthy and active. Then, learn the life lessons that sports teach. If the children become champions in the process, it is the icing on the cake," he said.

Sreekar Mothukuri may not have achieved much as a sportsperson, but is in the forefront when it comes to offering the best guidance in the world of sports. It is a wholehearted effort with the purity of thought, to just benefit everyone with rich knowledge.

THE GIST

▼ Indian cricket has a fabulous structure. If you have the talent and the determination, you can indeed find your way forward. But, the process is not easy.

▼ The unfulfilled dream of becoming made Sreekar reflect on his journey and realise that lack of guidance as the major stumbling block. He had visited libraries but could not find a book that could show the way in sports. So, he chose to write the books himself

▼ Wedded to sports, Sreekar runs a company called, "Its PlayTime", that offers sports readiness program for children in the 3-8 age group in schools in Hyderabad

SCIENCE

Why is India drilling a 6-km deep hole in Maharashtra?

The Borehole Geophysics Research Laboratory (BGRL) in Karad, Maharashtra, is a specialised institute mandated to execute India's scientific deep-drilling programme. Under BGRL, the aim is to drill the earth's crust and conduct scientific observations to help expand our understanding of reservoir-triggered earthquakes in the Koyna-Warna region.



DEEP DIVE: At the deep drilling site in Koyna region, Maharashtra, the towering drilling rig is seen surrounded by associated equipment, an onsite mud logging unit, gas analysis lab, and a geological studies lab. MOES-BGRL

Bhavya Khanna
Sukanta Roy
M. Ravichandran

Scientists don't yet have a way to predict when and where an earthquake will occur. We know powerful earthquakes at the boundaries of tectonic plates, which measure more than 7.5 on the Richter scale, are almost certainly associated with a severe loss of infrastructure and life. In the ocean, these geological events trigger tsunamis. However, more minor earthquakes that occur in a plate's interior are more challenging to predict because they occur at the least expected sites and could strike densely populated habitats. This is why scientific deep drilling is an indispensable tool for progress in the earth sciences.

What is scientific deep drilling?
Scientific deep-drilling is the enterprise of strategically digging boreholes to analyse deeper parts of the earth's crust. It offers opportunities and access to study earthquakes and expands our understanding of the planet's history, rock types, energy resources, life forms, climate change patterns, and more.

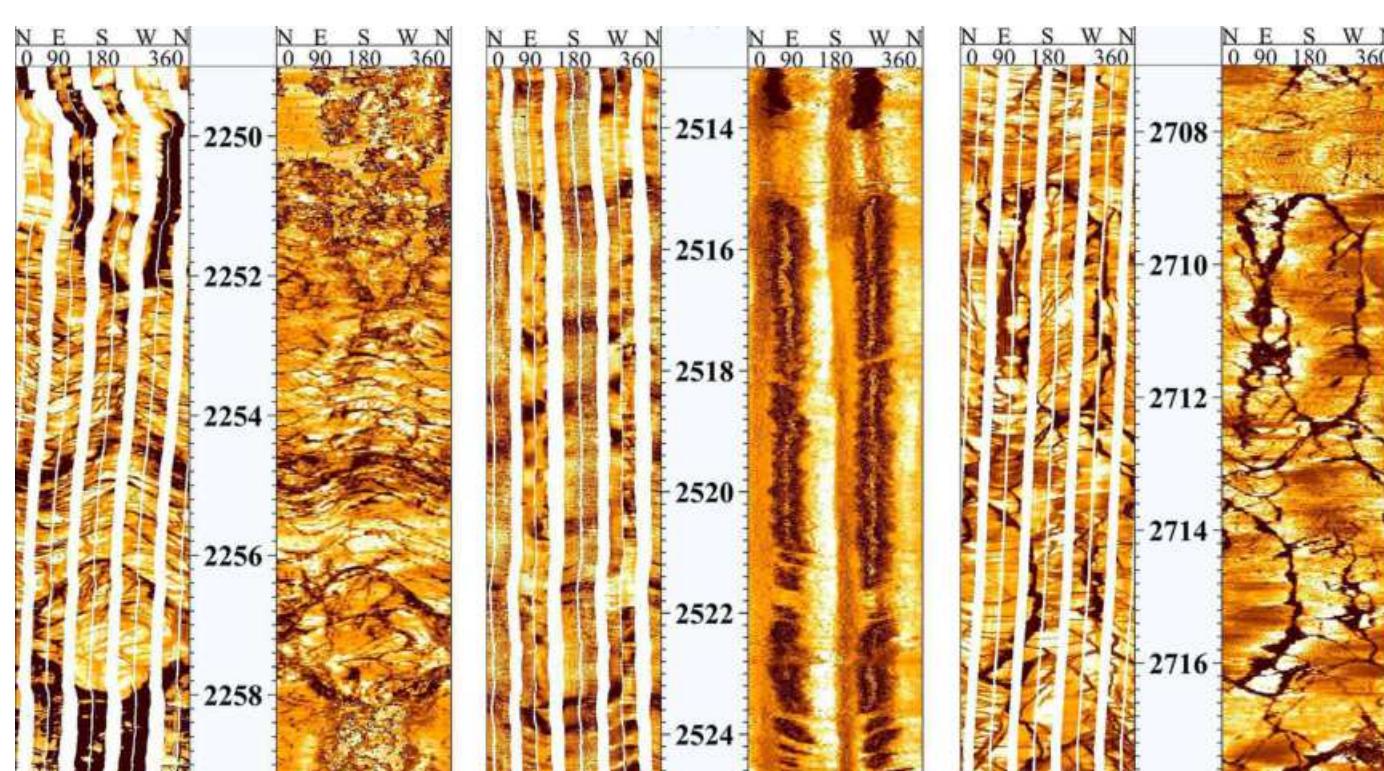
The Borehole Geophysics Research Laboratory (BGRL) in Karad, Maharashtra, is a specialised institute under the Ministry of Earth Sciences mandated to execute India's sole scientific deep-drilling programme. Under BGRL, the aim is to drill the earth's crust to a depth of 6 km and conduct studies to help expand the understanding of reservoir-triggered earthquakes in the Koyna-Warna region of Maharashtra.

This region has been experiencing frequent earthquakes since the Shivaji Sagar Lake, or the Koyna Dam, was impounded in 1962. BGRL's 3-km-deep pilot borehole in Koyna is complete; the Ministry of Earth Sciences is committed to reaching a depth of 6 km.

Benefits of a deep-drilling mission
Earthquakes are challenging to study. Surface-level observations can't make complete sense of them. The recurrent earthquakes in Koyna are synchronous with the dam's loading and unloading during the monsoon and post-monsoon periods, offering an opportunity to widen our understanding of earthquakes.

However, making observations inside the earth is a different ball game. Scientifically drilled boreholes can be a hub of direct, *in situ* experiments and observations and monitor a region's fault lines and seismic behaviour. They also provide exact and fundamental knowledge of the composition of the earth's crust, structure, and processes, and help validate models based on surface studies. Thus, it can inform a range of societal problems related to geohazards and geo-resources.

Investing in scientific deep-drilling can also help expand scientific know-how and technological innovation, especially in seismology (the study of earthquakes). It can also spur the development of tools and equipment for drilling, observation,



High-resolution images (electrical and acoustic) of the borehole wall at a depth of 2,248–2,718 m in the Koyna pilot borehole showing the presence of fault-fracture zones and rock deformation features in detail. MOES-BGRL

data analysis, sensors, etc.

Challenges of scientific deep drilling
Scientific deep drilling is the best tool to study the earth's interior. Other ways include geophysical measurements of seismic wave speed, gravitational and magnetic fields, and electrical conductivity from the near surface. Scientists can also examine crust fragments brought from deep underground to the surface.

But scientific deep-drilling remains the most reliable method because it helps get direct (*in situ*) and near-source measurements. Researchers can also capture rock and sediment cores aligned with the earth's timeline from within the borehole. It is also labour- and capital-intensive. The earth's interior is a hot, dark, high-pressure region that hinders long and continuous operations.

Even with these challenges, however, scientific pursuits are important. Expanding earth-science research, especially of solid earth, is crucial. Aside from earthquakes, this is because many surface phenomena – the composition of water and air, their availability, and the resulting interactions with climate-affected phenomena – are linked to what happens inside the earth's crust.

What is the drilling technique?
The Koyna pilot borehole is about 0.45 m wide (at the surface) and roughly 3 km deep. It employs a unique drilling strategy – a hybrid of mud rotary drilling and air hammering.

In rotary drilling, a rotating drilling rod made of steel is attached to a diamond-embedded drill bit at the bottom. As it penetrates the crust, it generates considerable heat due to friction, so drilling mud is flushed through the rod into the borehole to cool the drill bit. In addition to being a coolant and a lubricant, the drilling mud helps

bring rock cuttings up from the borehole.

A ring-shaped space separates the drilling rod and borehole wall. The debris moves out from the space due to the pressure of the drilling mud pumped from the top through the drilling rod. The deeper the borehole, the more pressure is required to bring up the debris from this space.

Air hammering pushes highly compressed air through the drilling rod to deepen the borehole and flush the cuttings out.

Deep-drilling operations at Koyna use a rig capable of both techniques. The decision to use each technique at a particular point is based on the rock type, presence of highly fractured rock, water inflow zones, and the need to collect core samples, among others.

Decisions of this kind are dynamic. Operators used the mud rotary technique to acquire cores because it allowed us to capture long, intact cylindrical sections. Where operators used air-hammering, the team collected rock chips for studies of rock properties.

The operators also have to circulate the drilling mud while making downhole measurements of physical and chemical properties of the borehole environment using temperature, density, electrical conductivity, sonic velocity, rock porosity, and radioactivity probes – while installing steel pipes to secure the borehole's sides.

When the borehole depth increases beyond 3 km and strikes for 6 km, the entire rig will have to be updated with exponentially enhanced capacity. In addition, increasing the depth to 6 km heightens the complexities of drilling through fractured rocks in the Koyna seismic zone and the possibility of drill rods and sensors getting stuck.

Troubleshooting also becomes more complicated because of limited access to equipment deeper down the hole. Rocks at these depths are softer so drilling mud

is lost. Further, a 4-in-wide and 9-metre-long granite core can weigh up to 200 kg, and lifting it up by more than 3 km is technically exacting. Operators will also encounter fault lines and fracture zones more often, through which water could enter the borehole and stall drilling.

If any of the above situations arise and troubleshooting fails, we may have to abandon the borehole. Another challenge is to steer the borehole at the desired inclination from the top, using vertically controlled actions. This requires drill motors, imaging tools, and monitoring devices that can be 'tuned' every minute.

The planning and execution of deep-drilling are thus dynamic and must be foolproof. Human resources are also a challenge. The process needs highly skilled technical personnel for continuous on-site engagement for 6–8 months at a time in harsh weather; this was the case for the 3 km pilot borehole. For a 6 km borehole, continuous drilling will last at least 12–14 months.

What have scientists found?

The pilot drilling mission was a success and has yielded significant new information about the subsurface geological environment. For one, it revealed 1.2-km thick, 65 million-year-old Deccan trap lava flows, and below them 2,500–2,700-million-year-old granitic basement rocks. Downhole

measurements of core samples and conditions from a depth of 3 km have also provided new information about the physical and mechanical properties of rocks, the chemical and isotopic composition of formation fluids and gases, temperature and stress regimes, and fracture orientations.

We also captured high-resolution images of the borehole wall using acoustic and micro-resistivity techniques. They can be used to validate data extracted from other cores worldwide. The team at



Earthquakes that occur in a plate's interior are challenging to predict because they occur at the least expected sites and could strike densely populated habitats.

Koyna also conducted hydraulic fracturing experiments to directly measure the rocks' stress regimes. We expect data from these experiments to be useful for many years, especially to understand the reasons for recurrent earthquakes in specific geographies. By integrating various datasets and using advanced analysis, the team could also detect buried fault zones and study their properties. One significant finding was the presence of water down to 3 km! It was found to be meteoric or rain-fed, implying deep percolation and circulation are possible. Another key finding was that the Koyna region is critically stressed: even small stress perturbations could cause the rock to fail and potentially trigger frequent, small-magnitude earthquakes in the region.

What next?

The pilot data will inform future drilling. Modelling experiments suggest the temperature at 6 km could be 110–130 degrees C. Drilling equipment, downhole data acquisition systems, and sensors for long-term placement at depth need to be designed accordingly. The Koyna data and samples will also facilitate new experiments. More than 20 research groups nationwide are already studying the Koyna samples. One is examining the gouge from fault zones to understand the frictional properties of rocks in quake-prone regions. Another is characterising microbes on these rocks to understand life forms that thrive in hot, dark, nutrient-poor environments. Their findings could potentially yield new molecules and clues to improve industrial processes.

Members of the international geological research community have also sought access to core samples for projects in emerging fields such as carbon capture and storage in the deep Deccan traps. In sum, the Koyna exercise is establishing a firm footing in scientific deep-drilling for India. Its lessons will inform future deep-drilling experiments and expand academic knowledge in multiple ways.

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