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MINING TRAGEDY
Water level affects rescue operation in Assam

NEWS » PAGE 14



RESEARCH TOOL
Database of 10,000 human genomes released

NEWS » PAGE 16



DEVASTATING ATTACK
Junta air strike kills 40 people in Myanmar

WORLD » PAGE 18

Same-sex marriage: SC rejects review of judgment

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A five-judge Bench of the Supreme Court, headed by Justice B.R. Gavai, on Thursday rejected petitions seeking a review of an October 2023 judgment which refused to legalise same-sex marriage.

"We have carefully gone through the judgments delivered by Justices S. Ravindra Bhat (former judge) speaking for himself and for Hima Kohli (former judge) as well as the concurring opinion expressed by one of us (Justice P.S. Narasimha), constituting the majority view. We do not find any error apparent on the face of the record," the Review Bench held in a short order.

The other judges on the Bench are Justices Surya Kant, B.V. Nagarathna, and Dipankar Datta. The petitions were decided via circulation in the chambers of the judges.

Modi calls for documenting history of Indian diaspora

Addressing Pravasi Bharatiya Divas event in Bhubaneswar, PM lauds journey of Persons of Indian Origin and speaks about their remarkable achievements; he also highlights country's global role

Satyasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

Addressing the journey of Persons of Indian Origin across different eras to various countries, their remarkable achievements, and contributions to the societies, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday called for documenting the history of the Indian diaspora.

Addressing the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas here, he said, "The history of the Indian diaspora across the globe, their journeys to various countries, and their remarkable stories of success form a unique part of India's heritage. There are many interesting and inspiring stories which deserve to be told, seen, and documented. They represent our shared legacies



Key event: Prime Minister Narendra Modi being greeted by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar in Bhubaneswar on Thursday. ANI

and cultural heritage."

Mr. Modi said in a world in turmoil due to wars across the globe, the future lay in Buddha, a symbol of peace, rather than in war.

Symbol of peace

"Right here in Odisha is the place named Dhauli which is a great symbol of peace. Emperor Ashoka had cho-

sen the path of peace here while the world was expanding empires through the power of the sword. This is the strength of our heritage, with the inspiration of which India can say to the world today that the future lies in Buddha and not in war," he said.

"The pace at which 21st-century India is advancing

and the scale of its development efforts are unprecedented. In just a decade, the country has lifted 25 crore people out of poverty. During the same period, India has risen from being the world's 10th largest economy to the fifth largest. It won't be long before India secures its position as the third largest economy in the world," Mr. Modi said.

Underlining the country's growing global role due to its achievements and prospects, the Prime Minister said, "Today's India not only firmly asserts its own point but also strongly amplifies the voice of the Global South. The World patiently listens to what India says."

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 14

INDIA bloc picks AAP over Congress for Delhi polls

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Assembly election has triggered an unexpected crisis for the INDIA bloc. The Samajwadi Party and Trinamool Congress have extended unqualified support to the Aam Aadmi Party over the Congress. The Shiv Sena (UBT) is also leaning in favour of Delhi's ruling party.

The support of these parties is symbolic at best, since none of them have any significant electoral presence in Delhi. However, their actions signal a wider problem within the bloc. J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah – whose party, the National Conference, has refused to pick sides – said on Thursday that the alliance's agenda, leadership, and future strategy is not clear.

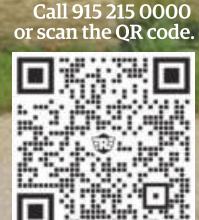
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BACK PAIN	—	—	MRI Lumbar Spine Screening
OSTEOPOROSIS & FRACTURE RISK	—	Vitamin D	Vitamin D, Calcium, Phosphorus
DIABETES CHECK	Sugar (fasting+after food), HbA1c	Sugar (fasting+after food), HbA1c	Fasting Insulin, Sugar (fasting + after food), HbA1c,
HYPERTENSION (HIGH BP)	Blood Pressure Check, Kidney Function Tests	Blood Pressure Check, Kidney Function Tests	Blood Pressure Check, Kidney Function Tests
CHRONIC FATIGUE & TIREDNESS	Complete Blood Count, ESR (inflammation screen)	Vitamin B12, Complete Blood Count, ESR	Vitamin B12, Complete Blood Count, ESR
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Have proof to put Jain on trial'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Thursday said there was enough evidence to put former AAP Minister Satyendar Jain on trial and sought a Delhi court to frame charges against him in a money laundering case.

The court sought certain clarifications from the ED on the point of charge proposed to be framed against Jain. Arrested in May 2022, Jain was granted bail in October 2024.

Timings		
FRIDAY, JAN. 10		
RISE 07:15	SET 17:43	
RISE 14:07	SET 03:38	
SATURDAY, JAN. 11		
RISE 07:15	SET 17:44	
RISE 15:00	SET 04:46	
SUNDAY, JAN. 12		
RISE 07:15	SET 17:44	
RISE 16:01	SET 05:52	

Delhi Weather max min
Delhi City 21 05
Safdarjung 21 05
Palam 20 06

Delhi Palam Today
14°C The cold day conditions are also possible. The weather will be cold & foggy with mostly dry conditions. Night also will be cold and uneasy.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
13°C Morning will be cold and foggy. The cold day conditions to prevail. Spell of light rain and thundershower with gusty winds to occur.

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THE HINDU
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Umar, Sharjeel speeches created fear: police to HC

Delhi police oppose their bail pleas in north-east Delhi violence case; they made references to CAA-NRC, triple talaq, Kashmir: SPP Amit Prasad

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Speeches by Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam and others created a sense of fear after a common reference to the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 and National Register of Citizens (CAA-NRC), Babri mosque, triple talaq and Kashmir, the police argued before the Delhi High Court on Thursday.

Opposing their bail pleas before Justices Navin Chawla and Shalinder Kaur, the police made submissions in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) case related to the violence which took place in north-east Delhi in February 2020.

'Common pattern'
"Speeches by Meeran Haider, Sharjeel Imam, Khalid Saifi and Umar Khalid show a common pat-



Delhi police conducting a flag march in February 2020 in the Chand Bagh-Karawal Nagar area. FILE PHOTO

tern. All are on identical lines. They create a sense of fear in the people hearing them..(by talking about) CAA-NRC, Babri, triple talaq and Kashmir," said Special Public Prosecutor Amit Prasad.

He said Mr. Khalid also gave an "objectionable" speech in Amritsar which was made "viral" at the relevant time.

Mr. Khalid, Mr. Imam and others were booked under the UAPA and the IPC for allegedly being the

"masterminds" of the violence which erupted during the protests against the CAA and NRC.

While challenging the trial court orders refusing bail, Mr. Khalid and others cited their long incarceration and parity with other co-accused. Mr. Prasad also referred to the statements of several protected witnesses to establish the accused persons were not "innocent bystanders". The matter would be heard on January 21.

HC questions maintainability of plea against AAP poll promise

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Thursday questioned the maintainability of a plea against Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) recent poll promise of paying a stipend of ₹2,100 to women in the Capital under the Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana if the party returns to

power.
"How is it maintainable as an election petition?" Justice Jyoti Singh said, and advised the petitioner to file a public interest litigation instead.

The petitioner, Vijay Kumar, stated that AAP was "luring voters" with a "false promise" as the Delhi government had already denied having such a

scheme. Advocate Shiv Shankar Parashar, the petitioner's counsel, said Mr. Kumar had filed a complaint with the Election Commission of India (EC) over the ruling party's "false promise".

He urged the court to direct the poll body to dispose of his complaint. The court posted the hearing for January 10.

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9:45 AM - 5:15 PM

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SESSION LINE-UP

9:45 AM - 10:45 AM

Inauguration & Special Address



Devesh Chaturvedi
(Secretary,
Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare)



Ashish Kumar Bhutani
(Secretary,
Ministry of Co-operation)



Shaji KV
(Chairman, NABARD)

Session 1: 10:45 AM - 11:30 AM

Why Monsoon Has Been Raining Woes Over The Last Few Years

Dr D S Pai (Scientist-G, India Meteorological Department)

Dr Nabansu Chattopadhyay (Director, Agricultural Meteorology Division, World Meteorological Organisation)

Ajai Rana (Chairman of Federation of Seed Industry of India and CEO, Savannah Seeds)

Neha Kumar (Head, South Asia Programme, Climate Bonds Initiative)

Moderated by Subramani Ra Mancombu

(Head - Commodities & Agri-Business, The Hindu businessline)

Session 2: 11:45 AM - 12:30 PM

Overcoming Climate Change with New Seeds, Strategies

Dr Venkatram Vasantavada (Director of Federation of Seed Industry of India & MD & CEO, SeedWorks International Ltd)

Ajeet Chahal (Rice Team Lead - Asia, Crop Science Division, Bayer)

S Soundararajane (Chief Executive Officer, HyFarm)

Sanjiv Kanwar (Managing Director, Yara South Asia)

Moderated by Vishwanath Kulkarni

(Senior Deputy Editor, The Hindu businessline)

Session 3: 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM

Interaction with Drone Didis

Moderated by Poornima Joshi

(Chief of Bureau, Delhi, The Hindu businessline)

Session 4: 2:00 PM - 2:45 PM

Tapping Digitisation, Technology for Agri Development

Arjun Ahluwalia (Founder & CEO, Jai Kisan)

Hemendra Mathur (Co-founder, ThinkAg)

Partha Ghosh (Program Lead, Social Alpha)

Dr Pares Verma (Executive Director, Shriram Bioseed Genetics)

Moderated by KV Kurmanath

(Associate Editor, The Hindu businessline)

Session 5: 2:45 PM - 3:15 PM

Interaction with Solar Didis

Moderated by Rishi Ranjan Kala

(Senior Assistant Editor, The Hindu businessline)

Session 6: 3:15 PM - 4:00 PM

Making Way for Biomass-Based Bio-Energy

Madhur Jain (Co-founder and CEO, Varaha)

Maninder Singh Nayyar (Founder & CEO, CEF)

Ashwin Save (Biofuel Circle Co-founder & COO)

Moderated by Richa Mishra

(Chief of Bureau, Hyderabad, The Hindu businessline)

Session 7: 4:00 PM - 4:45 PM

Challenges in Price Risk Management

Kedar Deshpande (Chief Business Officer, NCDEX)

Rajesh Paharia Jain (Chief Manager, Business Development, Kribhco)

Sanjai V S (General Manager, ABU, State Bank of India)

Dr Ashutosh Kumar (General Manager, NABARD)

Moderated by Prabhudatta Mishra

(Deputy Editor, The Hindu businessline)

4:45 PM - 5:15 PM

Valedictory Address

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IN BRIEF



All measures in place for Mahakumbh Mela: Minister

With only four days left for the Mahakumbh Mela, Uttar Pradesh Minister for Tourism and Culture Jaiveer Singh reviewed the preparations at the Mahakumbh city in Prayagraj. Speaking to the media on Wednesday, Mr. Jaiveer assured that all necessary measures have been implemented to ensure devotees face no difficulties in booking accommodation or travel within the region. The Minister highlighted plans for cultural displays, revealing that 20 mini stages across Prayagraj will host regional artists showcasing U.P.'s vibrant folk arts for 45 days. PTI

KTR questioned for over 7 hours in Formula E race case

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president and former Minister K.T. Rama Rao was grilled for over seven hours by senior officials of the Telangana Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Thursday. The questioning began at 10 a.m. and lasted until 5.15 p.m., with a 30-minute lunch and two tea breaks. The former Minister appeared for quizzing in connection with the alleged ₹54.88 crore financial irregularities in the Formula E race deal. He was questioned about the allegations made by the complainant Principal Secretary M. Dana Kishore. "The case is being investigated from the perspective of criminal misconduct and misappropriation of funds," a senior official said.

Sub-Inspector recruitment exam won't be cancelled in haste, Rajasthan govt. tells HC

The Hindu Bureau
JAIPUR

The Sub-Inspector recruitment examination of 2021, mired in the allegations of paper leak and irregularities, will not be cancelled in haste, the Bharatiya Janata Party government stated in the Rajasthan High Court here on Thursday. The investigation into the alleged paper leak is in progress, Additional Advocate General Vigyan Shah said.

The State government submitted its reply to the High Court, which had on November 18, 2024, passed an injunction order on the recruitment process. The court's order has paused any further action following the examination, including the training, passing-out parade and the subsequent field posting of the trainee Sub-Inspectors.



The Rajasthan High Court posted the matter for further hearing on February 10.

A single-judge Bench of Justice Sameer Jain reiterated its status quo order on Thursday, while stating that any further action for appointment of Sub-Inspectors would be treated as contempt of the court. The court posted the matter for further hearing on February 10 and asked the State government to produce the minutes of meetings of a Ministerial Committee appointed to

AAP chief writes to EC to raid Parvesh Singh's house for 'violating' election code

Kejriwal claims his BJP opponent from New Delhi constituency was distributing ₹1,100 to women, demands suspension of District Election Officer; EC directs Chief Electoral Officer to take action

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday wrote to the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) requesting to raid the house of his opponent and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate from New Delhi Assembly constituency Parvesh Sahib Singh, claiming that he was distributing ₹1,100 each to women in violation of the model code of conduct (MCC).

Mr. Kejriwal also requested the CEC to suspend the District Election Officer (DEO) of the constituency, citing that the party had complained about the "manipulation" of electoral roll in the constituency to the DEO, but no action has been taken.

Responding to the complaint, the Election Commission directed the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Delhi, to take appropriate action. "I am directed to request you to get the complaint inquired into, ascertain the actual facts and



Poll call: AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal addressing reporters in New Delhi on Thursday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

take immediate appropriate action in accordance with the provisions of the model code of conduct, electoral laws and the extant guidelines of the Election Commission of India. Action Taken Report shall also be sent to the Commission," the EC said in a letter to the CEO.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Kejriwal, along with Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, Delhi Chief Minister Atishi, and Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh, met the Election Commissioners and urged them to take action.

"In the past 22 days,

5,500 applications have been received for deletion of voter names in the New Delhi constituency. There are about 1 lakh voters in this constituency which means that applications to remove 5.5% of the voters have been filed in just 22 days. In fact, 89 people had filed 5,500 applications and of this, the 18 people who came forward, all of them said that they had not submitted any application. This means that there is a large-scale scam," he said after meeting the Election Commissioners.

Mr. Kejriwal also said

that between December 15 and now, there have been 13,000 new applications for voter registration in this small constituency with just 1 lakh voters. "Where did these 13,000 people come from in just 15 days? This is a clear indication that fake voters are being registered, likely brought in from States like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar," he said.

BJP demands apology

Mr. Kejriwal's reference to "fake voters" brought from U.P. and Bihar drew a sharp reaction from the BJP. While U.P. Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak demanded an apology to the people of the two States, BJP MP Manoj Tiwari said AAP has failed to provide clean water, quality health care, or good education to Purvanchalis.

Mr. Sanjay Singh said the AAP chief has worked tirelessly to improve the lives of people from the Purvanchal region by addressing their hardships, and it is the BJP that has humiliated them.

T.N. House adopts resolution against draft UGC rules

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu Assembly on Thursday "unanimously" adopted a resolution moved by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin urging the Union government to immediately withdraw the draft University Grants Commission (Minimum Qualifications for Appointment and Promotion of Teachers and Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and Measures for Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education) Regulations, 2025.

The resolution said the draft guidelines were not only against federalism, one of the basic principles of the Indian Constitution, but also Tamil Nadu's higher education. The Chief Minister said the draft would affect the State's education, which was driven by social justice. "It will severely affect the future of the youth of Tamil Nadu," he said, urging the Union government to withdraw the draft.

Mr. Stalin also said Tamil Nadu had the best educational institutions in the country and the DMK government would not remain silent when the autonomy of these educational institutions was being taken away.

The search committee shall comprise a nominee each of the Chancellor, UGC Chairman, and the apex body of the respective university, such as a syndicate/senate.

Moving the resolution against the draft, the Chief Minister said if the Centre

governed under the old laws and the fresh cases in a time-bound manner. He said the courts did not have the option to not accept chargesheets electronically.

"People who are not convinced [with the new laws] will also have no option but to work for the success of the laws. No logistical issues are there, mindset is half the problem. Once people are convinced and work in one direction, success will be achieved. It may take two-four years. Once the inertia is broken, the success rate will be exponential. The Union Ministry of Home Affairs has set a timeline of March 31 for Haryana, but we expect to implement the laws by February 28," Mr. Kapur said.

He added that certain amendments need to be made to the Police Rules applicable in the State for the implementation.

Legendary singer P. Jayachandran passes away

The Hindu Bureau
THIRISSUR

Playback singer P. Jayachandran, known for his expressive singing and whose magical voice captivated music lovers for over six decades, passed away at a private hospital in Thirissur on Thursday. He was 81. He had been undergoing treatment for cancer for some time.

Having sung over 16,000 songs that have touched generations, Jayachandran's voice transcended boundaries, resonating in Malayalam, Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, and Hindi. Despite the challenges of age, his voice possessed the youthful charm capable of stirring romantic hearts, till the end.

Jayachandran became



the beloved playback singer of Malayalam through his soulful renditions that speak directly to the heart. With songs filled with every emotion – from love to separation and pain – he became the voice that resonated with the very essence of life for music lovers.

Born at Ravipuram in

Ernakulam, to renowned musician Tripunithura Ravi Varma Kochaniyan Thampuran and Subhadra Kunjamma, he was raised at Irinjalakkuda, Thirissur. Jayachandran developed an early passion for various forms of art, including Kathakali, and playing Mridangam and Chenda.

His school years were marked by numerous awards for light music and Mridangam playing, which laid the foundation for his illustrious musical career.

His musical journey in films began with his first song in the film *Kunjali Marakkar*. While *Oru Mulappoo Malayum* was his first song to be recorded, in 1965, the song *Manjalayil Mungithorthi*... in the film *Kalithozhan* was the one that marked the

start of his incredible career. From then on, he went on to deliver countless songs that mesmerised Malayalis.

He has worked with many composers, including G. Devarajan, M.S. Baburaj, V. Dakshinamoorthy, K. Raghavan, M.K. Arjunan, M.S. Viswanathan, Ilayaraja, A.R. Rahman, Vidyasagar and M. Jayachandran.

Several awards
His contributions were recognised with numerous prestigious awards, including the J.C. Daniel Award and the Kalaimamani Award, making him a celebrated figure in Indian music.

He won the national award, five Kerala State awards, and four Tamil Nadu State awards.

Delhi memorial in the works, H.P. Cabinet okays renaming of State institute after late PM

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

Even as suspense surrounding the selection of a memorial site in the country's national capital for former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh continues, the Congress government in Himachal Pradesh on Thursday gave nod to rename an institute in his name, acknowledging Dr. Singh's significant contributions for development of the hill State.

The State Cabinet, in its meeting held in Shimla under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, gave approval to rename Himachal



Himachal Pradesh CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu.

Pradesh Institute of Public Administration (HIPA) as Dr. Manmohan Singh Himachal Pradesh Institute of Public Administration.

The Cabinet acknowledged his significant contributions to the nation and to Himachal Pradesh's

development, asserting that Dr. Singh's tenure as Prime Minister and Union Finance Minister was transformative, said an official statement. Dr. Singh was instrumental in pulling the country out of an economic crisis and laying the strong foundation for economic reforms that reshaped India's financial landscape, it added.

The Cabinet also approved the establishment of a Special Task Force (STF) to combat drug abuse and dismantle drug trafficking and organised crime networks in the State through a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach.

While rejecting his bail application, the court observed that the accused was a highly affluent businessman who was capable of intimidating the witnesses.

Businessman remanded in 14-day judicial custody

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

The Ernakulam Judicial First Class Magistrate Court II on Thursday remanded businessman Boopathy Chemmanur in 14 days' judicial custody in a case registered by the Ernakulam Central police on a complaint filed by a woman actor who accused him of passing sexist remarks about her on social media and in person.

While rejecting his bail application, the court observed that the accused was a highly affluent businessman who was capable of intimidating the witnesses.

Modi, Shah 'cheating' Jats by not extending quota, says Kejriwal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday alleged that the BJP has been "cheating" the Jat community of Delhi by not adding them to the Central government's Other Backward Classes (OBC) list, "despite multiple promises".

Hitting back, BJP's New Delhi candidate Parvesh Sahib Singh said Mr. Kejriwal's political foothold seems to be "slipping", as he has "started dividing Delhi into caste lines" even though he "never remembered" the Jat community in the past 11 years.

Earlier in the day, addressing a press conference, Mr. Kejriwal said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, and the



BJP have committed a big fraud. There is an OBC list of the Delhi government, and the Jat community is part of it. The Central government has an OBC list, but Delhi's Jat community is not a part of it. So, when students go to take admission at any Central government university [for education] or bodies such as Delhi Police, DDA [for employment], Delhi's Jat community does not get reservation".

The AAP chief highlighted

AAP govt. held special Assembly sessions but used them only to criticise the Centre and the L-G, never for approving the OBC inclusion for Jats.

PARVESH SAHIB SINGH
BJP leader

ed that Rajasthan's Jat community was on the Centre's OBC list. "So, Rajasthan's Jat community gets reservation in Delhi University, but Delhi's Jat community does not get reservation," he underscored.

"If the Centre does not listen, today Kejriwal is promising to the Jat community that I will fight with the Centre for you and get it done," he said.

However, Mr. Singh said that to add a community to the reservation list, a proposal should first be approved by the State government. "For Jats or any caste to be included in the OBC list, the State government must approve the proposal and send it to the OBC Commission. Kejriwal's government held special Assembly sessions but used them only to criticise the Centre and the Lieutenant-Governor, never for approving the OBC inclusion for Jats," he said.

Curbs on petrol, diesel vehicles back as Delhi air quality worsens

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

As the air quality deteriorated in Delhi-NCR, the Centre implemented Stage III measures of the Graded Response Action Plan on Thursday and banned construction and demolition activities, plying of BS-III petrol and BS-IV diesel cars, and shifted classes for students up to grade five to hybrid mode.

Delhi's overall 24-hour average air quality index (AQI) was 357 (very poor) at 4 p.m. on Thursday, up from 297 (poor) a day earlier, according to the Central Pollution Control Board daily bulletin. "The air quality is likely to be in very poor category from January 10 to 11. It is likely to be in the poor category on January 12," stated the Central government's Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi.

The Commission for Air Quality Management and Adjoining Areas also ordered staggered timings for public offices and municipal bodies in Delhi, Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, and Gautam Buddha Nagar (not the entire NCR).

Bihar Cabinet likely to be expanded with four BJP Ministers

Amarnath Tewary
PATNA

The Bihar Cabinet is likely to be expanded between January 15 and 30 after the end of Makar Sankranti (from December 15 to January 15), which is considered an inauspicious period by many, in view of the State Assembly elections due in October-November this year.

While the 243-member Assembly could have 36 Ministers in the Cabinet, it currently has 30 Ministers, including Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and two Deputy Chief Ministers. Portfolios of some Ministers are also expected to be reshuffled.

The NDA government's Cabinet was last expanded on March 15, 2024 when 21 Ministers – nine from Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal (United) and 12 from ally Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) were inducted.

Notice Inviting Expression of Interest (RIL/E&P/EOI/2025/01) (Under International Competitive Bidding)

Reliance is India's largest private sector company, with a consolidated revenue of ₹ 10,00,122 crore (US\$ 119.9 billion), cash profit of ₹ 1,41,969 crore (US\$ 17.0 billion) and net profit of ₹ 79,020 crore (US\$ 9.5 billion) for the year ended March 31, 2024. Reliance's activities span hydrocarbon exploration and production, petroleum refining and marketing, petrochemicals, advanced materials and composites, renewables (solar and hydrogen), retail and digital services. Currently ranked 36th, Reliance is the largest private sector company from India to be featured in Fortune's Global 500 list of World's Largest Companies' for 2024.

A) For All Oil & Gas Fields

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), as operator, on behalf of itself & its co-venturers invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from reputed and experienced Contractors/ Vendors for following category, for the blocks acquired under NELP-I:

Category Number	Category Description
DRL/COMN/2025/1	Supply of Cementing Hardware, Bridge Plug and related services

B) For Block No. KG-DWN-98/3 (KG-D6)

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), as operator, on behalf of itself & its co-venturer BP Exploration (Alpha) Limited invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from reputed and experienced Contractors/ Vendors for following categories, for Deep-water Block No. KG-DWN-98/3 (KG-D6) in East coast of India.

Category Number	Category Description
OAM/KGD6/2025/1	Supply of Multipurpose fire tender with built-in water, foam and DCP tanks and high-pressure hose reel

OAM/KGD6/2025/2	Design, Engineering, Installation, commissioning, testing and charging of 132 KV power grid as per specifications of the local and central electricity board rules
-----------------	--

OAM/KGD6/2025/3	Design & Supply of ROV operated Subsea deployable Hydrate Remediation Skid for Hydrate removal from deep-water flowlines / XMTs / Umbilical for water depth up to 2200m.
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OAM/KGD6/2025/4	Design & Supply of ROV operated Subsea deployable Bolt Replacement Tooling system for Bolt retrieval / installation from deep-water Subsea Asset with water depth up to 2200m.
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OAM/KGD6/2025/5	Operation & Maintenance (O&M) of FPSO and Operation of Subsea Production Facilities
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OAM/KGD6/2025/6	Mooring Services for Condensate Offtake Operations from FPSO
-----------------	--

OAM/KGD6/2025/7	Provision of Tug and Hawser & Hose Handling Boat for Condensate Offtake Operations from FPSO
-----------------	--

Interested Contractors/Vendors are requested to visit our website www.ril.com (eB2B: For Suppliers- E&P Notice for EOI) for further details on the above and submit their EOI through e-mail on devoiceresponse.eandp@ril.com, on or before 31 January 2025. Subject of the mail should mention "RIL/E&P/EOI/2025/01" along with category number. For documents size beyond 10 MB, Contractors/Vendors should request RIL through e-mail to provide FTP link for uploading EOI documents.

Address for Communication

Chief – Supply Chain Management,
Reliance Industries Limited, Petroleum Business (E&P),
Reliance Corporate Park (RCP),
Building No 11, 'A' Wing, Second Floor,
Thane-Belapur Road, Ghansoli, Navi Mumbai - 400 701, India.

Email: devoiceresponse.eandp@ril.com

CIN: L17110MH1973PLC019786



Growth is Life

INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE					
Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao Road, Nagarbhavi P.O. Bengaluru-560 072. www.isec.ac.in					
Advertisement No. A/1/2025 Date: 10.01.2025					
APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FROM THE ELIGIBLE CANDIDATES FOR THE FOLLOWING BACKLOG FACULTY POSTS					
Sl.No.	Designation	Pay and Academic Level	No.of Posts	Reserved for SC	ST
1	Professor	Rs. 1,44,200/- (Academic Level 14)	3	2	1
2	Associate Professor	Rs. 1,31,400/- (Academic Level 13A)	2	-	2

The detailed advertisement and procedure for applying for the above posts is available at our Website: www.isec.ac.in.
The last date of receipt of applications: 10th February 2025.
Sd/- Registrar I/c

ISEC-24518

Dastkar
CRAFT & DESIGN
Tradition and Innovation
10th-16th January 2025

11am - 7pm | Entry fee Rs. 40/- | Parking Available

This 7-day extravaganza brings together over 90 artisans from across India, showcasing how tradition meets innovation in Indian craftsmanship. From intricately embroidered textiles to eco-friendly decor, discover the charm of Indian crafts reimagined for modern lifestyles.

Craft Workshop and Demonstrations FREE (supported by The Australian High Commission, New Delhi)

Surpur Painting by Prakash Vasanth Jagadale
Waste Plastic Weaving by Shree Kuldevi Krupa Mission

From 11th to 14th January 2025

Timing: 12 noon - 6 pm

Indulge in regional cuisine at our multi-cuisine food court.

Venue- Nature Bazaar, Anuvrat Marg, Andheria Modh, New Delhi
Nearest metro station- Chhatarpur

info@dastkar.org **9910802970**



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER, DELHI OLD ST. STEPHEN'S COLLEGE BUILDING, KASHMERE GATE DELHI-110006

www.ceodelhi.gov.in

Helpline No. 1800-111-400 and 1950:

PUBLIC NOTICE

General Elections to the Legislative Assembly of NCT of Delhi - 2025

The general public and candidates are hereby informed that Election Commission of India has designated the following Officers as Returning Officers for the 70 Assembly Constituencies in the National Capital Territory of Delhi. The details of these Returning Officers along with the place for receiving the nomination papers are as under:

Name & Name of the Assembly Constituency	Name of Returning Officer	Designation	Office Address (where nomination papers will be received/ accepted and scrutiny to be conducted)	Land Line No.(O) & Fax No.	Mobile No.	E-Mail. Address	
DISTRICT-NORTH							
01-NERELA	Ms. Mahima Tomar	SDM (Nerela)	MPCC Building, Naya Bansi, Idrat Nagar, Delhi-110082	011-27844214	8588076580	roacnara@gmail.com	
04-ADARSH NAGAR	Sh. Rajesh Kumar	Assistant Commissioner, Food & Supply, (North)	Office of the Assistant Commissioner (North), Food & Supply Department, 23-27, Gulab Bagh, Shopping Complex, Delhi-110007	011-23652715	9212006628	roacd4adarshnagar@gmail.com	
05-BADLI	Sh. Rajeev Kumar Sinha	SDM (Model Town)	Office of the Sub Divisional Magistrate (Model Town), near NDPL Office Azadpur Flyover, Azadpur, Delhi-110033	011-27681530	9810809422	modeldm@nic.in	
07-BAWANA (SC)	Sh. Ankur Meshram	ADM (North)	Office of ADM, Room No. 23, DM North Office Complex, GT Kamal Road, Alipur, Delhi-110036	011-27708716	8446967004	ankur-meshram@nic.in	
13-ROHINI	Sh. Rajat Mehrotra	SDM (HQ)	O/o the Dy. Commissioner, North	SDM HQ, DM North Office Complex, GT Kamal Road, Alipur, Delhi-110036	011-27206727	8581838816	rao13rohini@gmail.com
15-SHAKUR BASTI	Sh. Aman Singh Lohan	SDM (Alipur)	O/o the Dy. Commissioner, North	SDM Alipur, DM North Office Complex, GT Kamal Road, Alipur, Delhi-110036	011-27203773	9315240619	rao15dabla2025@gmail.com
17-WAZIRPUR	Sh. Arvind Kumar	SDM (HQ)	O/o the Dy. Commissioner, North	Nigam Utrast Vidyalaya, Delhi Municipal Corporation, Nirmi Colony, Delhi-110052	011-27305087	9990650956	rao17wazirpur2025@gmail.com
18-MODEL TOWN	Sh. Lokesh Prasad Sinha	SDM (HQ)	O/o the Dy. Commissioner, North	Aryabhatta Polytechnic Institute (DSEU) near Shakti Nagar Telephone Exchange, GT Kamal Road, Alipur, Delhi-110033	011-27426263	9886752321	rao18modeltown@gmail.com
DISTRICT - NORTH EAST							
65-Seelampur	Sh. Nitesh Singh	SDM (Seelampur)	Room No. 2, SDM Seelampur Office Complex, G.T. Road, Seelampur, Delhi-110053	9319075899	roacd5seelampur2025@gmail.com		
66-Ghonda	Sh. Pankaj Roy Gupta	SDM (Yamuna Vihar)	Room No. 2, J-Block, Ground Floor, D.C. Office Complex, Nand Nagri, Delhi-110093	011-22574468	9997614303	sdnyamunavihar@gmail.com	
68-Gokulpuri (SC)	Sh. C.S.Vashistha	SDM (HQ)	O/o				

The Hindu's book on Parthasarathy Perumal Temple in Chennai released

The Hindu Bureau

CHENNAI

As part of The Hindu Group's Shrine Series, a book on Sri Parthasarathy Perumal Temple in Triplicane, Chennai was released here by Nirmala Lakshman, Chairperson, The Hindu Group Publishing Private Limited. The book, titled *Thiruvallikeni - Divine Abode of Lord Parthasarathy*, has well-researched articles on the history of the temple, the puranic accounts, and has stunning visuals captured over the years by *The Hindu*'s photographers.

The temple is unique in many ways – it has five deities, all of whom have been praised in the *Nalayira Divya Prabandham*. Sri Balarama is enshrined along with Lord Krishna, which again is a unique feature of this temple, which has two Brahmotsavams, one for Lord Parthasarathy – the presiding deity – and one for Lord Yoga Narasimha.

The book has articles on the five deities, the Brahmotsavams, the *prasadams*, unique aspects of Balarama worship, an illustrious family which was associated with V.O. Chidambaram Pillai's Swadesi Steam Navigation Company, the *Bhattars* of the temple and much more to read and savour. Articles on a tussle between the trustees of the temple and the municipality sometime in the early 1900s; how the area



Nirmala Lakshman, Chairperson, THGPPL, releasing the book in Chennai on Thursday. S.R. RAGHUNATHAN

takes its name Thiruvallikeni from the temple tank; the Vivekananda connect, the *pasurams* and *kritis* on Parthasarathy are included in the book.

Sridhar Aranala, Vice-President (Sales and Distribution) of The Hindu Group, said, "On this auspicious occasion of Vaikunta Ekadasi, the release of *Thiruvallikeni - Divine Abode of Lord Parthasarathy* is a valuable addition to The Hindu Group's Shrine Series."

The cover price of the book is ₹399 and a special offer of ₹300 is available till January 20, 2025 on account of Vaikunta Ekadasi, Pongal and Makara Sankranti festivals. The book can be bought at <https://publications.thehindugroup.com/bookstore/>



Most industrial units catching fire in Delhi have no licence'

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The People's Union for Democratic Rights on Thursday released a report on factory fires claiming lives of workers in Delhi, highlighting that most units where fires occur have no licences or permissions to operate.

It also said the majority of the plots on which industrial units

are running are small, and thereby do not require clearance or NOC from the Fire Department. "A large number of the units employ under ten workers and do not qualify as 'Factories' under The Factories Act. Thus, numerous workers are excluded from the protection of labour laws available for factory workers," the report 'Factory Fires and Workers: A Capital Story' said.

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA CORRIGENDUM					
SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD / CORP./ AUTH	OLD REFERENCE/ NIT NO.	NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	UHBVN	45/SE/PROJECTS/AMISP/2023-24	DATE EXTENDED CLOSING DATE- 24.01.2025 @01:00 PM OPENING DATE - 27.01.2025 @03:00 PM	www.uhbvn.org.in	9517770163 seprojects@uhbv.org.in Never travel on roof and foot boards.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.etenders.hry.nic.in
SAMVAD - 13/2025/40/31606/I/199/7

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BALASORE					
"e"- Procurement Notice for Road Work					
Identification No.- Online Tender-Road N.C.B. No.16 of 2024-25					
Letter No.: 56 Date: 07/01/25					
1. Name of the Work : (MMSY-MRL Road, MMSY-TRIP Road and MMSY-Improvement to existing RD road) 2. Total No. of Work : 74 Nos. of Work 3. Estimated Cost : As per Annexure 4. Eligible Class of Contractor : As per Annexure 5. Period of Completion : As per annexure 6. Other Details : -					
Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding	Last Date & Time of seeking Tender Classification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O/O S.E., R.W. Circle, Balasore	
		From To	Technical Bid	Financial Bid	
1	NCB No.-11	13.01.2025 at 11.00 A.M.	29.01.2025 Up to 5.00 P.M.	30.01.2025 at 5.00 P.M.	Will be intimated later
• Further details can be seen from the website : www.tendersodisha.gov.in Chief Construction Engineer, R.W. Circle, Balasore. O-192: OIPR-25105/11/0022/2425					

ELECTRONICS CORPORATION OF TAMILNADU LIMITED (ELCOT) CHENNAI - 600035.					
TENDER NOTICE					
ELCOT invites tenders for Supply, Installation & Commissioning of IT Hardware for Government Departments / Agencies on Rate Contract basis. For details, Please visit https://tenders.gov.in .					
S. Tender No.	Tender Description	S. Tender No.	Tender Description		
1 33857	UPS Systems & UPS Batteries	16 33872	Multimedia Projector		
2 33858	Display Monitor, TV & Interactive Displays	17 33873	Mini PC		
3 33859	Tablet & Mobile Phone	18 33874	IP Camera		
4 33860	Desktop Computer	19 33875	Storage Devices		
5 33861	Laptop Computer	20 33876	Office Productivity Tools & Server Software		
6 33862	SSL & DSC	21 33877	Antivirus		
7 33863	All in One Desktop	22 33878	IT Consumables		
8 33864	Printers	23 33879	Videowall		
9 33865	Scanners & Plotters	24 33880	Linux Products		
10 33866	Servers & Workstation	25 33881	Zoom & Webex License and Microsoft Teams		
11 33867	Cisco or Equivalent Products	26 33882	Computer Furniture		
12 33868	Networking Components	27 33883	PA Systems		
13 33869	Firewall	28 33884	Information Kiosk		
14 33870	Biometric Systems	29 33885	CM VC - Inaugural event		
15 33871	Video Conferencing Systems				

MANAGING DIRECTOR,
ELECTRONICS CORPORATION OF TAMIL NADU LIMITED,
692, II Floor, M.H.U. Complex, Anna Salai, Nandanam, Chennai-600 035.
e-mail: md@elcot.in URL: www.elcot.in

DIPR/117/Tender/2025

Parents arraigned as accused in Walayar sisters' death case

CBI charges parents of Kerala siblings, aged 13 and nine, who ended their life under mysterious circumstances in 2017, with abetting rape and suicide and not reporting incidents to the police

The Hindu Bureau

KOCHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arraigned the parents of the two minor girls who were found dead hanging at their house in Walayar in 2017 in mysterious circumstances following alleged rape, as accused in the case.

This was stated in a supplementary chargesheet filed by the agency on Wednesday. They have been charged with abetting rape and suicide, and not reporting the rape incidents to the police. The pa-



Loud and clear: Members of the Justice for Walayar Kids Forum protesting before the Secretariat in Thiruvananthapuram. FILE PHOTO

rents have been charged under Section 109 of the Indian Penal Code and provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

A total of six chargesheets were filed before the CBI court here. As per the chargesheets, the parents abetted the rape and suicide and deliberately concealed the fact that their daughters had been raped

by the persons charged with the offence. The persons charged in connection with the death of the elder girl are Valiya Madhu, Shibu, Pradeep, and Kutti Madhu, while Valiya Madhu and a minor boy were charged for the death of her younger sibling.

The siblings, aged 13 and nine years, were found dead hanging in a shed near their house at Walayar within a span of two months in 2017. The Walayar police concluded that the girls were sexually abused for nearly a year, following which they ended their lives.

SKM calls for unity among farmers

The Hindu Bureau

CHANDIGARH

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), the umbrella body of farmers that spearheaded their 2020-21 agitation, on Thursday passed a 'unity resolution' considering the enormity of the demands, in Punjab's Moga.

At its 'Mahapanchayat', the SKM resolved to reject the National Policy Framework on Agriculture Marketing and demanded formulation of a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price based on the Swaminathan report, and debt waiver for all farmers and workers, etc.

"A unity resolution was passed considering the enormity of the farmers' demands," said an official

Kisan Mazdoor Morcha statement, urging farmers' unions to unite to challenge the Union government.

A six-member unity committee will go to Khanauri and Shambhu - the inter-State boundaries between Haryana and Punjab, under the banner of the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha, where the farmers have been protesting since February 13, 2024. SKM has also accused the Centre of being responsible for the present impasse and the deteriorating health condition of farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal.

"The siblings, aged 13 and nine years, were found dead hanging in a shed near their house at Walayar within a span of two months in 2017. The Walayar police concluded that the girls were sexually abused for nearly a year, following which they ended their lives.

No point in tabling CAG reports now: AAP to HC

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Assembly Secretariat has informed the High Court that "no useful purpose would be served" in tabling the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) reports on the city's administration in the Assembly as its tenure is ending in February.

The submission was in response to a plea by seven BJP MLAs for the tabling of the reports.

"The tenure of the present Assembly is coming to an end in February, and the last session was held

Tirupati stampede: CM Naidu suspends two officials and orders judicial probe

The Hindu Bureau

TIRUPATI

The axe of accountability has fallen on two officials for the death of six devotees in the stampede in Tirupati on Wednesday night. The State government announced the suspension of two officials and transfer of three.

Addressing the media here on Thursday, after inspecting the scene of stampede and interacting with the officials, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu cracked the whip on the er-



Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu interacting with a devotee injured in the stampede, at SVIMS in Tirupati on Thursday. ANI

ring officials and suspended Deputy Superintendent of Police Ramana Kumar (who opened the gate with

out prior announcement, leading to the stampede) and TTD's Sri Venkateswara Gosamrakshanasa

(Dairy Farm) Director K. Haranath Reddy (who was in-charge of the token distribution centre).

He also announced the transfer of the TTD's Joint Executive Officer (Health and Education) M. Gouthami, Chief Vigilance and Security Officer S. Sreedhar and the Superintendent of Police (Tirupati) L. Subbarayudu for failing to ensure coordination between the TTD and civil administration.

Mr. Naidu said he had found gaping loopholes in coordination, which had led to the stampede.

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 16.01.2025 up to 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on dated 17.01.2025 at 11.00 AM.

Noida **New Okhla Industrial Development Authority**

Main Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, G.B. Nagar, (U.P.) Website: www.noidaauthorityonline.in

SHORT TERM E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited from eligible contractors/firms for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened / downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.in & <https://tender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/ amendments & corrigendum etc.

A) Short Term Fresh-Tender Work:

S. No.	Jobs No.	Name of the work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
1	39/DGM/SM(WC-I)/2024-25	Engagement of Event Management Agency for Designing, Executing, Operating & Managing of Event on Urgent basis at Noida Haat, Sector-33A, Noida, for Uttar Pradesh Diwas-2025	77.69

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 16.01.2025 up to 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on dated 17.01.2025 at 11.00 AM.

महावर्षी सूचना- नवीन ओडिला औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण के अधिसूचित क्षेत्र में शासन से रोकीकृत मार्टर न्याय, 1976 के विरोध लक्षित्यां या किसी भी प्रकार का अंत्य निर्माण पूरी तरह अंत्य अंत्य है। जनसामाज्य को आगाह किया जाता है कि इस प्रकार की अंत्य कॉलेनियों एवं अंत्य निर्माण भवयों में भूमध्य/आपार्टमेंट/दुकान/गोडाऊज़/फार्महाउस की खरीद-फरोख्य से पूर्णः संचेत रहें तथा कॉलोनाइज़र के तुम्हारने एवं शामक विज्ञापनों से बचे। साथ ही नौरेडा अधिकृत क्षेत्र के दिए गए एवं योग्य नदियों के द्वारा बोल्ड (Flood Plain Zone) में अनाधिकृत अवैध लोट

HIMACHAL PRADESH JAL SHAKTI VIBHAG				
"NOTICE INVITING TENDER"				
Online bids on item rate basis are invited by the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Division Reckong Peo on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh in electronic tendering system in two covers for the under mentioned work from the contractor/firms enlisted with Himachal Pradesh Jal Shakti Vibhag in appropriate class.				
S. N.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money	Cost of form
1.	Flood Protection Work/Channelization of Kotangee as a remedial measure to safeguard setting/sliding in tensile Kalpa Distt Kinnar HP	18718944/-	219689/-	Rs. 1500/-
1.	Tender documents and other instructions can be downloaded or viewed online from the portal http://htptenders.gov.in by the firms/individual registered on the website which is free of cost.			
2.	As the bids are to be submitted online are required to be encrypted and digitally signed, the bidders are advised to obtain Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from suitable vendors or from any authorized agency at the earliest.			
KEY DATES:-				
1.	Date of online publication	8/01/2025 upto 5.00 PM		
2.	Downloading of e-tender documents	9/01/2025 at 10.00 AM 20/01/2025 upto 5.00PM		
3.	Date of submission of e-tendering	09/01/2025 at 10.00 AM 20/01/2025 upto 5.00PM		
4.	Submission of earnest money deposit and cost form through online mode(e-payment)	Upto 20/01/2025 5.00 PM		
5.	Date of opening bid	21/01/2025 at 11.00AM		
	Cover-1 eligibility criteria		
	Cover-2 Financial Bid	Shall be intimated Separately.		
CONDITIONS:-				
1.	The e-tender documents shall be uploaded online in 2 (two) covers:-			
	i) Cover-1 shall contain scanned copies of "eligibility information".			
	ii) Cover-2 shall contain "Financial Bid" on the prescribed form.			
2.	Cover-1 shall contain Scanned copies of following "eligibility information" (Scanned copies to be uploaded in Pdf file). No physical submission of documents will be allowed.			
a)	The Earnest money shall be through online mode(e-payment) in favour of Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division Reckong Peo and certificate of exemption of Earnest Money Deposit. In event of said exemption an affidavit regarding number of tenders in which the contractor has participated and total value of their earnest money involved be uploaded with the tender documents. In case the contractor/firm gives false information, contractor/firm will be liable to be blacklisted.			
b)	The cost of tender form shall be through online (e-payment).			
c)	Certificate of registration with Jal Shakti Vibhag HP in appropriate class.			
Eligibility criteria shall be as under:-				
(d)	Copy of PAN,EPF and GST Registration.			
(e)	Scanned copies of latest Income Tax clearance certificate issued by competent authority.			
(f)	The authorization letter regarding digital signature certificate (DSC) of the person authorized by the registered tenderer to upload the bid, be uploaded along with the other documents online.			
(g)	The contractor/Firm shall submit/upload the scanned copies of the documents as required in NIT through online mode only. No physical submission of documents will be allowed.			
(h)	The scanned copy of undertaking that I have carefully studied all the terms and condition stipulated in form PWA 6 & 8 as well as special terms & condition appended along with schedule of quantity before quoting the rates in the BOQ chart			
(i)	The scanned copy of undertaking that I have visited the site of work before quoting the rates.			
3.	Cover-2 Shall contain "Financial Bid" which will be opened at a later date to be notified separately and opened only of those contractors/Firms whose documents will be found as per Eligibility information & Technical Bid "Cover-1". Cover -2 shall contain only Financial Bid/offers on Departmental schedule quantity/BQ where contractor/Firma will quote his/their offer for each item.			
4.	Earnest money of L1, shall be retained for a period of 120 days or signing of contract agreement by L1, whichever is earlier.			
5.	No subletting of work as a whole by the contractor is permissible.			
6.	In case, opening day is a holiday, the tenders shall be opened on next working day at the same time.			
7.	The offer of the tender shall be kept open for 120 days, however every efforts shall be made to award the work within 27 days time period prescribed by Govt.			
8.	Conditional bids/tenders are liable to be rejected without assigning any reason. The Executive Engineer reserves the right to reject/cancel any or all the tenders/bids without assigning any reason.			
9.	Any enquiry regarding tender can be obtained on e-mail of the Divisional Officer under e-mail address xeniphreco@yahoo.com.			
HP / 4435/24-25 HIM SUCHANA AVAM JAN SAMPARK				

**Office Of The Superintending Engineer
9th Circle Public Work Department Dehradun/Chief Project Manager
Dehradun Smart City (PIU)
Office of the Superintending Engineer, 9th Circle PWD, Dehradun Uttarakhand
Website- <http://pwd.uk.gov.in> E-mail: sepwddun09@gmail.com**

Dated: 09/01/2025

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING Short-Term E-Tender

The Superintending Engineer 9th Circle, Public Works Department, Dehradun/Chief Project Manager, Dehradun Smart City, PIU on behalf of "Governor of Uttarakhand" invites Short term Tender in two bid system for the following work. Information regarding tender shall be available on <https://www.uktenders.gov.in> from date **10-01-2025**

SL. No.	Name of Work	Earnest Money (Rs. in Lacs)	Validity of Tender (In days)	Cost of Tender Document (In Rs.)	Completion of Work (In Month)	Contractor Category of Registration
1	Supply Delivery and Commissioning of One (01) Nos. 2.00 to 3.50 Cum Self-Propelled New Mechanical Road Sweeper Machines with one Year comprehensive Operation and Maintenance (further extendable for 5 years) under Swach Bharat Mission - Urban (SBM-U) National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in Dehradun	5.68	60	5000.00 +18%GST	03	OEM/ Authorized Seller.
2	Supply Delivery and Commissioning of One (01) Nos. 5.00 to 6.50 Cum Self-Propelled New Mechanical Road Sweeper Machines with one Year comprehensive Operation and Maintenance (further extendable for 5 years) under Swach Bharat Mission - Urban (SBM-U) National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in Dehradun	7.44	60	5000.00 + 18%GST	03	OEM/ Authorized Seller

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
49, East Wing, 4th & 5th Floor, Khanjia Bhavan Race Course Road
Bengaluru – 560 001. Phone No. 080-22265383 website : www.kiadb.in

No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-40/755/2024-25 Date: 09.01.2025

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Item Rate Tender under two cover bid system is invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors who have got adequate financial resources, state of the art technology, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience for the following work as per the schedule given below:

Name of the Work : Providing and fixing gantry reflective direction board, line marking, RPM/Road studs, sign Boards and other road safety items at Vasanthanarasapura Industrial Area, Phase-1, 2 & 3 at Tumakuru District.

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **24.01.2025** upto **4.30 pm**.

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>.

Sd/-
Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/4262/Zen/2024-25

DEPARTMENT FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF DIFFERENTIALLY ABLED AND SENIOR CITIZENS

Podium Block, V.V.Tower, Ground Floor, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Veedhi Road, Bangalore 560 001. Telephone No. 080-22866066, 080-22866046
Email Address: dirdwdsc@karnataka.gov.in

Tender Notification
(Through E-Procurement only)

Tender is invited by the Director, Department for the Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens, under e-Procurement platform/e-portal in two parts (i.e., Technical bid and Financial bid) from the original manufacturers or their authorized dealers for supply of Talking Laptop for the Visual Impairment Students for the year 2024-25 to the Department for Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens. The interested bidders may see further details and may login in website: www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in

The tender can be submitted on or before **23-01-2025 till 3:00 PM**. The technical bid will be opened on **24-01-2025 at 4:00 PM** and the financial bid will be opened on **28-01-2025 at 11:30 AM**. Department reserves all rights to accept, reject, incorporate changes and re-tender without giving any reasons. The details can be obtained from the Department for the Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens, Podium Block, V.V.Tower, Dr. B.R.Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru-560001, Phone No:080-22866066, 28860907. For more info please see department website www.dwdsc.karnataka.gov.in

**Sd/-
Director,
Department for the Empowerment of
Differently Abled and Senior Citizens, Bengaluru.**

DIPR/CP/4243/Zen/2024-25

पुलिस अधीक्षक का कार्यालय, सिंगडेगा
(सरकारी साधारण के लिए सूचना)

लापता महिला लापता महिला संजिता केरकेटा, वर्मान उम्र—करीब 23 वर्ष, पो—अलवर्ट केरके, साठे—करीया कुडाजानी, थाना—टी० टैंगर, जिला—सिंगडेगा, राज्य—झारखण्ड, जो वर्ष—2017 में दिल्ली काम करने चली गयी थी। जो अवृतक वापस घर नहीं आयी। गुमशुदा महिला की बराबरी अभी तक नहीं हो पायी है, जिनका विवरणों निम्नवत है—

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HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
e-Procurement Notice
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

The Executive Engineer HPPWD Rohru Dist Shimla H.P. on behalf of Governor of H.P invites item rate, bids, in electronic tendering system, in 2 cover system for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/firms registered with HPPWD Department.

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (Rs)	Starting Date for download Bid	Earnest money	Deadline for submission of bid
1.	C/o Sub Tehsil Building at Jangla Dist Shimla (Sh-C/o Building Portion WS & SI Rain Water harvesting tank/septic tank & site development etc.)	27189126/-	27-01-2025	543783/-	03-02-2025

The Bidders are advised to note other details for tenders and letter No.PWD(B) A/3(1)/2020 dated 12.01.2023 issued by secretary PW to the Govt. of himachal Pradesh Public Works Department from the department website www.hptenders.gov.in, and any corrigendum will be uploaded on the website only.

Executive Engineer
HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPARK HPPWD Division Rohru, Dist Shimla HP

Office of EXECUTIVE ENGINEER TAUNI DEVI DIVISION
H.P. Public Works Department, TAUNI DEVI 177023
Telephone. 01972-278422, e-mail: ee-tou-hp@nic.in

Tender Notice

The Executive Engineer, Division, HP-PWD, Tauni Devi on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh invites the online bids on percentage rate, electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved Contractors/ Firms registered with HPPWD, Department.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs)	EMD (In Rs.)	Time limit	Cost of Bidding Documents
1.	Special Repair of 06 Nos Hostel Mess and Academic Cum Admin Block Sainik School Sujanpur Thira Distt. Hamirpur (SH- Providing flush pointing on stone masonry etc)	587807.00	12000.00	Two Months.	350/-
2.	Special Repair of all hostel Sainik School Sujanpur Thira Distt. Hamirpur (SH- Replacement of damaged doors and windows of dormitory etc)	646489.00	13000.00	Two Months.	350/-
3.	Construction of Health Sub-Centre building at Sarahkar Distt. Hamirpur(HP) (SH- Providing and laying paving in frontyard and construction of boundary wall) (Deposit Work)	487351.00	9800.00	Two Months.	350/-
4.	Construction of Health Sub-Centre building at Khiah Distt. Hamirpur(HP) (SH- Providing and laying paving in frontyard and construction of boundary wall) (Deposit Work)	771747.00	16000.00	Two Months.	350/-
5.	Restoration of rain damages on link road Kuthera Chalkhar Ree Banal km 0/00 to 9/880 (SH- Construction of breast wall near House of Sh. Vinod Kumar from RD 4/997 to 5/10)	139987.00	2800.00	Two Months.	350/-
6.	Construction of shed at village Rakrial Distt. Hamirpur(HP) (SH-Construction of steel shed) (Deposit Work)	479750.00	9600.00	Two Months.	350/-
7.	Construction of rain shelter at Banal on Hamirpur Sujanpur road (SH- Construction of rain shelter at RD 15/750)	535825.00	11000.00	Two Months.	350/-
8.	Construction of rain shelter near NH Junction on Tauni Devi Uhal Kakkar Jangal Beri road (SH- Construction of rain shelter at RD 0/090)	535825.00	11000.00	Two Months.	350/-
9.	R/R damages on Link road Majhog Galu to Sial Km. 0/0 to 4/0 (SH- C/B wall at RD 0/935 to 0/950)	149946.00	3000.00	Two Months.	350/-

SPOTLIGHT



The road that Mukesh and his colleague had profiled in the story that ran on their YouTube channel Bastar Junction and on NDTV. SHUBHOMOY SIKDAR

Darkness descends on Bastar

With all the praise his body of work in a decade-long eventful career is drawing, the murder of 33-year-old Bijapur journalist Mukesh Chandrakar has also left a trail of questions on the future of journalists and journalism in Chhattisgarh, finds **Shubhomoy Sikdar**

There is a shop called Tea and Coffee at the centre of Bijapur, a city in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region, nearly 400 kilometres from Raipur. It is enveloped in the aroma of freshly brewed ginger tea. Bubbling saucepans fuel conversations at what was once the Old Bus Stand. In the shopping complex that now stands here, one unit is shuttered, opening only occasionally.

Just 10 days ago, it would burst into life around 10 a.m. every day, with a steady stream of visitors from across the country. Tea and Coffee owner Kapil Jhadi was kept busy with orders here. "Journalists, politicians, social workers in remote villages, even policemen in uniform, would come," Jhadi says.

But that was before January 1, the day Mukesh Chandrakar, 33, who occupied the space as an office, disappeared. On January 3, Mukesh's body was found in a septic tank, about 3 km from here. A journalist who began the YouTube news channel 'Bastar Junction' – which now has 1.59 lakh subscribers – Mukesh had run a report on the poor condition of a road in Bijapur. Police say he was murdered by three brothers, all construction contractors, Mukesh's distant relatives: Suresh Chandrakar, Dinesh Chandrakar, and Ritesh Chandrakar. The three, and Mahendra Ramteke, an employee, were taken into custody.

Soon after people heard the news of Mukesh's murder, there was an outpouring of emotion on X, with journalists from across India speaking about how he was the go-to person for anything related to the Naxal-prone region. There were also conversations on how grassroots journalists never got their place in the sun, and about their safety. Memorial meetings were held, from Raipur to New Delhi. For Jhadi, who followed his work, "His reports touched the core issues of interior

Bijapur and the whole of the Bastar region."

Mukesh, who was a freelancer with NDTV, had worked on the story of road-construction corruption with Bastar Junction's correspondent Nilesh Tripathi. The video, released on December 25, exposed the poor quality of a 52.4-km-long stretch, connecting Gangaloor and Nelsnar villages in Bijapur. A day later, the Chhattisgarh government had announced an inquiry into the matter.

Capturing stark realities
Mukesh's journalism captured the stark realities of life in Bastar's conflict-ridden zone, where left-wing extremists have waged a decades-long war against the Indian state. His stories tracked villagers risking their lives to source basics like salt, risky makeshift bridges and crumbling roads, parents losing children to blasts, children sustaining bullet wounds in encounters between the police and Naxals. These were documentaries of the everyday struggles of tribal communities caught in the crossfire. A teary-eyed tribal woman who attended Mukesh's funeral said he was like a god for her. "He had helped me get a job. I appeal to the government to find his killers and arrest them as soon as possible," she told TV cameras, before the alleged killers were arrested.

Nearly 2 km away from the office is Mukesh's

Financial security is always a challenge for us here, but the larger question of security for journalists remains unanswered. Even my family, based in Kanker, has asked me to quit the profession and return home

PINAKI RANJAN DAS
Bijapur-based journalist

modest home: a one-BHK (bedroom-hall-kitchen) that he rented with a cousin and a colleague. Mukesh's older brother, Yukesh, 36, a TV journalist, who is married with two children, lives in an adjacent house within the compound.

It was in this compound that the brothers had their last conversation on January 1, between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. The chat was about celebrations. "Mukesh and I had planned to have a little celebration of our own on December 31, but he had to go to Dantewada. I went back home and slept," says Yukesh, as he attends to a stream of visitors, including State Congress president Deepak Bajaj and Bijapur's Congress MLA Vikram Mandavi.

On January 2, Yukesh learnt from his son that Mukesh – Bitti for the family – had gone out. Given his inconsistent schedule and knack of breaking stories, no one suspected anything initially, assuming that he had left to cover a story. "I dialled his number, but it was switched off. Even that wasn't unusual. Around 1 p.m. my older (step) brother (Purushottam) called me to ask if all three of us brothers could drive to our village Basaguda, as the paddy procurement season was on and our crops had to be sold. Mukesh was still unavailable," says Yukesh.

The search

In his complaint to the police, Yukesh noted that he had called Nilesh, the journalist with whom Mukesh had prepared the report on the Gangaloor-Mirtur stretch. "Nilesh told me that he had spoken to my brother around 6.30 p.m. the previous day, and Mukesh had told him that Ritesh (one of the now-accused men) was to visit him," the complaint notes. Yukesh says it was Nilesh who suggested that the police be informed.

Yukesh began the search, followed by other Bijapur journalists, like Ganesh Mishra and Pinaki Ranjan Das, who were close friends. "Mukesh's laptop showed his last location near a shed owned by Suresh (another of the now-accused men)," says Mishra. The shed has nearly 17 rooms in which the contractor's labourers reside and a badminton court where outsiders, including Mukesh, played sometimes.

Suresh Patragiri, 30, who works for a web

news portal 'Lalluram', says he accompanied a police team to the shed on January 2, and while the rooms were searched, nothing was found there. Patragiri and another journalist, Pushpa Rokde, 40, from 'Prakhar Samachar' recounts that the journalists noticed a newly constructed concrete slab that covered a septic tank.

"The next day (January 3) I asked two women who lived there about the slab. They told me it had been constructed around 8, the previous morning. We cross-checked with some badminton players, who confirmed they had not seen the cover earlier," says Rokde, who has been a journalist for a couple of decades. The contractor had allegedly told the police that he wanted to construct a bathroom over it. "But the septic tank underneath would have needed an outlet for the gas. It only added to our suspicion," Rokde adds.

While they informed the police, journalists claim it took nearly a day and intense pressure from the community to get it broken open on January 3 evening. Mukesh's body with injury marks all over was retrieved then.

As soon as the news of the death spread, the spotlight shifted to other aspects: the story Mukesh and Nilesh had done against the backdrop of the overall risks journalists face in Bastar, where the alleged nexus between officials and construction contractors often escape scrutiny amid stories of conflict.

Following the outcry over the death, a special investigation team (SIT) was formed. Suresh's properties were demolished by the government. On January 7, the Chhattisgarh Public Works Department (PWD) suspended his registration as a construction contractor.

Vested interests at play

The news report Mukesh and Nilesh had worked on was aired on NDTV's regional (Madhya Pra-



The house where Mukesh lived in Bijapur city, where his older brother Yukesh (right) is seen. SHUBHOMOY SIKDAR

desh-Chhattisgarh) network on December 25. The project, initially tendered at ₹50 crore, ballooned to ₹120 crore despite no changes to the scope of work, the report said. Chhattisgarh government's PWD is the agency dealing with such contracts.

Nilesh says that he and Mukesh were travelling to interior Bijapur for a different story when he noticed the poor quality of the road and got curious. *The Hindu* visited the road which remains potholed, despite what appears to be some recent patchwork on certain stretches.

After the report was aired, there was a State raid on Suresh's premises apart from the inquiry, according to local news reports. After the recovery of Mukesh's body from Suresh's shed, older stories about the contractor's meteoric rise from a cook to a multimillionaire who travelled in luxury cars and had a grand wedding, where he had travelled in a helicopter to receive the bride, started doing the rounds.

Nilesh, who has worked as a journalist for a decade and knows the perils of practising the profession in India's interiors, feels burdened by the death of his colleague. "But there was a need for people to see the story, because Mukesh had continuously raised the issue of corruption and irregularities," he says.

Of the three brothers who are now in police custody, Ritesh was a friend of Mukesh's, says his brother. After the murder was unearthed, Bastar Inspector General P. Sundarraj said that the duo was having dinner together in the shed when the two had an argument over Mukesh being a 'hindrance' in Ritesh's work despite them being family. Ritesh and Ramteke allegedly attacked Mukesh with an iron rod.

However, the police is looking at Suresh, who was arrested in Hyderabad on January 5, as the person behind the conspiracy, as he is now the 'prime accused'.

"We are collecting all the technical and material evidence in the case," says Mayank Gurjar, the head of the SIT now probing the case.

The journey to journalism

Mishra says that Mukesh's confidence in his reporting was rooted in his well-oiled network. The duo had travelled to all but 50 of the 650 villages in Bijapur. "He had empathy for last-mile villagers," he says.

One of Mukesh's earliest reports that made a mark was about the incarceration of an innocent youth for over a year and how his life had been ruined by this. Then there is the more popular story about how he was a part of a team that secured the release of a Central Reserve Police Force jawan abducted by Maoists in 2021.

In a conversation last May with this reporter, he had said that his sensitivity towards the tribals was rooted in his past, which was full of hardship, but also had stories of kindness.

Mukesh was born in Basaguda, a village nearly 50 km from Bijapur. His father passed away when he was just two and a half years old, leaving his unlettered mother, an anganwadi worker with a meagre salary, to raise him and his brother in a tribal area without land or rights to forest produce. They survived on the kindness of tribal neighbours who would give them a part of their crops or produce.

One of the stories that he recalled was how he would sleep outside a Vizag hospital where his mother Kaushalya (now deceased) was being treated for cancer because he could neither stay inside the women's ward nor afford accommodation. "On days it rained, there was no sleep," he had said.

To begin with, Mukesh had worked in a garage as a mechanic to make ends meet. The family's struggles worsened during the Salwa Judum movement, a counter-insurgency force, which displaced them to a relief camp. The inspiration to join journalism came from his older brother, and after spending nearly eight years in mainstream national media, he decided to start his own channel.

A Raipur-based journalist of a national daily said she had encouraged Mukesh when he discussed it with her. "I told him that it was a good move, as Bastar journalists often remain anonymous or exist as footnotes in reports filed on the region despite their groundwork. The cloak of anonymity would go, and he could tell his own stories," she says.

Besides his daily reports, Mukesh provided regular explainers, breaking down the complexities of a long struggle and the implications of it for those living in the area. Mukesh knew Bijapur district – a large area of which is covered in the dense Abujhmad forests – like the back of his hand, and often ventured beyond to travel the larger Bastar region.

According to his friends and fellow journalists, the monetisation of his YouTube channel, his recent car purchase, and tests with operating drone cameras in and around his office were to take his reportage to the next level. But these were cost-intensive exercises.

Das says Mukesh had exhausted his savings. He had bought a patch of land nearby, spending a major chunk of his savings, with the thought of constructing a home there some day.

Financial security is always a challenge for us here, but the larger question of security for journalists remains unanswered. Even my family, based in Kanker, has asked me to quit the profession and return home," says Das. These views were echoed in meetings of press people in Delhi and Raipur.

Mukesh's office is opened sometimes. The setup remains the same: books on tribals, land rights, Bastar, the Constitution, Karl Marx. There is an empty chair on which he sat, a poster of a skyscraper behind it, and the computer on which he edited his videos. On January 6, after eight security personnel and a driver were killed by Naxalites, Das, Mishra, and a few other journalists finish their day of reporting and sit here. They discuss Mukesh and the need for Bastar journalists to stay united. "If Yukesh is okay, we will pitch in to pay the rent and continue running this office. *Bhai ke office ko marne thodi na denge* (We won't let our brother's office die)," says Das.



CMYK

How has Game Changer, starring Ram Charan and Kiara Advani, shaped up? Director Shankar spills the beans



Power clash Kiara Advani and Ram Charan in a still from *Game Changer*; (inset) director Shankar on the sets. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



The game is on

Bhuvanesh Chandar

bhuvanesh.chandar@thehindu.co.in

Most journalists patiently awaiting an interaction with filmmaker Shankar would have their minds set on how candidly or otherwise the filmmaker would address their questions. Has the failure of last year's *Indian 2* made him a more reluctant speaker? Is he nervous about how the audiences would receive his Telugu debut, *Game Changer*, starring the now globally renowned RRR star, Ram Charan?

Conversely, from the moment he steps into the forum, Shankar

embodies an evident, stoic sense of optimism. His calm demeanour reassures that perhaps he is bigger than the failure of one project.

Negative reviews have never affected him, he says. "We have to accept it. Everyone has the right to criticise. We need to take negative reviews as challenges to overcome."

His *Game Changer*, set for

release this week, initially began during the pandemic-induced lockdown as an interim project. "I was already working on *Indian 2* and 3, and the scripting for *Velpari* was in full swing. The two other stories I had needed big budgets; one was a VFX film that needed a fresh face as the hero, and the other was a spy thriller that demanded shooting in foreign locales. I wanted something different and the prospect of adapting someone else's story excited me." And that is when



writer-director Karthik Subbaraj brought the story of *Game Changer*, after which it went through a process to become more *Shankar-ish*. As the promos have teased, the film centres on a conflict between an IAS officer, played by Charan, and a politician, played by SJ Suryah. "There's a backstory to who this officer is, and the shape that the story takes amidst this war is the most exciting part of the film."

Shankar dismisses the notion that all his films take an anti-corruption stand. "Just because these films deal with politics, people boil down the issues spoken about to just one word: corruption. But there are different facets to it. In this film, we have tried to explore the powers of an IAS officer."

Familiar ground

Making a Telugu film has been a long-time wish for Shankar. "In all my films, the story's structure would inherently elevate the heroism; this script had it and when a star like Ram Charan comes in, it falls into place." Charan, he adds, possesses what he calls a 'suppressed explosive energy' within. "His performance reflects this; even when he subtly conveys something, you feel a power surging, ready to explode."

There is a general notion among fans that Shankar has been prioritising grandeur over story. The filmmaker contends otherwise. "Mere grandeur is useless. The story and the scenes need to demand grandeur."

Over the years, Shankar has spearheaded the use of modern technology in Indian cinema. "With every film, the audiences start expecting more and I will have to push myself to meet those expectations."

After *Game Changer*, Shankar is set to restart shooting for Kamal Haasan's *Indian 3*. He also has his dream project, *Velpari*, an adaptation of Tamil author Su Venkatesan's popular historical novel, *Veera Yuga Nayagan Velpari*. "I want to take time to explore all the unexplored sides of myself with this project."

Game Changer releases in theatres on January 10

A splash with ink

Based on an ancient Chinese technique, *Huaniao* ink paintings by Harsha Dass at the Lalit Kala Akademi create lyrical images

Soma Basu

soma.basu@thehindu.co.in

Four years ago when Harsha Dass, a senior executive with the Indian Railways had to shift to Taiwan with her diplomat husband, she routed her understanding of the local culture through art classes. "Drawing was a childhood hobby. In Taipei, I was attracted by the beautiful artworks in ink and decided to learn the ancient Chinese technique of painting."

In July 2023, Harsha held her first exhibition at the Taipei National Central Library. Encouraging reviews prompted her to continue with the art after returning to India last summer. She is now showcasing a collection of 17 *Huaniao* paintings, 'Looks from the East', at the Lalit Kala Akademi.

Her strikingly different work highlighting the separate sub-genre of Chinese ink paintings on rice paper reveals a painterly brilliance of an eager student who practised hard to master the strokes in a short span. Harsha found an accomplished old school teacher in Jyn-Tzy Wang. "She is a living storehouse of knowledge about traditional techniques and skills and eased me into the craft of ink painting," says Harsha now posted as Chief Personnel Officer in Northern Railways, Delhi.

Done on the durable and versatile handmade rice paper or silks, the paintings typically feature flowers, birds, water, mountains, trees, and landscapes. Scholar artists developed a free hand or *xieyi* style bloated ink painting as opposed to the classic outlined or *gongbi* style painting, making the two schools of *Huaniao* paintings very distinct.

Harsha follows the classic style and also uses lot of colours in her work for vibrancy. She says, when she was rigorously training under her teacher, the initial classes were difficult because one had to learn the way the teacher taught and progress was in baby steps. "Chinese ink painting is a science; You learn how important the preparation is, of the ink, the colour, the palette and patience. You learn to move with the form that you are creating as breathing infuses life into your brush strokes. You cannot create unless there is peace and harmony within yourself."

The initial months are only about perfecting the posture; holding and washing the brushes correctly, for every stroke there is a different brush, made with hair from different parts of animals; learning the strokes for bamboo leaf and bamboo stem and preparing the right shades of ink



Masterly strokes Harsha Dass and her Chinese ink painting at 'Looks from the East' exhibition at Lalit Kala Akademi. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

"One needs the temperament to learn the art because it is physically taxing, one has to stand and finish a painting, preferably in one day otherwise the naturally made ink loses its colour. I worked hard, 10 hours a day but unless I got a stroke right my teacher did not allow me to move on to the next," remembers Harsha.

"Once you develop a passion for the art form, you are guided by its philosophy. It has opened up a new world of spirituality for me."

It was difficult for Harsha to convince her teacher to reveal the secret technique to ink paint fish. In the formidable art scene, her determination to pick up the skills and dedicated practice enabled her to focus on her pet themes, sooner than she and even her teacher expected, Harsha says.

One of her large size and favourite ink painting titled 'A competitive schooling' with nine fish can be seen at the exhibition. She completed it in one go in 15 hours and describes the experience as "fulfilling". Harsha has got four more appealing ink paintings of fish mounted. "They are not easy to paint given the multiple layers of strokes and colouring involved but painting them has induced calmness in me."

There is beauty, joy and happiness in her canvases much as the balance is an essential element in her paintings. Her mastery enables her to deal with any living non-human form including insects and pets .

"The rich legacy of traditional techniques are passed down through generations by teachers to their favourite students. I feel honoured that I was one such student."

At Gallery 4, Lalit Kala Akademi, 35 Firozshah Road; Till January 13; 11am to 7pm

STEP OUT



Natural art show

My Earth My Home features seven women artists from Delhi, Himachal Pradesh and Australia who use only natural materials in their artworks. Curated by Georgina Maddox, the group show highlights eco-dyeing with Shibori techniques and wild art. Artists Bettina Van Haeften, Pooja Hada, Alka Mathur, Shalini Ghosh, Jasmeet Khurana, Sharmila Gupta, Nishi Jauhar, Ritu-Ngapnon Varuni have used natural pigments and brushes made by them with materials collected from Himalayan forest areas.

At Gallery Art Positive, F-213/B, Old MB Road, Lado Sarai; January 10 to 16; 11am to 7pm



Cultural evening

To commemorate the golden jubilee year of Ganesha Natyaya, an event 'Nitya and Swara' will feature Carnatic vocal recital by Sudha Raghuraman and Bharatanatyam performance by Mohanapriyan Thavarajah. At Ganesha Natyaya Auditorium, 6-16 Qutub Institutional Area; January 12; 6pm



Impact of memory

Retrospective Analysis of Memory, Fragment, and Nostalgia, is a three-artist exhibition that explores the intricate interplay between memory, imagination, and nostalgia. Featuring Ekta Singh, Madhav Vyas, and Mansoor N. Mansoori, the show delves into the fluid, fragmented nature of memory and its influence on personal and cultural narratives. At Gallery LATITUDE 28, F-208, First Floor, Lado Sarai; Till January 18 (Sundays closed); 11am to 7pm

Geetika Sachdev

Most office spaces on Gurugram's Golf Course Road appear dull and dreary after dark. There are, however, treasures to be found including Japonico, housed in Vipul Tech Square. Yellow-toned signage catch the attention on the ground level and a wooden elevator opens up to reveal the 160-cover space in the Japanese bar and restaurant.

The brain behind Japonico, Sahil Sambhi (of restaurants Bawri and VietNam fame) joined hands with restaurant designer Freddy Birdy to create the contemporary Japanese bar. "Japonico was conceived to be a hip and modern Japanese concept where the look and feel is as important as the cuisine," says Sahil.

Japonico has three distinct sections : the robata area with long tables is suited for group dining, the cocktail space has a stainless steel bar and a long DJ table where guests can dine. There is also immersive electronic art in the bar. The outdoor deck, adjoining the

cocktail menu of Japonico explores the adventures of a mythical character, Kaito Sakamoto, with a drink dedicated to each chapter of his journey

bar area, offers inspiring views of Gurugram's skyline. With retractable sliding doors, the deck and the bar area can merge into a single space.

Hic, hic, hurrah! The beverage programme, curated by mixologists Jeet Rana and Chirag Pal, focusses on anime storytelling. The cocktail menu, fashioned like a book, takes you through the journey of a mythical character, Kaito Sakamoto. From his beginnings as a farmer to moving to cities, and reaching the pinnacle of his ambition – every drink reflects a chapter in his story. I start with the humble beginnings

Story book of cocktails



a blend of in-house fermented fruit wine with melon and pear, sparkling sake, and vodka that pays homage to Kaito's modest-yet-vibrant roots. Its sweet-sour taste is easy on the palate.

The next drink, the legacy is an elevated and fruity rendition of martini. It has a mix of gin and vodka, fat-washed with truffle and infused with wasabi and passion fruit. It comes with various accompaniments – Tobiko caviar, pickled radish, and olive, adding texture and flavour to each sip.

On the platter

In line with his vision of being international, Sahil has roped in Chef Roberto Blondi, who previously associated with prestigious kitchens including Zuma London, Roka Riyad and the three-Michelin-star Eleven Madison Park

Contemporary menu Japonico dessert platter and Japonico shiitake mushroom, truffle oil salad served at the new Japanese bar and restaurant in Gurugram. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

New York.

Japonico boasts the city's longest (15-feet-long) robata grill, which reflects in its menu filled with grilled meats, seafood and seasonal vegetables. I start my meal with a trio of salads – the Japonico shiitake mushroom, truffle oil salad; iceberg wafu salad and Atlantic crab salad. Each of these have a distinct Japanese dressing: the goma using sesame paste, wafu dressing with caramelised onions, soy sauce and mirin and shiro miso with blended miso, yuzu koshu and fresh yuzu juice.

The challenges

"While it's challenging, we have tied up with a vendor



here who flies in produce daily from some of the largest fish and grocery markets in Tokyo," says Sahil. The next dish is the Japanese bluefin tuna tataki with wood-fired seared akami with avocado, apple mustard sauce, diakon, spring onions and garlic chips. It is a light and juicy bite that pairs well with drinks.

Some other dishes worth trying are the melt-in-the-mouth Chilean sea bass yakitoro marinated with saikyo miso and the yuzu marinated Canadian black cod.

The Japonico dessert platter is reminiscent of a bouquet with multiple sweet treats. There is chocolate fondant, Japanese cheesecake with grilled pineapple and ice-cream, classic tiramisu, selection of fruits and homemade ice-cream.

At Tower D second floor, Vipul Tech Square, Golf Course Road, near Sector 42-43, Gurugram; A meal for two (with alcohol) ₹5,000 plus taxes, Call 9948000039



Damage control

Adherence to existing regulations can limit the impact of earthquakes

This week, an early-morning earthquake in Tibet of magnitude 7.1 and originating at a depth of 10 km has reportedly claimed at least 100 lives and damaged buildings and houses. The tremors from the quake were felt in Nepal as well as parts of Bihar and even New Delhi, thousands of kilometres away. The main earthquake was followed by at least two aftershocks. If the epicentre had been located closer to India, the damage could have been manifold. Earthquakes in the Himalayas evoke a special kind of dread in the country. Memories of two deadly quakes in Nepal in April and May of 2015 that killed at least 9,000 and caused incalculable damage still bubble up. The tectonic plates are the gigantic shards into which Earth is broken up. Layered on them are the continents and the seas. These plates are constantly in motion – colliding with, diverging with, or sliding past one another. The Indian plate collided with the Eurasian plate and the crust tilted upwards, creating the Himalayas. The fractured zones along which they interact create the fault lines where earthquakes occur. By studying these faults and the pattern of past earthquakes, seismologists can estimate how much latent energy at these fault lines, which can run thousands of miles, has been released and how much of it still resides in them.

Scientists have long warned of a massive, overdue earthquake in the Garhwal-Kumaon range because of what is known about the pattern of quakes in the region. The records of the last 300 years suggest that those that have occurred have not released all the pent-up energy and that is why there is a broad consensus among experts that an 8-magnitude tremor is overdue. Unfortunately, predicting the day and time is outside the ambit of current science. Thus, the best we can hope for is insulation against the projected damage. It is in this context that infrastructure development in the Himalayan region must be viewed. While several of these projects are intended to smooth the movement of people and goods, the recurrent landslides and glacial lake outbursts that wash away dams, hydropower projects, and roads serve as a constant reminder of the inherent fragility of the region. Every form of infrastructure in the region – power plant or dam – must take into account the imminence of a major earthquake and the associated costs factored into planning. Adhering to already existing building codes, not only in the Himalayas but in the surrounding Indo-Gangetic plains, can go a long way in limiting the inevitable damage.

Winter contest

Assembly elections to Delhi have an oversized importance

The Delhi Assembly elections on February 5 is set to be a bipolar contest between the incumbent Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The Congress, once the most popular party in the national capital, is struggling to regain at least part of its lost prominence. Delhi is not a full-fledged State, and its unique and convoluted governance design often sets the Centre and the State government on a collision course. Still, there is national spotlight on Delhi politics, which the AAP and the BJP have dominated since 2012. Since then, the voters in Delhi have swung overwhelmingly in favour of the AAP in Assembly elections and the BJP in Lok Sabha elections. The AAP nurtures national ambitions and its chief, Arvind Kejriwal, fashions himself as a challenger to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. In the run-up to the elections, the AAP has had its image of incorruptibility and of being a platform for the commoner severely stained by corruption allegations against Mr. Kejriwal and several of his colleagues. It is true that the central investigative agencies are selective in their anti-corruption probe, but that does not absolve AAP of suspicion. The frequent run-ins with the Lieutenant Governor appointed by the Centre have made it difficult for the party to deliver on what it has promised, even as it makes a bid for a fourth term.

The BJP is pitching a double-engine government that will put an end to the tussle between the two powers that control Delhi. The election is likely to bring up issues concerning the integrity of the election process itself. The AAP has submitted to the Election Commission that the names of bona fide voters are being removed from the electoral rolls. When announcing the elections, the Chief Election Commissioner sought to allay these fears saying deletion of names was not possible without adhering to strict protocols, and every party has the right to raise objections at various stages. In response, the BJP has said that the AAP is worried that illegal Rohingya and Bangladeshi immigrants who are benefiting from the party's welfare schemes will be struck off the list. The results, scheduled to be announced on February 8, will also be a test of the strength, the strategies, and the coherence of the parties ranged against the BJP. While the AAP and the Congress fought the Lok Sabha elections with a seat-sharing agreement as INDIA partners in an attempt to defeat the BJP, they are opposing each other in this fight. For the BJP that considers every election as a life-and-death matter, Delhi is even more so.

We need accessibility rules that are based on principles

The Supreme Court, in *Rajive Raturi v. Union of India* (2024), held Rule 15 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Rules, 2017, violative of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

The Court reasoned that the Rule was drafted in a discretionary tone whereas the corresponding provisions (Sections 40, 44, 45, 46, 89) in the Act imposed a mandatory obligation for the government. This was significant as Rule 15 was a statutory provision under which the accessibility guidelines of respective departments and ministries were notified. Key examples include the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs' guidelines for creating barrier-free environments, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways' bus body code, and other accessibility standards established by the Ministries of Sports, Culture, and Information and Broadcasting.

The Court observed that these guidelines allowed discretion to the ministries and departments, which is antithetical to the mandatory language of the Act. Moreover, striking down Rule 15 also meant that the accessibility guidelines notified under the Rule lost their statutory authority. As a result, the Court gave the government three months to develop minimum mandatory accessibility requirements to govern all the sectors.

The judgment is a stark reminder of how accessibility guidelines have been created in silos without the identification of normative principles that will ensure universality and intersectionality to those guidelines. Thus, while formulating new guidelines, there needs to be a shift towards a principle-based framework on accessibility rules.

The idea of accessibility

The Court deliberated in detail on the difference between accessibility and reasonable accommodation. Accessibility and reasonable accommodation both originate within the principles of substantive equality of the Constitution. Accessibility is now accepted as a right woven throughout the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Conversely, reasonable accommodation is a facilitator of substantive equality where specific challenges are dealt with in a specific context. Therefore, both concepts should be understood as interdependent and complementary to each other, where accessibility builds the edifice through standardised accessibility standards from the outset, while reasonable accommodation ensures tailored solutions for those individuals who might still face inaccessibility in a specific context.

The idea of accessibility is not static, and the conceptual contours and corresponding tools



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The new accessibility rules must be direct, understandable, and practical to ensure effective implementation

have evolved regularly. For instance, with the advent of Artificial Intelligence and the Internet of Things and their incorporation into social interactions, the understanding of digital accessibility has evolved simultaneously. This makes it necessary to modify the nature, extent, and type of digitally accessible tools that can ensure broader inclusivity.

The shifting threshold also needs to be understood in the context of phased realisation of accessibility. The Court in *Rajive Raturi* observed that the existing guidelines are framed in a way that establishes long-term goals of accessibility without setting the minimum standards requiring immediate implementation. Hence, the minimum accessibility threshold shall be envisaged on a sliding scale wherein the baseline moves forward at periodical intervals. Canada has developed a comprehensive road map to achieve full accessibility by 2040, focusing on harmonising standards across the country through two work streams, with periodic reviews every five years to adapt to changing needs.

The RPwD Act defines barriers in the broadest form possible, wherein intangible barriers such as attitudinal barriers are recognised in addition to tangible barriers such as infrastructure. This has modified how accessibility is viewed and understood within physical and digital ecosystems. Thus, it is necessary to evolve accessibility parameters in theory and practice to overcome tangible and intangible barriers. For instance, the evolving understanding of disability is an aspect that informs the attitude of society and, hence, directly relates to the attitudinal barrier. Thus, accessibility must also align with this evolution of disability understanding to be truly inclusive.

The understanding of universal design has also evolved over time. It is not just limited to persons with disabilities but also includes every vulnerable community, such as women, children, and the elderly. This reflects a tacit recognition of the universality of disability, which is not identified as an individual's incapacity to perform but rather the composition of the environment in which one operates. Disability may arise from a high cognitive workload causing an inability to focus and control emotions, temporarily broken limbs, unavailability of ramps to a pregnant mother, age-related complications, etc. Thus, the rules should be applicable across groups, providing accessibility in the general sense and not exclusive to persons with disabilities.

Compliance with social audit

Section 48 of the RPwD Act mandates the Central and State governments to regularly undertake social audits of all general schemes and programmes to ensure they do not have an

adverse impact on the needs and concerns of persons with disabilities. Social audits play a vital role in developing and strengthening the accountability of the government and service providers. For instance, regular social audits of schemes providing assistance technologies to persons with disabilities can assess the bottlenecks in the delivery of services, identify the changing needs of individuals, and provide better devices.

However, due to the lack of standardised guidelines under the RPwD Rules, there is no clarity on the scope and methodology of social audits. This might lead to inconsistencies among the Centre and the States, lack of awareness, and insufficient training for auditors. Therefore, clear guidelines and operationalisation of social audits at a larger scale will help identify the changing nature of disability-related challenges and make targeted interventions to enhance service delivery through concerned schemes and programmes.

Rules have to be understandable

The earlier accessibility rules across departments and ministries suffered from bureaucratic complexity regarding their mandate. There were too many technicalities and often contradictory accessibility mandates from multiple ministries that confused the complying entities. For instance, a sporting complex has multiple guidelines for accessibility from the Ministry of Urban Affairs and Housing, Sports, Transport, and others. This led to not just a failure to provide objective parameters but also increased the compliance cost for such establishments. During the proceeding under the redressal mechanism, the complex and overlapping guidelines also delayed the relief sought by persons with disabilities.

The new accessibility rules must be direct, understandable, and practical to ensure effective implementation. The ambiguity in department/ministry jurisdiction that plagued the earlier rules should also be addressed by having a nodal authority, ideally, the sector regulators, and in the absence of it, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment should adjudicate on rules.

The deadline for releasing the new accessibility guidelines is February, subject to extension. Thus, there is a necessity for diverse sectors, both private and public, beyond social services such as financial, technological, transport, to deliberate upon the minimum rules of accessibility. This isn't just warranted by the legislative mandate of the RPwD Act but also a market incentive to tap into the large population base by providing accessible products and services.

Section 152 of BNS should not become a proxy for sedition

The Rajasthan High Court, in *Tejender Pal Singh v. State of Rajasthan* (2024), cautioned against using Section 152 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) as a tool to stifle legitimate dissent. In 2022, before the BNS was enacted, the Supreme Court had suspended pending criminal trials and court proceedings under Section 124A (sedition) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) until the government reconsidered the law. This was followed by a verbal proclamation by the Union Home Minister that 'sedition' would be repealed as an offence. Section 152 of the BNS criminalises any act exciting secession, armed rebellion, and subversive activities. It also criminalises acts encouraging feelings of separation or endangering the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India. While the BNS does not formally use the term 'sedition', the Rajasthan High Court's recent decision hints that the spectre of sedition still looms large in the BNS.

Problems with Section 152

First, Section 152 BNS criminalises 'acts endangering the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India.' However, what constitutes such endangerment under Section 152 has not been defined in the statute. This renders the provision vague, and amenable to expansive interpretation by enforcement authorities. Accordingly, a speech criticising a prominent historical or political figure, or sympathising with a controversial public figure, may be construed as 'endangering' the 'unity and integrity of India' for initiating legal action against a person. In the current sociopolitical environment that appears increasingly fragmented, a stringent penal provision without inbuilt checks for abuse may be used to stifle dissent and criticism.



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The lack of a statutory requirement to establish a causal linkage between the speech and its actual consequence before depriving the accused of personal liberty renders Section 152 amenable to abuse much like its predecessor, and has the potential to instill a chilling effect on free speech. The potential for abuse of the sedition-like provision is clearly borne out by data of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) regarding Section 124A of the IPC. Out of 548 persons arrested between 2015 and 2020 for sedition, only 12 people were convicted in seven cases. More importantly, this was the situation when Section 124A IPC was relatively narrower and more specific in comparison to Section 152 of the BNS. Unfortunately, the NCRB data, and the benefit of hindsight regarding abuse of Section 124A, seem to have had no bearing in designing the contours of Section 152 of the BNS.

Second, the term 'knowingly' in Section 152 substantially lowers the threshold for commission of the offence, especially in the context of social media. Even if a person does not have the malicious intent to incite activities or feelings prohibited under Section 152, they can still be considered liable for the offence if they share a post knowing it will reach a larger audience and may provoke such activities or feelings. This would be sufficient to arrest a person and prosecute them for commission of the offence under Section 152, which is cognisable and non-bailable. The lack of a statutory requirement to prima facie establish a causal linkage between the speech and its actual consequence before depriving the accused of personal liberty renders Section 152 amenable to abuse much like its predecessor, and has the potential to instill a chilling effect on free speech. The potential for abuse of the sedition-like provision is clearly borne out by data of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) regarding Section 124A of the IPC.

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The way forward

In the past, the judiciary has consistently adopted a consequentialist interpretation to strike a careful balance between national interest and the freedom of expression. The Supreme Court has given weight to the actual consequence or impact

of free speech in determining the offence rather than considering the 'speech' on its own. For instance, in *Balwant Singh and Anr v. State of Punjab* (1995), the Court drew a line of demarcation between casual sloganising and its repercussions or consequences, requiring a direct causal nexus between the act and its impact for it to amount to an offence of sedition. Further, in *Javed Ahmad Hazam v. State of Maharashtra and Ors* (2024), the Court said the "effect of the words must be judged from the standards of reasonable, strong-minded, firm and courageous men, and not those of weak and vacillating minds..."

Moreover, in *Kedar Nath Singh v. State of Bihar* (1962), the Court had differentiated 'disloyalty towards the government' from 'strongly worded criticism of the government and its policies'.

Given the lack of inbuilt safeguards in Section 152 to prevent its abuse, these interpretations should guide the enforcement authorities in applying this provision. Moreover, the Supreme Court should, when it gets the earliest opportunity, craft a set of guidelines for the enforcement authorities, demarcating the boundaries for the terms used under Section 152 BNS, as it did with respect to 'arrest' in *D.K. Basu v. State of West Bengal*. This will ensure that the provision does not become a proxy for the offence of sedition.

It is important to provide liberal space to thoughts, beliefs and expressions, and to subject them all to unimpeded criticisms, especially in the age of social media. We need to fall back on the concept of 'marketplace of ideas', as envisioned by Justice Holmes in *Abrams v. United States*, because the best test of truth will always be the potential of an idea to get itself accepted in a democratic and diverse society.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Another stampede

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has a great track record in managing crowds, which is why this incident comes as a surprise ("6 killed, 20 injured in stampede at Tirupati," Jan. 9). In India, stampedes are common, whether at places of worship, processions, or theatres. Devotees always come in larger numbers than expected. The administration must plan for the worst-case scenario. **Kshirasagara Balaji Rao**
Baru Rajendra Prasad Hyderabad

The Maha Kumbh Mela will soon be taking place in Uttar Pradesh. The stampedes in Tirupati, Hyderabad and Hathras must serve as a warning to the Uttar Pradesh government. After the stampede in the theatre in Hyderabad, the Telangana police had accused the theatre management and actor Allu Arjun. Who will the Andhra Pradesh government blame for the Tirupati stampede? **Baru Rajendra Prasad**
Hyderabad

A powerful weapon
The RTI Act is the most powerful weapon in the hands of citizens ("Cripple and scuttle," Jan. 9). It empowers citizens and increases accountability and responsibility of public institutions. Filling up vacancies in Information Commissions is crucial for the smooth flow of information. **Kamakshi Saxena**
Delhi

Possible fissures
That the Trinamool

Congress and SP have extended their support to AAP could challenge the Congress's position, both in Delhi, where it is contesting, and within the INDIA bloc, where it holds a leadership position ("Kejriwal thanks TMC for 'backing' AAP; rift with Cong. widens," Jan. 9). The shifting power dynamics could lead to fissures within the bloc. **Ahmed Raza Manu**
Hyderabad

Stepping down
Justin Trudeau's resignation

is not surprising ("Wayward liberal, Jan. 8"). His political downfall is of his own making, thanks largely to his misadventures in public administration. The economic downturn, the crisis in the housing sector, and overwhelming immigration are the main reasons why he has lost public faith. The final straw may be the prospect of huge tariffs from Canada's main trading partner, the U.S. His resignation is a damage control exercise for his party. But how far the

party will be able to control the damage is anybody's guess. **D.V.G. Sankara Rao**
Vizianagaram



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Is India open to the idea of dual citizenship?

**PARLEY****Vivek Katju**

Former diplomat

**Amitabh Mattoo**

Dean of the School of International Studies at the Jawaharlal Nehru University



In the U.S., you cannot become a President unless you are born in the territory of the country. REUTERS

At an event in December, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said there are a lot of challenges in providing dual citizenship to Indians settled abroad. He pointed out that the Overseas Citizenship of India drive is a step towards meeting the demand and added that the debate on dual citizenship is "still alive". Is India open to the idea of dual citizenship? Amitabh Mattoo and Vivek Katju discuss the question in a conversation moderated by Kallol Bhattacharjee. Edited excerpts:

Do you think dual citizenship for diasporic Indians could become a reality?

Vivek Katju: First, let me distinguish between NRIs living abroad and People of Indian Origin (PIO). NRIs, or Non-Resident Indians, are Indian nationals who hold Indian passports. They have all the rights that accrue to Indian nationals. The only thing they cannot exercise abroad is the right to vote, though I believe arrangements were made at some stage for NRIs to register themselves in the missions so they could vote in their place of entitlement. PIOs are not Indian nationals, quite clearly, and therefore they do not have political rights. At one stage, the government had given expanded economic facilities to PIOs, and later, what was called a PIO card was converted into an Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) card. Now, I never understood the reason for this change in designation, as the OCI card does not confer on any person of Indian origin, any additional facilities, or any rights which the PIO card did not already possess. Citizenship essentially has political attributes. If you are a citizen, you have the full right to participate in the political process of the country. A non-citizen does not have that right. So, the word "citizen" is extremely confusing and, in my opinion, it should be avoided as it creates a misleading impression.

Minister Jaishankar's remarks have opened up an issue that has unresolved contours. Professor Mattoo, what are your thoughts about granting dual citizenship rights to people of Indian origin living abroad?

Amitabh Mattoo: I think Mr. Jaishankar must have made an off-the-cuff remark. It cannot be a serious question to be debated at this point in India that certain people or a class of people who are no longer Indian citizens, or who either gave up Indian citizenship or never were Indian citizens, will be given additional citizenship of India. If you look back at the Constitution of India, Part II deals with this section on

citizenship. Article 5 of the Constitution defines who is a citizen of India, either by birth, by parentage, or by acquiring it after having remained a resident in India. There is also a distinction between being a domicile and being a citizen. You may be domiciled in India and yet not be a citizen. This was determined by the Supreme Court in *D.P. Joshi v State of Madhya Bharat* in 1955. The only major amendment to the Citizenship Act came in 2019, with the Citizenship Amendment Act. Then there was a fast-track process for minorities from certain neighbourhood countries to be allowed to take Indian citizenship. I don't think it can really be a serious, substantive question to allow people to have citizenship of both India and another country because that would confer political rights. In other words, citizens of the U.S., U.K., or Australia, for example, would not only have political loyalty to those countries but also the right to vote in India. That, frankly, for me is an extremely dangerous idea. As an Indian citizen, I would not be willing to give political rights to anyone with divided loyalties. Because after all, dual citizenship means that you have divided loyalties.

We are not ready to have dual citizenship in this country after just 75 years. I am not xenophobic, I am a person who has grown up with an idea of global citizenship in a larger sense. But in terms of which political dispensation will govern India, I am not willing to share that right with anyone who has but 100% political loyalty to India. Personally, I had the option of acquiring Australian citizenship, and the only reason I did not take it was that it would mean relinquishing Indian citizenship.

The incoming Trump presidency has several Indian-origin people, as well as



I believe it is the democratic right of every Indian to choose the citizenship of another country and relinquish Indian citizenship. But they cannot say I will acquire the citizenship of another country, participate in its political process, and still hold on to political rights in India

VIVEK KATJU

first-generation Indian immigrants, who will hold public office. Do you think that for certain communities and certain kinds of workers who are employable globally, the idea of citizenship requires some degree of flexibility?

VK: No. You cannot have divided loyalties. You are either a citizen of India, which is in full rights, political rights, economic rights, etc, or you are not.

You mentioned that in the U.S., there are people of Indian origin who are holding, who have, and who will be holding the office. I think six persons of Indian origin have been elected to the House of Representatives this time. Let us not forget that they are American citizens. The Indian systems and law demand that the moment you acquire the nationality of another country, you relinquish India's nationality, which means that you do not have political rights anymore.

I believe it is the democratic right of every Indian to choose the citizenship of another country and relinquish Indian citizenship. But they cannot say I will acquire the citizenship of another country, participate in its political process, and still hold on to political rights in India. Now I know that some other countries allow that, but I must confess I have very orthodox views on this. The international system is a system of states.

AM: I completely endorse Mr. Katju's remarks. We cannot, for the sake of populism or to attract foreign investment, create what the Marxists used to call a "comprador" class – a class of people who will act as foreign agents in India. You give them the right to vote and to elect members of Parliament and Legislative Assemblies, that is a sure way of recolonising India.

But if you open this Pandora's box by allowing even a single citizen of another country to have dual citizenship in India, it would be deeply dangerous and subversive. There are situations where people who have decided to make India their home have relinquished earlier

citizenship and become citizens of India. Mirra Alfassa, known as The Mother, whose work inspired many and who founded the Aurobindo Ashram in Puducherry, became an Indian citizen despite earlier campaigning for dual citizenship. Similarly, Mother Teresa became an Indian citizen, and economist Jean Drèze, I believe, relinquished his Belgian citizenship and became an Indian citizen. In the U.S., which might seem more flexible, the fact is that you cannot become a President unless you are born in the territory of the U.S. Even Elon Musk, despite all his championing of Donald Trump, can never aspire to be President because he was born in South Africa. So, some laws are much more rigid.

Is the issue being propped by populism?

AM: I hope not, because I have great regard for the External Affairs Minister, so I am sure he is not doing it for populist reasons. The diaspora has a great role to play but not as dual citizens. You have the diaspora playing a role in cementing bilateral relations with the U.S. The hugely successful Indian diaspora in the U.S. often acts as a rallying point for leaders' visits there, and similarly in other countries. The first Indian diaspora of indentured labourer that went into the Caribbean may not have been as successful in material terms as this new wave of diaspora. But, as I said, they can cement bilateral ties and help attract investment from abroad.

As in the case of Microsoft, Satya Nadella has promised investment in artificial intelligence. That is all for the good of the nation. However, the question really is whether this diaspora could become a Frankenstein monster. While its role may appear benign and a source of great good, you may suddenly empower it to the point where it decides who is going to be your next leader. That is where I think there has to be a *lakshman rekha*. You need to maintain a clear line between the useful role played by the diaspora and its crossing the boundaries. I am not willing to let any Satya Nadella or Vivek Ramaswamy or any person of Indian origin who may just acquire Indian citizenship for instrumental reasons while retaining their American or other citizenship decide my political future. I am an Indian citizen, and I vote for my future along with other Indian citizens who do not have any other loyalties to any other country.



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

NOTEBOOK

What it takes to be on right side of facts

Journalists in Kashmir have long navigated a hostile environment, facing threats, surveillance, and legal repercussions

Peerzada Ashiq

Navigating powers in a conflict zone is a daunting challenge for journalists. There is a cost to pay for digging for the truth, and bitter truths could prove costlier. The murder of 33-year-old freelance journalist and YouTuber, Mukesh Chandrakar, from Chhattisgarh is a grim reminder of the cost that people pay for holding a mirror to a corrupt system.

In the case of Kashmir, which has seen different phases of violent conflict, journalists could not operate without survival kits. Covering Kashmir in the 1990s, at the peak of militancy, required one set of survival kits to navigate warring parties' intimidation and threats to control narratives. Post-2008, when Kashmir was in the throes of street violence, journalists fine-tuned their operations to ensure reporting truth was not compromised.

However, post-2019, when Jammu and Kashmir's status was downgraded to a Union Territory and special status ended, control and fear became the new instruments for dealing with journalists. There were no survival kits in a dynamic situation where red lines, drawn by State institutions, would change with each passing day for reporters. A ban was put on reporting live encounters, and permission was denied to get closer to the area where militants and security forces would engage in a firefight, unlike in the past. Official versions became the main narratives. Anyone expressing views contrary to the official position was not invited to official functions and was barred from attending visits of official dignitaries.

In September 2019, I filed a report on police data on detentions, especially of mainstream leaders and protesters. The story surfaced when officials denied having centralised data on detentions in Kashmir. A police summon followed the publication of the report and I was asked to reveal my source. However, it was not the summon that was intimidating. The actions taken against my sources in the admini-

nistration were chilling. Any office where I signed the check-in logbook was scanned to identify my sources, who were then placed under surveillance and received cryptic warnings. Access to my sources was cut off to the extent that most stopped responding or meeting me.

For many colleagues, it was worse. There was a joke doing the rounds in Kashmir among media persons: post-2019, there were two types of journalists – those who had been raided by security agencies and those who were yet to be raided. Even now, the laptops, drives, and mobile phones of many journalists are with security agencies. Summons and raids were another chilling reminder that the search for truth had become a daring act. Two freelance journalists, Majid Hyderi and Irfan Mehraj, still remain behind bars. While Hyderi faces charges under the Public Safety Act, Mehraj is charged under the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Long way ahead
On January 3 this year, J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's maiden and free-wheeling interaction with the press in Srinagar was held against this backdrop. In fact, Mr. Abdullah's opening remarks were itself a commentary on the functioning of the press. As he took many inconvenient questions, he sparked hope that there are freer times ahead. "My wish would be to see a free and open media. This interaction is a step in that direction, where you are not given a list of what you can or cannot ask," he said.

However, there is a long way to go. The Kashmir Press Club has remained shut for many years. Dozens of local scribes have already left Kashmir, and many independent journalists have changed their trade in the face of tough times. The clampdown created a vacuum, which was filled by non-professionals who let sensationalism rather than sensibility dictate the terms of engagement.

peerzada.ashiq@thehindu.co.in**PICTURE OF THE WEEK****Silent waters, hidden catch**

Fishermen holding harpoons, covered under blankets, wait in their boats to catch fish using a unique technique called Tchay-e-gard shikar (shadow fishing) on the frozen waters of the Anchar Lake in Srinagar, on Thursday. Every winter, from December 21 to April 30, the Kashmiri fishermen use this method of camouflaging their presence to lure the fish into a trap with the help of reeds and shock waves by beating the water. IMRAN NISSAR

FROM THE ARCHIVES**The Hindu****FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 10, 1975****U.S. eager to demonetise gold**

Washington, Jan. 8: The United States will try to get countries attending international monetary meetings here next week to agree to "abolish controls on official gold transactions, but to refrain from building up their gold stocks for a year or two," the Treasury Under-Secretary, Mr. Jack Bennett, said to-day. Mr. Bennett also said the U.S. would press next

week for agreement on a number of measures depriving gold of any role within the International Monetary Fund. As part of a planned reform of the world monetary system, the U.S. is eager to "demonetise gold – break the traditional link between the precious metal and national currencies." The Americans feel that demonetisation of gold would curb speculation and make future world monetary arrangements more stable and manageable. But if central banks are freed to buy and sell gold freely at free market prices, the U.S. would like them to refrain from buying substantial quantities of gold in the first year or two.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 10, 1925**All-India Music Conference**

Lucknow, Jan. 9: The Fourth All-India Music Conference commenced its Lucknow session yesterday. Nearly 3,000 visitors and delegates including H. H. the Maharaja of Tehri were present. Thakur Nawab Ali, Chairman of the Reception Committee, stated that the aims and objects of the Conference were among others to take steps to uplift Indian music on proper lines and to collect and preserve great masterpieces in the art.

Text & Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The UN migration agency's aid appeal for Syria

73 In \$ million. The appeal has been made as the country transitions after years of civil war and decades of dictatorship. The UN International Organization for Migration said it was more than doubling an appeal launched last month for Syria, from \$30 million to \$73.2 million. AFP

Fatalities of Myanmar junta's air strike in the western Rakhine state

40 The Arakan Army is engaged in a fierce fight with the military for control of Rakhine, where it has seized swathes of territory in the past year, all but cutting off the capital Sittwe. The UN said that more than 3.5 million people have been displaced by the conflict in Myanmar. AFP

The Palestinians killed in the Israel-Hamas war so far

46,000

Children and women make up more than half the fatalities. The Israeli military says it has killed over 17,000 militants, without providing evidence. It says it tries to avoid harming civilians. PTI

The oldest ice core from the Antarctic which has been drilled

1.2 million years. An international team of scientists announced that they've drilled one of the oldest ice cores yet, penetrating nearly two miles of the Antarctic bedrock to reach ice they say is at least 1.2 million years old. Analysis of the ice is expected to show how atmosphere and climate evolved. PTI

Number of special invitees for the 76th Republic Day parade

10,000

Handloom artists, members of the Paralympic contingent, and forest and wildlife conservation workers are among the special guests invited to the parade. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Decoding India's growth slowdown

The official diminution of India's projected GDP growth rate may still be an underestimation of the extent of economic slowdown. The revenue mobilisation strategy needs to be reworked to enhance taxation on wealth and profits in order to enhance capex and welfare spending

ECONOMIC NOTES

Prasenjit Bose
Soumyadeep Biswas

The first advance estimates of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2024-25, released by the National Statistics Office (NSO) this week, shows a decline in the real GDP growth rate to 6.4% from 8.2% registered in 2023-24. This is lower than the 6.5 to 7% range projected by the Economic Survey in July 2024. The growth rate of nominal GDP, which is the sum of the real GDP growth rate and the overall inflation rate, is estimated at 9.7% in 2024-25 – significantly lower than the 10.5% growth rate projected in the last Union Budget.

Data discrepancies
The official diminution of India's projected GDP growth rate may still be an underestimation of the extent of economic slowdown. Academics and institutional experts have consistently pointed out serious defects in the official GDP estimates, with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) recommending an upgrade of the real sector statistics. An "Informational Annex" to the 2023 IMF Staff consultation report on India had inter alia noted that, "...the compilation of constant price GDP deviate from the conceptual requirements of the national accounts, in part due to the use of the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) as a deflator for many economic activities. The appropriate price to deflate GDP by type of activity is the Producer Price Index (PPI), which is under development. Large revisions to historical series, the relatively short time span of the revised series, major discrepancies between GDP by activity and GDP by expenditure, and the lack of official seasonally-adjusted quarterly GDP series complicate analysis. Together, these weaknesses make it challenging to monitor high frequency trends in India's economy through official statistics, particularly from the demand side." The estimation of real or constant price GDP requires the use of a GDP deflator to estimate values of GDP components in constant prices. The GDP deflator being used in India's official estimates is a weighted average of wholesale and retail price indices. The Wholesale Price Index (WPI), 2011-12 series has shown high volatility over the past decade, leading to inexplicably large divergences between the WPI and CPI inflation rates (Chart 1). This has had serious implications for the accuracy of the GDP deflator and real GDP estimates.

For instance, the nominal GDP growth rate was estimated at 14.2% in 2022-23 and 9.6% in 2023-24, which indicated a sharp decline in growth. However, the real GDP growth rate was estimated to have grown from 7.0% to 8.2%, indicating growth acceleration. This implied that the GDP deflator was only 1.4% in 2023-24, even as retail inflation was at 5.4%, because the WPI inflation rate was estimated to have fallen from a high of 9.4% in 2022-23 to a negative of -0.7% in 2023-24. In short, because of high volatility in the WPI, the nominal GDP estimate showed a growth deceleration in 2023-24 but the real GDP estimate reflected growth acceleration. Such anomalous and confounding data on macroeconomic fundamentals invariably lead to delusions and policy errors.

Elusive private investment

Tabled a day ahead of the Union Budget last July, the Economic Survey 2023-24 had taken comfort in the 8.2% growth in

Economic blues

From 2022-23 to 2024-25, real GDP and investment have grown at an annual average rate of 7.2% each and private consumption at 6%. Post-pandemic, there has been one percentage point increase in the annual average growth rate of real investment. Therefore, there is absolutely no indication of any structural break in the investment behaviour of the private corporate sector so far under the 11 years of NDA rule

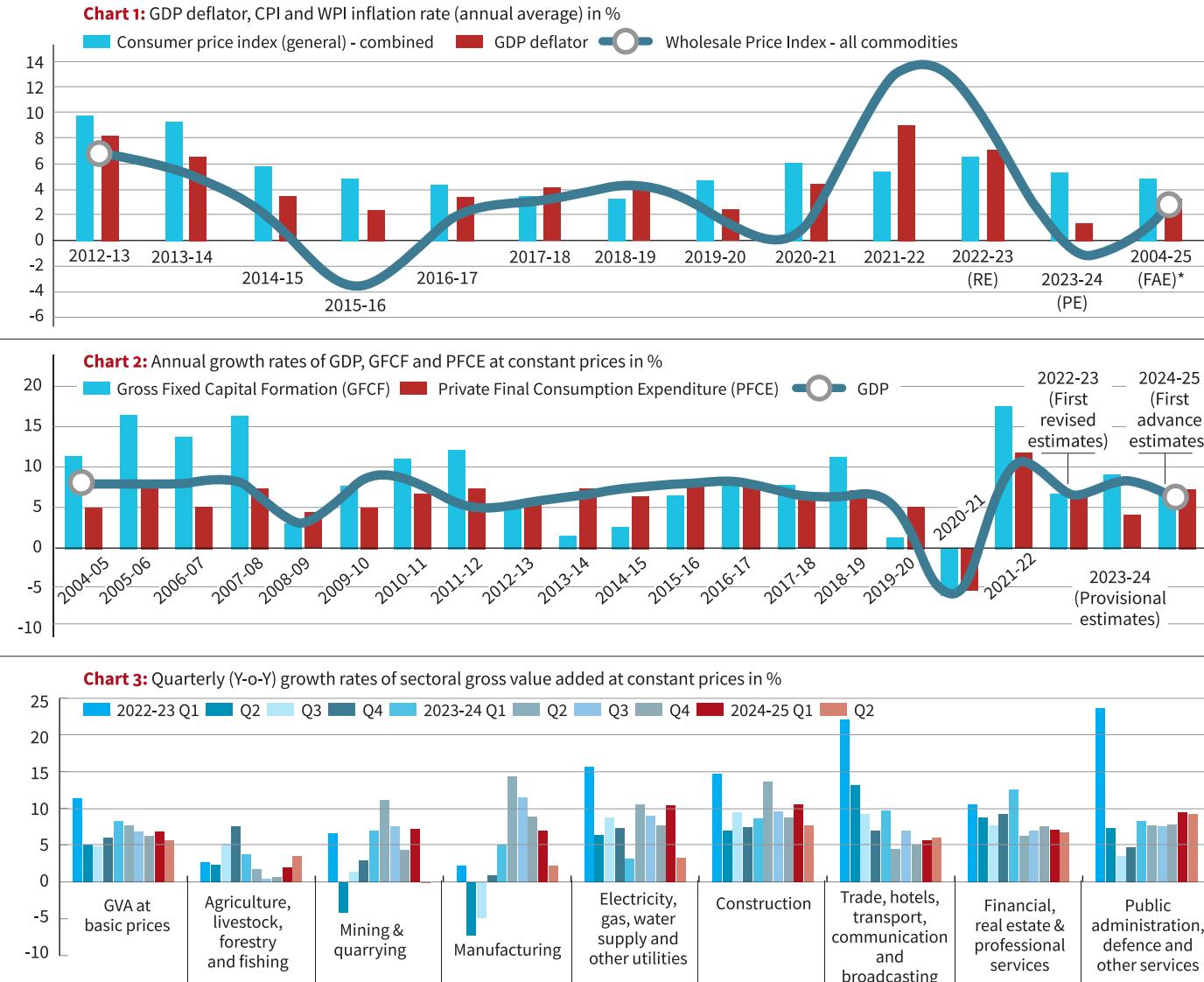


Table 1: Union Government's accounts: revenue and expenditure heads at the end of November 2023 and 2024

	Centre's net tax revenue		Centre's non-tax revenue		Capital expenditure		Revenue expenditure	
	2023-24	2024-25	2023-24	2024-25	2023-24	2024-25	2023-24	2024-25
Budget estimates (BE) (₹crore)	23,30,631	25,83,499	3,01,650	5,45,701	10,00,961	11,11,111	35,02,136	37,09,401
April to November (₹crore)	14,35,755	14,43,435	2,84,365	4,27,020	5,85,645	5,13,500	20,66,522	22,27,502
% of Budget estimate (April to November)	61.6	55.9	94.3	78.3	58.5	46.2	59.0	60.1
% of Budget estimate (April to March)	99.8	n.a.	133.2	n.a.	94.8	n.a.	99.76	n.a.

Source: Source: Controller General of Accounts (CGA), Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, NSO, MoS&PI, GoI; DPIIT, MoC&I, National Accounts Statistics 2024 & First Advance Estimates of GDP for 2024-25.

real GDP and indicated a vigorous expansion of investment by the private-sector. Yet, the Chief Economic Advisor had asked whether the corporate sector responded positively to the tax cuts of September 2019, and complained about sluggish corporate investments in machinery and equipment and intellectual property products. He criticised the disproportionate allocation of gross fixed capital formation (investment) in the private sector to "dwellings, other buildings and structures" as an unhealthy mix.

Throwing such caution to the wind, the Union Budget relied entirely on a revival of the private corporate capex cycle to announce the 'Prime Minister's Package for Employment and Skilling' with an outlay of ₹2 trillion, aimed at benefiting 41 million youth over a five-year-period. The employment linked incentive/subsidy scheme and the internship programme for one crore youth in five years, were premised on the expectation of massive job creation, consequent to an acceleration of private corporate

investment. The fiscal consolidation roadmap, whereby the fiscal deficit was projected to decline from 5.6% of GDP in 2023-24, to 4.9% in 2024-25 and 4.5% in 2025-26, was also announced with the budgetary expectation of the private sector taking a lead in the capital formation process. However, the latest GDP estimates have shown a significant decline in the growth of real gross fixed capital formation from 9% in 2023-24 to 6.4% in 2024-25. A longer view of India's growth trajectory over the past decade, even on the basis of exaggerated official national account estimates, shows the irrationality of official expectations.

During the 10 years of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) rule, between 2004-05 and 2013-14, the average annual growth of real GDP was at 6.8%, investment 10% and private consumption 6% (Chart 1). Between the onset of the present regime till the outbreak of the pandemic, that is, between 2014-15 and 2019-20, real GDP grew at an annual average rate of 6.8% (exactly similar to UPA), but real investment growth fell to

6.3% while private consumption growth increased to 6.8%. Thus, economic growth under NDA was not investment led, as was the case under UPA.

Moreover, during the UPA period, real growth in private investment was over 10%, above the growth of public sector investment at around 9% (Chart 2). Under NDA rule, till the pandemic, public investment in real terms grew faster at an average of 6.6% per year, than private investment which grew by 6.3%.

Investment, consumption and output had collapsed in 2020-21 owing to the lockdown induced recession. The recovery in 2021-22 was indeed led by private investment, but the spikes in the growth rates of investment, consumption and output were on account of base effect – it was simply a return to normalcy after the collapse in the preceding year. From 2022-23 to 2024-25, real GDP and investment have grown at an annual average rate of 7.2% each and private consumption at 6%. Post-pandemic there has been one percentage point increase in the annual average growth rate of real

investment, and 0.8 percentage point decline in the annual average growth rate of private consumption.

Therefore, there is absolutely no indication of any structural break in the investment behaviour of the private corporate sector so far under the 11 years of NDA rule. The deep corporate tax cuts in September 2019 have failed to spur capital formation and real economic activity; rather it has only helped a short lived spurt in corporate earnings and fuelled a post-pandemic bubble in the equity market. In contrast, the advent of the UPA regime had led to a real investment and exports boom between 2004-05 till the financial crisis and global recession of 2008-09, which was facilitated both by a massive increase in industrial bank credit and significant foreign capital inflows. A similar private investment led boom has remained elusive under the NDA regime.

This testifies to the forgotten truth of political economy, that supposedly business friendly governments can deliver much wealth and profits for their cronies but are incapable of bringing about economy-wide structural changes and common prosperity.

Fiscal strains

IN THE LIMELIGHT



Willem Dafoe in a scene from *Nosferatu*. AP

The inescapable cultural infection and relevance of 'Nosferatu'

A hundred years after terrorising its first hapless victims, F.W. Murnau's rebellious expressionist fever dream refuses to fade away, infecting pop culture with an undying persistence, reshaping vampire lore and rewriting the genetic code of horror cinema as we know it

Ayaan Paul Chowdhury

In the autumn of 1922, cinemagoers were introduced to a figure who would cast an inextricably formative shadow over the genre. When F.W. Murnau's terrifying monochrome reimagining of Bram Stoker first hit the screens, they were greeted with something primal, grotesque and exceedingly unsettling; far removed from the suave aristocracy of Dracula. The silent, jagged masterpiece of German Expressionism, soon sank its ivories into the very essence of what we know of modern horror today, shaping a genre that would never again be the same. With Robert Eggers' much-anticipated remake looming over Indian theatres at long last, it feels only fitting to revisit the ways in which *Nosferatu* casts a decisive darkness as inescapable as Count Orlok's own.

An illicit evil

Let's begin with the legal disclaimer: *Nosferatu* was an unauthorised adaptation of Dracula. Prana Film, the short-lived production company behind the project, decided that a few superficial name changes – Count Dracula became Count Orlok, Jonathan Harker was rebranded as Hutter – would suffice to sidestep pesky copyright laws. Of course, it didn't. Stoker's widow successfully sued, and a court ordered all copies of the film to be incinerated. That *Nosferatu* survived is a small miracle, and its preservation feels almost poetic: a film about a creature that defies death refusing to succumb to an ashly oblivion.

But it isn't just the film's survival that has given it mythic status; rather the genius with which it redefined the lore. At

first glance, *Nosferatu* appears as a curious anomaly. Orlok, played by a more-than-convincing Max Schreck, was the antithesis to the dignified seducer we've come to associate with Dracula. There was no flowing cape or widow's peak; rather a hideous spectral figure with rodent-like features, elongated fingers, and a hunchback. Producer and art director Albin Grau's stark departure in creature design was steeped in occultism and inspired by wartime stories of vampiric folklore that envisioned Orlok as a personification of pestilence.

Schreck's portrayal of Orlok leaned heavily on the exaggerated physicality of German stage tradition, transforming the character into a creature of unrestrained, animalistic menace. Unlike Dracula's meticulously groomed charm, Orlok's monstrosity was raw, unapologetic, and refreshingly devoid of any polish. The film's versimilitude even spawned urban legends that Schreck wasn't acting at all but was, in fact, a bona fide vampire – the absurdity of which was later immortalised in E. Elias Merhige's *Shadow of the Vampire*, where Dafoe turns Schreck into a method actor with fangs. That Schreck's name translates to "terror" in German feels a little too on the nose to be true.

An expressionist nightmare

German Expressionism found a natural home in *Nosferatu* and it's here that the film broke further ground. While contemporaries like *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* revelled in twisted, theatrical sets, *Nosferatu* grounded its terror in real-world locations. Murnau shot much of the film on location in the cobbled streets of Wismar, Germany and the crags of Orava Castle in Slovakia, which lent the

world and its characters a paradoxical realism. The towering cliffs, crumbling castles, and desolate towns feel oppressively authentic, yet Murnau's use of light and shadow transformed them into landscapes of nightmare. Shadows stretched unnaturally; doorways and windows loomed like gaping maws. Even the simplest of actions, like Orlok's unforgettable ascension up a staircase, became an iconic tableau of terror.

Calamity and subversion

Murnau's vampire was a perverse, bloodthirsty fiend; but he was also a harbinger of disease and decay that gnawed at the marrow of a post-pandemic world grappling with invisible horrors. Released in the shadow of the Spanish flu pandemic, the film practically reeked of the plague: rats tumbling from coffins, entire villages felled by a nameless illness. Even the term "nosferatu", allegedly tied to the Romanian word for "plague-bringer," held up a mirror to communal despair. Orlok's presence in Wisborg was a threat to the very fabric of the community and a metaphor for contagion that resonates uncomfortably in the post-pandemic age.

Yet, *Nosferatu* did more than sicken its audience with existential allegories and its brutal expressionist imagery; it also rewrote the rulebook. The sun, which was once nothing more than a minor inconvenience for Dracula, here became a fitting executioner. Orlok's poetic death by daylight birthed a trope so enduring it now haunts everything from *Buffy* to *Twilight* to even *Jojo's Bizarre Adventure*. But its innovations in the genre couldn't possibly be reduced to killing methods. The film eschewed gore or cheap

jumpscare for atmospheric slow-creeping dread and the power of suggestion. Murnau distilled fear into a visual lexicon, passing it down like a cursed heirloom to everyone, from Hitchcock to del Toro.

An underwater cameo

Few works have left a mark on cinema as indelible as *Nosferatu*, and any attempt to reimagine it must grapple with its towering legacy. But if Eggers' previous work is any indication, he understands what makes this film special: the way *Nosferatu* captures the ineffable – a fear both primordial and contemporaneous.

But for an entire generation raised on Nickelodeon, *Nosferatu* has never been this hallowed cornerstone of silent cinema that cinephiles drone on about between criterion sales – he was the weird guy at the Krusty Krab, casually flicking the lights on and off. For those few who might've googled "Nosferatu" years later, imagine the whiplash of discovering this artifact of cinematic history, resurrected by a cartoon that didn't even bother to colour him in. A sponge in square pants may have done more for Count Orlok's pop cultural relevance than a century of earnest film restoration ever could.

What Murnau pulled off a hundred years ago with an unauthorised knockoff of Bram Stoker was the invention of a fresh cinematic grammar for dread. By warping gothic archetypes through an expressionist lens, he birthed something disturbingly primeval. *Nosferatu* endures because it crawls under the skin, rooting out an ancient unease we'd rather ignore – a shadow standing between your doorway, flipping the light switch.

THE DAILY QUIZ

On January 10 or thereabouts, 49 BC, Julius Caesar crossed the Rubicon river – an act that also entrenched an idiom in the English language. A quiz on other such idioms

Srinivasan Ramani

QUESTION 1

An idiom that means to endure pain with determination; this originated from soldiers in the 19th century given something to bite down on to help them cope with the pain of an amputation without anaesthesia. What was that thing and what is the phrase?

QUESTION 2

Named after a Greek king of the Hellenistic period, this idiom came into being to describe the king's several victories that also took a huge toll on his forces. Name the king and the phrase.

QUESTION 3

A phrase that means solving a complex problem in a decisive/

brute-force manner, this originated as a legend about an act by Alexander the Great which involved using his sword. What is the phrase?

QUESTION 4

A phrase that connotes someone confronting the unpleasant consequences of her/his actions, this originated from the practice of soldiers being asked to listen to a band playing a drumbeat before being punished. What is the phrase?

QUESTION 5

An idiom that suggests the release of something leading to great problems or suffering, this originates from Greek mythology, where the first human woman created by Hephaestus on the instructions of Zeus, is given a box by the gods and is forbidden to open it. What is the idiom?



Visual question:

Identify the English word/ idiom that has originated from what is seen in this image. And what does it mean?
BISWARANJAN ROUT

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. The reason why January 9 was chosen as Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD). It was held first in this year. **Ans: To commemorate the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to India in 1915; 2003**

2. This city has hosted the PBD the most number of times. The previous edition was held here. **Ans: New Delhi; Indore**

3. The major change initiated to the PBD in 2015. **Ans: The convention become a biennial event**

4. This was special about the edition held in 2021. **Ans: It was held virtually because of the COVID pandemic**

5. The theme for this year's Pravasi Bharatiya Divas. **Ans: 'Diaspora's Contribution to a Viksit Bharat'**

6. The PBD is sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs along with these two organisations. **Ans: Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)**

7. The name of the award given to honour overseas Indians. **Ans: Pravasi Bharatiya Samman**

Visual: Identify this former President and Premier of an African nation. **Ans: Sir Anerood Jugnauth of Mauritius**

Early Birds: Rajmohan Velayudhan| Gowtham Sankar| Tamal Biswas| K.N. Viswanathan| Tito Shiladitya



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

**K. Subrahmanian
S. Upendran**

"Guess what? Milind is taking me to a movie tomorrow."

"Milind! I'd advise you to stay away from him. He's a bad egg."

"Bad egg? What does it mean? A bad person?"

"A 'bad egg' is a person who is considered to be dishonest and unreliable! The police put the bad egg in jail."

"In our movies, it's usually the policeman who is the bad egg."

"And if it isn't the policeman, it's..."

"...it's usually a politician. According to me..."

"...how many times do I have to tell you you can't say 'according to me'. It's always 'according to' someone else. According to the Finance Minister, inflation has come down."

"In my opinion, the Finance Minister is wrong."

"Good. You can either say 'in my opinion', or 'if you ask me'. But never 'according to'

"You know you have a strange custom of..."

"...I don't have a 'custom', but a 'habit'."

"Custom! 'Habit'? What difference does it make?"

"Well, a 'custom' is something that 'the people of a community or society always do in particular circumstances'."

"So, when you say something is a custom, then a lot of people are involved."

"Yes. The entire community or society is involved. For example, during Deepavali, it is our custom to light lamps."

"It is also a custom to remove our slippers before entering a temple."

"Good example."

"Thanks. But how does it differ from 'habit'?"

"A 'habit' is something that an individual does often or regularly. For example, I have the habit of scratching my head when I'm thinking."

"By the way, is 'foolery' a place where fools live?"

"How did you get the impression?"

"Nunnery" is a place where nuns live.

So 'foolery'..."

"No, no. 'Foolery' means 'foolish behaviour'. I can't stand his fooleries. Do you know what a 'foolometer' is?"

"No."

"It is a standard for the measurement of fools or folly."

"Can you tell me what the standard is?"

"I can't. I can only tell you that the stress is on the second syllable. The third 'o' in 'foolometer' is pronounced like the 'o' in 'hot'."

Published in The Hindu on September 13, 1994.

Word of the day

Ringer:

a person who rings the church bells (for summoning the congregation); a person who is almost identical to another; a contestant entered in a competition under false pretenses

Synonyms:

bell ringer, toller, clone

Usage:

He has established himself as the ringer of the new church.

Pronunciation:

newsth.live/ringerpro

International Phonetic Alphabet:

/rɪŋə(r)/

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

From Page One**Document history of Indian diaspora: Modi**

The Prime Minister emphasised on the Girmityas, indentured labourers, who were sent from pre-independent India to various countries, including Fiji, Mauritius, Seychelles, Malaysia, Trinidad and Tobago, British Guiana, and Suriname, to work under colonial arrangements.

"Why cannot comprehensive database of Girmityas be created? This could document the villages and States they originated from, the destinations they settled in, and the journeys that shaped their lives. It could also go to how they converted challenges into opportunities. To bring their stories to a wider audience, films and documentaries could be produced," Mr. Modi said.

"There should be study and research on Girmityas' history. Chairs can be established in universities. At regular intervals, world Girmitya conference can be organised. I will tell my team to explore possibilities on this aspect and work to take this forward," he said.

The Prime Minister mentioned about a few families which migrated from Gujarat and settled in Oman. "Their 250 years of journey is quite inspiring. Thousands of documents related to them have been digitised and exhibited. Besides, an oral history project has been done by documenting experiences shared by senior-most members of the community. Similar efforts should be made on Indian diaspora who had gone to different countries," he said.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said the diaspora has become more important with each passing year as India strives to build a "global workforce. He said in times of difficulty abroad, they can be confident that the Narendra Modi government "has got your back".

During the day, the PM inaugurated four exhibitions and flagged-off the Pravasi Bharatiya Express, a special tourist train for the diaspora.

(With PTI inputs)

Judgment in R.G. Kar rape and murder case on Jan. 18

Press Trust of India

KOLKATA

Judgment in the rape and murder of an on-duty doctor at R.G. Kar Medical College in Kolkata in August last year will be delivered on January 18 by a court here. The Central Bureau of Investigation, which was handed over the probe by the Calcutta High Court, has sought the death sentence for Sanjay Roy, who was charged with carrying out the gruesome crime.

The hearing in the trial concluded on Thursday.

Maintaining that other persons were also involved in the crime, the victim's parents said that they hope that they will also be arrested and tried before the court.

UGC affidavit in SC refers to a letter to V-Cs to act against caste bias on campuses

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

that their petition would be heard periodically.

The June 26, 2019 letter mentioned in the affidavit in the Supreme Court in a case filed by the mothers of Rohith Vemula and Payal Tadvi stated that a letter was sent by it to Vice-Chancellors of all the universities in the country telling them to take prompt action against officials and faculty members who discriminate against Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe students.

The affidavit came to the fore recently after a Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant took up the mothers' case after a considerable gap. On January 3, Justice Kant promised the mothers

complaint register in the office of the Registrar/Principal for the purpose.

"If any such incident comes to the notice of the authorities, action should be taken against the erring official/faculty members promptly," the letter had stated.

In its third direction to the V-Cs, the UGC spread its net wider to direct that no official or faculty member must discriminate against "any community or category of students".

Fourth, the UGC asked universities to constitute committees to look into discrimination complaints received from students, teachers and non-teaching staff belonging to SC/ST/ Other Backward Classes.

Unauthorised procurement, supply of railway e-tickets a 'social crime', says top court

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday held that unauthorised business of procuring and supplying railway e-tickets is a "social crime" which must be stopped on its tracks," Justice Datta, who authored the judgment, observed.

The case revolved around the provision of Section 143 of the Railways Act, 1989 which restricts entities which are not under the disciplinary control of or are not authorised by the Railways to conduct the business of procurement and supply of e-tickets.

"The Indian Railways is a keystone of our country's infrastructure. It carries around 673 crore passengers annually and has a tremendous impact on the economy of this country. Any effort to disrupt the integrity and stability of the ticketing system has to be stopped on its tracks," Justice Datta said.

"The whole scheme of e-ticketing was introduced for the convenience and

Ball in govt.'s court on SC/ST creamy layer, says top court

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Supreme Court judge Justice B.R. Gavai on Thursday said the ball was in the courts of the legislature and the government to take a call on whether the 'creamy layer' of Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) beneficiaries of reservation in education and public service must be excluded from quota benefits.

"We have given our view that taking into consideration the past 75 years, such persons who have already availed benefits and are in a position to compete with others, should be excluded from reservation. But it is a call to be taken by the executive and the legislature," he observed orally.

+

The court was hearing a writ petition filed by Santosh Malviya, seeking a direction to the States, departments and public sector undertakings for "immediate cessation of reservation benefits being extended to the 'creamy layer' within the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes".

The judge, heading a

Bench including Justice Augustine George Mash, was referring to a Constitution Bench judgment of 2024 which had upheld States' power to make sub-classifications within the Scheduled Castes.

Justice Gavai, who was part of the seven-judge Constitution Bench, in his separate opinion on August 1, 2024, had called for the need to evolve a unique set of criteria to exclude the 'creamy layer' among SCs and STs from reservation benefits.

"State must evolve a policy for identifying the creamy layer even from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes so as to exclude them from the benefit of affirmative action... the criteria for exclusion of the creamy layer from SC/ST for the purpose of affirmative action could be different from the criteria as applicable to the Other Backward Classes [OBCs]," the judge had observed.

Justice Gavai's opinion had formed the basis for a push within a majority on the Constitution Bench to introduce the creamy layer principle for SC/ST categories.

HC grants bail to Gujarat journalist in GST case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Gujarat High Court on Thursday granted bail to The Hindu correspondent Mahesh Langa in an alleged case of GST scam. It said that there is no material record to establish "money laundering".

The applicant was arrested in connection with the present offence on October 8, 2024. "Thus, the investigation of the offence alleged against the present applicant is virtually over by now. The present application deserves consideration," the order said.

The FIR registered in October stated that the alleged fraud was committed between February 1 and May 1, 2023, and the prime accused is Dhruti Enterprise, which allegedly created six firms from a single PAN to transfer and receive bogus input tax credit (ITC) of GST to unscrupulous recipients by issuance of fake invoices without the supply of underlying goods. DA Enterprise, run by Mr. Langa, is one of the companies mentioned in the FIR.

The court said: "In the facts and circumstances of the case and considering the nature of the allegations made against the applicant in the FIR, without discussing the evidence in detail, *prima facie*, this court is of the opinion that this is a fit case to exercise the discretion and enlarge the applicant on regular bail." In November, a sessions court granted anticipatory bail to Mr. Langa in an alleged case of cheating of ₹28 lakh.

Sixth-generation aero-engine can be developed by tying up with foreign firm: DRDO chief

Dinakar Peri

NEW DELHI

The only way India can develop a sixth-generation aero-engine and other technologies required is by co-development with a foreign manufacturer, Samir V. Kamat, Chairman of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), said while noting that India currently invests only 5% of its defence budget for research and development, which needs to increase to 15%.

To realise that capability, he said the country will have to invest close to \$4 billion to \$5 billion, that is ₹40,000 crore to 50,000 crore.

His remarks come against the backdrop of huge delays in the development of indigenous fighter jets, while China has made rapid progress in this area.

"If we look at what we need to do in terms of technologies, the first priority



is aero-engines. Today, we have demonstrated a fourth-generation aero-engine the only way I can see is if we do a co-development with a foreign Original Equipment Manufacturer."

Elaborating further, he said various facilities have to be set up - testing facilities for each sub-system, a high-altitude test facility, flying test-bed, manufacturing facilities to make the disc which would need investing in a forge press which can press 50,000 tonnes, and so on.

PM to open Z-Morh tunnel, key feature in year-round Kashmir-Ladakh corridor

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

The Z-Morh tunnel is set to become the first major milestone in the effort to build a strategic corridor between Kashmir and Ladakh which is open all through the year, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi slated to inaugurate it on January 13.

The tunnel, in Ganderbal district, is key to keeping the tourist destination of Sonamarg open for visitors around the year. Earlier, snowfall and avalanches would cut off the tourist spot every winter.



This will be Mr. Modi's first visit to Kashmir since an elected government took over the reins in the Union Territory. A security assessment of the project was done on Thursday to set up foolproof security arrangements ahead of the PM's visit. Security across

the Valley, especially in Srinagar, has been stepped up and additional checkpoints set up on the main roads.

Hoteliers are enthusiastic about the tunnel. "It was much needed to have Sonamarg on the winter tourism map of Kashmir. There is a need to open up new winter destinations in Kashmir given the growing footfall. It would be safe to drive to Sonamarg in winters now," said Sajid Maied, a hotelier.

At present, most hotels remain closed because of unreliable road access and infrastructure problems.

Three Naxalites killed in Sukma

The Hindu Bureau
BIJAPUR

Three Naxalites were killed in an encounter with security forces in Sukma district of Chhattisgarh on Thursday, the police said.

A senior police officer

said that the Maoists were killed by the District Reserve Guard and Special Task Force of the State Police and members of Commando Battalion for Resolute Action.

"During the operation, on 09.01.2025, an encoun-

**APPEAL**

Samridhi Choudhary, 3 years old daughter of Gopal Choudhary is admitted to Mazumdar Shaw Medical Centre and is diagnosed with Thalassemia Major. A bone marrow transplant is required for survival. Bone Marrow Transplant is the only curative treatment. The approximate cost of present treatment would be ₹10,00,000/- Kindly send donation, however small by Cheque/D.D./M.O. favouring Save Poor Children's Charitable Trust, Flat No. A1, Ceejay Garden, Ground Floor, Old No. 76, Kempegowda Road, Basaveshwara Puram, Chennai-600026, Contact No. 044-42044165 & 044-35691848, Mobile: 9884607377, Email: savepoorlives@gmail.com, website: www.savepoorlives.com.

With BJP's first list having many turncoats, Nadda seeks to quell rebellion

Satvika Mahajan
NEW DELHI

With the Bharatiya Janata Party's first candidate list for the Delhi Assembly polls out and the second expected within a couple of days, party president J.P. Nadda participated in election management meetings at the Delhi BJP office on Thursday.

BJP sources said Mr. Nadda called upon party leaders not getting ticket to ensure support for all its 70 candidates instead of getting disheartened.

This comes as the party's first list featured eight turncoats among the 29 candidates. A source said the party cadre was disheartened by the absence of young and fresh faces in the first list. Several names on the list are of candidates who had already served as MLAs in Delhi and have lost the polls in 2013 and 2020.

Sources present during Mr. Nadda's address said he asked the BJP cadre to pull their full force behind the 70 people who were being fielded instead of resorting to rebellion. The BJP has failed to form a government in the national capital for 26 years, which



J.P. Nadda being greeted by Delhi BJP president Virinder Sachdeva at a party meeting on Thursday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

is why these polls are extremely crucial for it.

The sources said Mr. Nadda reminded the party that Delhi went beyond the Lutyens' area, and asked the workers to campaign with full strength in both the central areas and the outskirts.

The BJP chief raised the issue of migrant voters in the capital, especially people from the Purvanchal belt, targeting them as a large voter base of the party.

Mr. Nadda, slamming AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal's statements alleging fraudulent additions to the voter list, said, "Mr. Kejriwal, who has been looting Delhi for the past 10 years by creating a disaster of cor-

ruption, started fearing defeat and he got agitated and started making baseless statements against our brothers and sisters from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Mr. Kejriwal has insulted our people from the two States by calling them fake voters. The people of Delhi will definitely give him a reply by uprooting him from power."

However, the first list of the party does not feature any Purvanchali faces.

Additionally, the BJP is expected to roll out a scheme for women on lines similar to Madhya Pradesh's Ladli Behna Yojana and Odisha's Subhadra Yojana. However, only two women feature on the party's first list.

With allies backing AAP and not the Congress, the bloc is facing existential questions; Omar Abdullah calls for winding up the alliance, says its agenda, leadership, future strategy unclear; Shiv Sena (UBT) flays Cong. for personal attacks on Kejriwal

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

A wider problem in the INDIA bloc has come to the fore with the Samajwadi Party and the Trinamool Congress supporting the Aam Aadmi Party over the Congress in the Delhi Assembly election. The Shiv Sena (UBT) is also leaning in favour of the AAP.

Amid the crisis, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has called for winding up the alliance if it was only meant for the 2024 Lok Sabha election. He has said the alliance's agenda, leadership and future strategy are not clear.

On Wednesday evening, AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal announced that the Trinamool Congress had extended its support to the AAP for the Delhi election. Within minutes, the Trinamool's Rajya Sabha leader Derek O'Brien, posted on X, quoting Mr. Kejriwal's post, and saying, "We have your back @AamAdmiParty."

The Shiv Sena (UBT) castigated the Congress for making personal attacks



Rallying support: Arvind Kejriwal addressing the media on the Jat reservation issue in New Delhi on Thursday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

on Mr. Kejriwal, including calling him a "traitor", but clarified that it is not yet selecting one over the other. "We have not yet officially declared our support to AAP. Both AAP and Congress are our friends. But it is true that Arvind Kejriwal is stronger at present," senior party leader Sanjay Raut told *The Hindu*. "We want both of them to resolve this without much mudslinging."

Uddhav Thackeray will meet the media tomorrow [Friday] evening, where he will clarify the party's stand."

The editorial on the Delhi election in the party's

mouthpiece, *Saamana*, is critical of the Congress. "The contest in the Delhi Assembly election is between BJP and AAP only. Congress party is in the fray and it is attacking Arvind Kejriwal and AAP instead of BJP," it said.

Existential question
Refusing to pick sides between the AAP and the Congress, Mr. Abdullah instead raised an existential question. "After the Assembly election in Delhi, they should call all the alliance members for a meeting. If this alliance was only for the parliamentary elec-

tion, it should be wound up, and we will work separately. But if it is meant for Assembly elections as well, we will have to sit together and work collectively," the J&K Chief Minister told presspersons in Jammu. The last meeting of the INDIA bloc was held on June 1, just before the Lok Sabha election results were announced.

It is not the first time the question has been asked, whether the bloc assembled only for the Lok Sabha election or will extend to the State elections as well. During the 2023 Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh elections, similar questions had cropped up, since the Congress had failed to give any seats to the Samajwadi Party despite several rounds of negotiation. The Left parties have expressed disappointment that the Congress failed to accommodate them in several consecutive State polls.

Only for LS poll: RJD
Wading into the argument, senior Rashtriya Janata Dal leader and former Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav unequivocal-

ly stated that the bloc was only meant for the Lok Sabha election. "It was decided, at the very onset of the INDIA bloc, that it was limited to the Lok Sabha election only. As far as Bihar is concerned, we have been together since the beginning," Mr. Yadav told presspersons in Buxar. Bihar is set to go to the polls at the end of this year.

Communist Party of India (Marxist) Polit Bureau member Brinda Karat refused to explicitly choose between the Congress and the AAP. "CPI(M) is fighting two seats [in Delhi]. We will also extend support to other Left parties who are fighting on a couple of seats. In all other seats, we will support the strongest candidate against the BJP. Our slogan is 'Defeat BJP, save Delhi,'" Ms. Karat told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Kejriwal, meanwhile, thanked the INDIA bloc members for their support. "With your support, we are confident of defeating the BJP in the upcoming elections," he wrote on X.

(With inputs from Amit Bherlari in Patna and Peerzaad Ashiq in Srinagar)

Admit cards and fake OMR sheets of NEET seized in Bihar

The Hindu Bureau
PATNA

The Bihar Police on Thursday found admit cards and fake OMR sheets of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Postgraduate in a fire-ravaged hostel room on the Patna Medical College and Hospital campus.

Half-burnt ₹100 and ₹500 notes, coming to ₹2.75 lakh, were recovered from the room gutted on Tuesday night.

Ajay Kumar from Samastipur, who is a post-graduate, was staying in the room. He is suspected of hiring MBBS students and making them impersonate for NEET-PG candidates.

Sources said that on Wednesday, Mr. Kumar reached the hostel with many people and was furious over the damage. Several students and junior doctors have complained that he has forcibly occupied many rooms and does not pay heed to the warnings by the college administration.

"A fire had started in the room of Chanakya Hostel and it was illegally occupied by one Ajay Kumar. The room was not allotted to him, and we have sought a report from the warden of the hostel. We have seized all the documents and have sought a detailed report about every document from the college authority, including the admit cards and other documents," Sweety Sahrawat, Superintendent of Police (Central), Patna, said.

Asked about cheating in the test or a paper leak, Ms. Sahrawat said: "We cannot say anything at present unless we verify all the documents – whether it is old or for what purpose it was kept inside the room."

In 2024, a leak of the NEET-UG paper in Bihar led to the arrest of 45 people by the Central Bureau of Investigation.

Bihar was the epicentre of the scam.

Congress says Union Budget must end 'tax terrorism' and 'looting' of the public

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



Mallikarjun Kharge

Ahead of the Union Budget, the Congress on Thursday alleged that the Goods and Services Tax had become a means to "loot" people. It demanded that the Centre put an end to "tax terrorism".

In a post on X, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the GST could stand for the "Gabbar Singh Tax" or "Grahasti Satyansh Tax (Household Destruction Tax)" or "Give Sitharaman Tax", a reference to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

"Whatever name we call BJP's GST, one thing is certain: the Modi government has made GST a means of looting the hard-earned money of the poor and the

middle class," Mr. Kharge said. "The Congress party demands that in the upcoming general Budget, Modi government should put an end to tax terrorism and looting of the public."

Multiple slabs

His comments came on a day when the Congress held press conferences in a dozen cities to highlight the problem of multiple GST slabs and demand that

the government provide relief to the middle class and lower income groups.

He alleged that nine different GST rates made the tax "complex and absurd" instead of a "Good & Simple Tax". He noted that the GST regime is a tax on public consumption, arguing that by celebrating record tax collections, the Modi government is "rubbing salt into the wounds of the people".

"Two-thirds of the total GST i.e. 64% comes from the pockets of the poor and the middle class, but only 3% GST is collected from the billionaires, while the corporate tax rate has been reduced from 30% to 22%. For the first time, GST has been imposed on 36 agricultural products of the farmer," he noted.

Rattled by GST success, Cong. misleading people: BJP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party on Thursday accused the Congress of misleading people on the issue of Goods and Services Tax. BJP national spokesperson Syed Zafar Islam, in a statement, said the Congress was "rattled by the implementation and success of GST because it no longer has any loopholes, depriving Congress of opportunities for corruption".

"As a result, Congress has been attempting to tarnish the image of GST from the start. Initially, Congress referred to GST as 'Gabbar Singh Tax', and now it is calling it 'Tax Terrorism', despite the fact that it was Congress government that first introduced the concept of GST," he said.

Expand projects globally to boost police image, Shah tells think tank

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday called for the global expansion of projects, studies, and publications by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) to "enhance the public image of

the police". He emphasised the importance of contributions from multiple stakeholders, including research challenges at the grassroots level and work towards finding solutions, he said, emphasising BPR&D's role as the nodal agency connecting the Home Ministry with all States.

towards the implementation of the new criminal laws. It should conduct research to identify policing challenges at the grassroots level and work towards finding solutions, he said, emphasising BPR&D's role as the nodal agency connecting the Home Ministry with all States.

Mr. Shah reviewed the work of the police think-tank, including its efforts

COCHIN PORT
कोचिन पत्तन प्राधिकरण
Cochin Port Authority
Mechanical Engineering Department, Cochin - 682 009
TENDER NOTICE
Tender No. EE-P/T-03/RDSS-INFRA/2024
E-Tenders are invited for "Development Of Electrical Distribution Infrastructure for Cochin Port Authority, Ernakulam District, Kerala State Under Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS)"
PAC: ₹ 11,45,43,020/-
For more details please visit:
www.tenderwizard.com/COPT
Or www.cochinport.gov.in
CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER

GVK Power (Goindwal Sahib) Limited
Regd. Office: Plot No. 10, Paigah Colony, Sardar Patel Road, Secunderabad- 500003, Telangana, India CIN U40109TG1997PLC028483
(A wholly owned subsidiary of Guru Amar Das Thermal Power Limited, GATPL)
(A step down wholly owned subsidiary of Punjab State Power Corporation Limited, PSPL)
Dept-HOD, Mechanical GATP, Goindwal Sahib, invites E-Tender for the work of:
1 Tender Enquiry No. 009/GATP/MECH/50005480 dated 09/01/2025
"Capital/Major overhauling of Furnace Pressure Parts, Air Pre Heaters and Wind Box & Burner System of Unit-1 (270 MW, OEM-BHEL) at GATP, Goindwal Sahib" at 2X270 MW Guru Amardas Thermal Plant (GATP), Goindwal Sahib, Dist.: Tarn Taran, Punjab as per details given in the tender specifications.
For detailed NIT & tender specifications, please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 09/01/2025 from 17:00 Hrs onwards.
Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any, will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> GATP-02/25

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD TECHNOLOGY, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MANAGEMENT - THANJAVUR (NIFTEM-T)
(An Institute of National Importance under Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Government of India)
Pudukkottai Road, Thanjavur - 613 005.
Tel.: 04362-228155, Email: registrar@iiftp.edu.in, Website: www.niftem-t.ac.in

No: NIFTEM-T/Admin/AO(Deputation)/2024 Date: 05.01.2025

VACANCY NOTIFICATION

National Institute of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship & Management Thanjavur - (NIFTEM-T) is inviting applications from the eligible candidates for the post of **Administrative Officer 'on deputation'** basis. The details are as follows:-

Name of the Post and Pay Scale	No. of Vacancy	Eligibility Criteria
Administrative Officer 'on deputation' Pay Matrix Level-10 (Pre-revised Pay Band III Rs.15600 - 39100 plus Grade pay Rs. 5400/-)	01	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Officials of the Central / State Governments / UTs holding analogous post (or) with at least 2/3 years service in the grade rendered after appointment thereto on a regular basis in posts in PB 2 with Grade Pay of Rs. 4800 / 4600 (pre-revised) Level 8/7 respectively.Should have experience in Administration, Establishment and Accounts.Preference will be given to applicants having good knowledge of service matters and rules & regulations of the Central Government.

For application format, eligibility criteria and terms & conditions, visit our website : www.niftem-t.ac.in (Private candidates need not apply, Since, this vacancy is to be filled up on a deputation basis)



REGISTRAR

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BERHAMPUR
(At/Po-Ambupura, Near Income Tax Office, Berhampur-760011, Ganjam, Odisha)
(E-Mail: serwpb2004@yahoo.com ; Tel No. - 0680-2404287)

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement Bid Identification No. Online Tender/22-2024-25/BPR

Identification No.	Name of work	No. of Works	Approx. Estimated Cost (In lakhs)	Class of Contractor	Period of Completion
Online Tender / 22-2024-25/BPR	Road Works under MMSY-TRIP (Balance Works)	02 Nos	From Rs. 341.13 Lakhs to Rs.469.41 Lakhs	"A" Class as applicable	Period of Completion as provided as per Col.No.5 of Annexure of NIT

Procurement Officer Bid Identification No. Availability of tender online for bidding From To
Chief Construction Engineer, R.W. Circle, Berhampur. Online Tender /22-2024-25/BPR 15.01.2025 at 10.00 A.M. 29.01.2025 upto 5.30 P.M.

(i) EMD / Bid Security, Cost of Bid document is to be transferred through Online as per the procedure mentioned in the DTCN.
(ii) Non-submission of the information/documents through online by the bidder as per the items mentioned in the eligible criteria of the DTCN will also liable for rejection of his tender.

Further details & Corrigendum if any can be seen from the website: www.tendersodisha.gov.in

Chief Construction Engineer, R.W.Circle, Berhampur
O-1159: OIPR-25071/11/0036/2425

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through e-procurement)
BESCOM invites tenders through e-procurement platform from eligible Bidders for supply of "Vehicle Mounted Fully Automatic Underground Cable Fault Locating Equipment Suitable for Locating Fault as per Tender Specifications."

Sl. No.	Description	Enquiry No.
1	(Capacity - 3000 Joules) to BMAZ Area, BESCOM	BESCOM/2024-25/IND0097
2	(Capacity - 2000 Joules) to BRAZ & CTAZ Area, BESCOM	BESCOM/2024-25/IND0098

Bid Documents available: 10.01.2025. Last date for Bid Submission: 10.02.2025, 17:00 Hrs. **Opening of Bid Document:** 11.02.2025, 17:15 Hrs.

The Tenders can be obtained through KPP portal web-site <http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>. Aspiring Bidders need to register on KPP portal. Further Bidders can take assistance with KPP help desk contact numbers (+91-80460100

IN BRIEF



Record registrations for Pariksha Pe Charcha

More than 2.79 crore students, teachers and parents from the country and abroad have registered for the eighth edition of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's annual programme ahead of the Board examinations, *Pariksha Pe Charcha* (PPC). (The photo shows the event in 2023.) The Union Education Ministry said in a release here on Thursday the turnout is expected to be a record this year and the popularity of the programme to "transform exam-related stress into a festival of learning and celebration" is increasing. "This remarkable response underscores the growing resonance of the programme as a true *Jan Andolan*," the Ministry said in the release.

CBI files new corruption case against Karti Chidambaram

The CBI has registered a fresh case of corruption against former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram's son and Congress MP Karti Chidambaram for allegedly giving relief to alcoholic beverage company Diageo Scotland over a ban on the duty-free sale of its whisky, officials said Thursday. The case pertains to an alleged suspicious payment made to Advantage Strategic Consulting Pvt. Ltd, "an entity controlled" by Mr. Karti and his close aide S. Bhaskararaman by Diageo Scotland and Sequoia Capitals, the CBI FIR said. No immediate reaction was available from the suspects named in the FIR. PTI

India releases compilation of 10,000 human genomes from 83 population groups

The 'Genome India' database will be available to researchers across the world; it will serve as a template for investigations into disease, drug therapy; PM says it will strengthen biotech economy

Jacob Koshy

NEW DELHI

India has completed and made available a year-long compilation of 10,000 human genomes representing 83 population groups, making up about 2% of the country's 4,600 population groups, as a database. This collection will serve as a template of future investigations into disease and drug therapy.

The 'Genome India' database, as it is known, will now be available to researchers across the world for investigation and is housed at the Indian Biological Data Centre (IBDC), in Faridabad, Haryana.

A first analysis of the genomes estimates around 27 million low-frequency (or relatively rare) variants, with 7 million of them not found in similar reference databases around the world. Certain population groups show higher frequencies of alleles, or different versions of the same gene. Over the last two de-



A major focus of the Indian reference genomes is to have researchers study diseases. GETTY IMAGES

cades, many countries have created databases of the genomes of their population – for a variety of purposes including estimating disease risks, adverse drug reactions, establishing genealogy and DNA-profiling databases.

However, a major focus of the Indian reference genomes is to have researchers study diseases. "The discoveries from Genome India are not just scientific

ment that will adhere to data sharing and privacy policies. Though the database stores information on population groups, this data will not be classified by the names of castes or tribes but will be numerically coded, Rajesh Gokhale, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, told *The Hindu*.

Describing the project as "historic", Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a video address, said this paved the way for India strengthening the biotechnology economy as well as biotechnology-based manufacturing.

Experts said that while only a small fraction of India's population groups were studied, the door was open to expanding the database to a million genomes. "Though costs are a limiting factor, a million would dramatically scale insight into India's genetic diversity," said Kumaraswamy Thangaraj of the Centre for Cellular Microbiology, Hyderabad and one of the project leaders.

Justice B.N. Srikrishna to chair panel for ID verification firm Equal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The former Supreme Court judge Justice B.N. Srikrishna (retd.) will chair the newly formed Advisory Board of the ID verification and data sharing platform Equal. The firm provides identity authentication services for large firms, boasting digital integration with several ID providers.

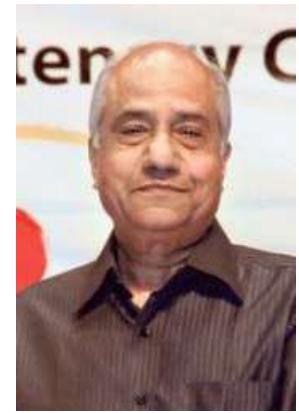
The appointment comes as the government finalises the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025, to implement the DPDP Act, 2023.

Justice Srikrishna was the chair of the first committee formed by the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to formulate a data protection law.

That committee's report, submitted in 2018, was eventually not taken up.

Justice Srikrishna has also headed the Sixth Pay Commission, chaired the Financial Sector Legislative Reforms Commission, and also led the Expert Committee on Arbitration Law to propose reforms to the Arbitration & Conciliation Act, 1996.

The Advisory Board for Equal will counsel the account aggregator OneMoney. Account aggregators



Justice B.N. Srikrishna

are firms that provide Indians with a consolidated view of their financial data, a key digitisation priority for the government.

The commitment of two firms enable "secure, compliant and consent-driven data sharing aligns closely with my work in safeguarding privacy and fostering trust in technology-based democratisation of products and services", Justice Srikrishna said in a statement provided by Equal.

"Together, we aim to create frameworks that not only drive innovation but also set global benchmarks for ethical data usage and business practices."

The Advisory Board includes retired central bankers and bureaucrats who have been key in establishing and maintaining key digitisation priorities.

The Hindu businessline Agri and Commodity Summit to be held today

The Hindu Bureau

CHENNAI



and Rural Development), will deliver the keynote address.

A session on "Why the monsoon has been raining woes over the past few years" will have expert panellists including D.S. Pai, Scientist G, India Meteorological Department; Nabanshu Chattopadhyay, Director, Agricultural Meteorology Division,

World Meteorological Organisation; Ajai Rana, Chairman, FSII and CEO, Savannah Seeds; and Neha Kumar, Head, South Asia Programme, Climate Bonds Initiative.

A session on "Overcoming climate change with new seeds, strategies" will have Venkatram Vasantavada, Director, FSII and MD & CEO, Seedworks International; Simon Wiesbusch, MD & CEO, Bayer CropScience; S. Soundararajan, CEO, HyFarm; and Sanjiv Kanwar, MD, Yara South Asia as panellists.

Interactions with 'Drone Didis' and 'Solar Didis' will add another interesting aspect to the summit.

The last session will be on "Challenges in price risk management" with panellists Kedar Deshpande, Chief Business Officer, NCDEX; Rajesh Paharia Jain; Chief Manager, Kribhco Chanakyapuri.

As Meta shifts away from professional fact-checkers, Indian firms await clarity

Aroon Deep

NEW DELHI

Indian fact-checking organisations are on tenterhooks as they await the consequences of Meta's decision to abandon its partnerships with professional fact-checking organisations in favour of a community-led model, starting with the U.S.

The change has accompanied the partisan atmosphere that has enveloped fact-checking in the U.S., where the election of Donald Trump as President has driven an ideological reorientation among Big Tech firms.

To view the live event, visit tbl.news/AS2025LS or scan the QR code. Entry is only by invitation for pre-registered participants. The event will be held from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Hotel Leela Palace, Chanakyapuri.



Partnerships with firms like Meta is a key source of revenue for certain fact-checking firms.

duction of fact-checking on social media platforms. "Cambridge Analytica happened because of Facebook," he said, recalling how the firm's user data were used for behavioural campaigns.

There was also scrutiny of the firm's role in shaping opinions leading up to Brexit, the United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union. "Fact-checkers were brought in to counter this," he said. But Mr. Trump's election and the divisive rhetoric

around fact-checking in the U.S., which drew criticism during the COVID-19 pandemic as posts and accounts were being taken down or flagged at a time when there wasn't yet total consensus among scientists on the disease's causes and origins or the risks around its vaccines, have led to resentment towards professional fact-checking by social media platforms.

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg said fact-checking organisations had behaved in a "partisan" way. He added that the new community system would face fewer accusations of bias.

As *The Hindu* had reported last May, the implementation of Community Notes on X has been impeded by a requirement that people across the ideological spectrum must agree on the inclusion of a fact-check on a post. This requirement has led to political

misinformation in particular going unchecked frequently.

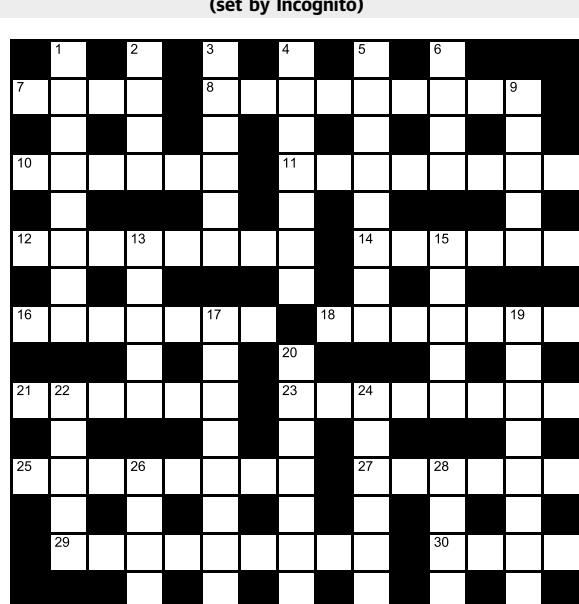
Two senior fact-checking executives contacted by *The Hindu* declined to comment on the Meta announcement's implications for India, citing uncertainty on immediate consequences. Meta has not released any timeline for if and when such a change will be implemented in other countries. Partnerships with firms such as Meta are a key source of revenue for certain fact-checking firms.

Indian law on fact-checking has been challenged in courts. The Supreme Court has stayed the notification of a fact-check unit of the Press Information Bureau from having the power to flag posts as misinformation and strip social media platforms from liability under the law.

TH CROSSWORD

14379

(set by Incognito)



Across

- 7 Heal mongrel with epilepsy at first (4)
- 8 King carelessly relaxed around one (9)
- 10 Students returned. That's a mistake (4,2)
- 11 Pulling 20 things distributed around first of October with love (8)
- 12 Extraordinarily keen to carry flower and fuel (8)

Down

- 1 Use belly dance to get a piece of candy (5-3)
- 2 Cry, "Little power" (4)
- 3 Processed image covering park shows part of target area (6)
- 4 Excitedly fed. European sat and dined sumptuously. (7)
- 5 Caruso goes around the Spanish merry-go-round (8)
- 6 Journalist meditates in absence of mates (4)
- 9 Distance covered and managed to get keys (5)
- 13 Route, possibly the type of road skirting town (5)
- 15 The sort of man you feed in dinners (5)
- 17 Salespersons carrying flat slate piece can be cold-blooded creatures (8)
- 19 Spanish truck initially carries goods transported for French food source (8)
- 20 Big cat carrying girl goes around right mechanism activating camera trap (7)
- 22 Gold from Australia? Curious! (5)
- 24 Mistakenly set RAF to attack from aircraft (6)
- 26 Irritated puss gets employer of mailman in America (1,1,1,1)
- 28 Powder used in hospital clinic (4)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site.

@ <https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn>



SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to previous puzzle

OUT OF THIS WORLD
B K P A N E A U
A E R I E N E C T A R I N E
D A R G U S T D
G R I M A C E S M E T A N A
E N R I L I T
R E I N S J I N A N I M A T E
C A N T O N E S G L O S S
H R R R R
A E R A T E S I N D I A N A
O F F L I G H T R
T O P B A N A N A O W I N G S
I E L N T O E
C O N F L A G R A T I O N S

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Vaikunta Ekadasi message

All of us pray to God every day for two things. One, to grant one's endless quest for wealth, position and health. The second prayer is to grant one moksha after performing one's duties on earth. These prayers are most fervent on Vaikunta Ekadasi. This day is hallowed, among all the 25 Ekadasis in a year, as it is on this day that Maha Vishnu Himself opens the gates of heaven for devotees, as stated in the Padma Purana and Uttara Kanda (chapters 36, 40), said Damal S. Ramakrishnan.

The game of snakes and ladders, played on Vaikunta Ekadasi, teaches one to shed ego and let go of attachments. The ladder signifies devotion to God, climbing which is rendered possible by leading a life of virtue, while the snake symbolises ego that pulls one down in all one's endeavours, most of all God-quest.

The legend behind Vaikunta Ekadasi is also one of ego and ultimate surrender to the Lord. Muran, an asura, drunk on the power of his strength gained through prayer and penance, began to harass devas, who began to lose ground to him. Upon hearing the prayers of the devas, Vishnu waged war on Muran who had already secured a boon whereby even Vishnu's powerful chakras would cause him no harm. However, proving that ego can never flourish, a female force sprang from Vishnu's chest. Identifying herself as Ekadasi, she slayed Muran and Vishnu opened the portals of heaven to devas. The day came to be celebrated as Vaikunta Ekadasi, with Vishnu granting Ekadasi's wish that anyone fasting, forgoing sleep, chanting Vishnu Sahasranamam, singing bhajans and surrendering to Him be granted heaven.

IN BRIEF



Novelis Inc plans to raise \$750 million via bonds

U.S.-based Novelis Inc, which is part of Hindalco Industries, on Thursday said its indirect wholly owned arm plans to raise \$750 million via bonds. Novelis intends to use the net proceeds from the proposed offering to repay \$738 million of outstanding debt and any remaining proceeds to fund cash on its balance sheet. Novelis Inc, a sustainable aluminum solutions provider, had reported an 18% decline in net income at \$128 million in the September quarter of 2024-25. PTI

TV Today Network to shut down 104.8 FM in six months

TV Today Network on Thursday announced that it will shut down its radio business, operated under the brand name Ishq 104.8 FM, in the next six months, citing current market dynamics. The board of the company in a meeting held on Thursday approved the proposal for the closure of the FM radio business, according to a regulatory filing. TV Today Network currently operates three FM radio stations in Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata under 104.8 FM. PTI

Tata Motors group global wholesales grew 1% in Q3

The Tata Motors group global wholesales in Q3 FY25, including that of Jaguar Land Rover, rose 1% year-on-year to 3,41,791 units. Global wholesales of all Tata Motors' commercial vehicles and Tata Daewoo range in Q3 FY25 stood at 97,535 units, lower by 1%, the company said. Global wholesales of passenger vehicles (PV) sales, including those of electric vehicles (EVs) in Q3 FY25 stood at 1,39,829 units, higher by 1% compared with Q3 FY24.



Santosh Iyer

Top-end cars drive 12% sales surge in 2024 for Mercedes

The Hindu Bureau

MUMBAI

Mercedes-Benz India sold 19,565 units in calendar year 2024 (CY24), a growth of 12.4% from CY23 despite challenging market headwinds, the company said.

"This outstanding sales was driven by a combination of newly-launched and existing vehicles and an enhanced retail customer experience," said Santosh Iyer, MD & CEO, Mercedes-Benz India.

"Demand persisted for Mercedes-Benz across its entry, core, and top-end vehicle (TEV) segments, with strong performance from new as well as existing products," he added.

"Much of the growth came from top-end vehicles. We are confident of consolidating the market gains and continue this growth in 2025," he noted.

In 2024, Mercedes-Benz launched 14 new products, including nine top-end vehicles in the Indian market. For CY25, the company said it would unveil eight new vehicles.

The firm unveiled two battery electric vehicles viz. the five-seater 'Made in India' EQS 450 SUV priced at ₹1.28 crore and off-roader G580 with EQ Technology at ₹3 crore.

CM YK

Govt. blames 'double-counting' for overestimating gold, silver import bills

Glitches in effort to migrate SEZs' trade reporting to ICEGATE system have led to both systems sharing 'mutually exclusive' data to Commerce Ministry; more corrections may be in the offing as the latest changes reflect 'first phase of reconciliations'

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

After effecting an unprecedented \$14.2 billion downward revision in India's goods imports for the first eight months of 2024-25, the Centre on Thursday said the erroneous figures were thrown up due to double counting of certain imports into Special Economic Zones (SEZs), and an official panel will be sprucing up data consistency.

Signalling that further data revisions could be in

the offing, the Commerce and Industry Ministry said the principal commodity level data "uploaded recently" by the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIS), "incorporates the first phase of reconciliations made till date".

The data review was triggered when quick trade estimates for November 2024 revealed an "unusual surge in imports of precious metals", the ministry said, pointing to the record \$14.9 billion gold import tally. The DGCIS and DG



(Systems) at the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) launched a joint scrutiny and reconciliation.

"... Primarily, it was observed that due to migration

mechanism from SEZ to ICEGATE, figures of precious metals needed revision as it was noticed as the system was calculating both imports into SEZ and subsequent clearance into DTA [Domestic Tariff Area] as separate transactions after the migration," the ministry noted.

ICEGATE is a system used to capture trade from all ports, while SEZs had a separate system – and a shift for SEZs' declarations to ICEGATE was recently effected. "However, owing to persistence of certain

technical glitches, the migration is still not complete. Both SEZ Online and ICEGATE are still capturing and transmitting mutually exclusive exim data to DGCIS," it explained.

"A committee has been formed with stakeholders from DGCIS, DC Systems (CBIC) and SEZs for creation of a robust mechanism for publishing consistent data," conveyed a statement on the trade data changes, led by a \$6 billion cut in November's import bill from the originally reported peak of \$70 billion.

TCS net up 12% to ₹12,380 cr. in Q3, to pay ₹76 as dividend

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Tata Consultancy Services Ltd. (TCS) consolidated net profit for the third-quarter ended December 31, 2024, increased 12% to ₹12,380 crore, even as macro factors of the second quarter and headwinds continued during the quarter under review, said the firm's CEO and MD K. Krishivasan.

Net margin was at 19.4% and total contract value (TCV) \$10.2 billion. Revenue at ₹63,973 crore, grew 5.6% year-on-year (yoy) and 4.5% in constant currency. Operating margin at 24.5% declined 50 basis



points. One basis point is 0.01%. The board has declared a dividend of ₹76 per share, including ₹66 as special dividend. The record date is January 17.

Briefing reporters, Mr. Krishivasan said, "Banking, financial services and insu-

rance (BFSI) and consumer business group (CBG) [verticals] returning to growth, continued stellar run of regional markets, and early signs of revival in discretionary spend in some verticals, give us confidence for the future."

Mr. Krishivasan said the change of guard in the U.S. Presidency is unlikely to impact the company.

Milind Lakkad, chief HR officer, said TCS promoted more than 25,000 associates during quarter taking the total promotions this year to over 1.10 lakh.

The attrition rate of 13% was a matter of no concern, Mr. Lakkad added.

IOC, BPCL, HPCL to get ₹35,000 crore in LPG subsidy

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Centre is likely to provide a subsidy of ₹35,000 crore to State-owned Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) to make up for losses they incurred on selling the fuel this fiscal, sources said.

The three fuel retailers have kept the price of domestic LPG unchanged at ₹803 per 14.2-kg cylinder since March 2024 despite a rise in input raw material cost. This had led to under-recoveries on LPG sales, and the resultant drastic fall in their earnings in the April-September period.

The total under-recovery on LPG sales for the industry in the current fiscal is estimated at about ₹40,500 crore. Against this, the government is likely to provide ₹35,000 crore in total spread over two financial years, two sources said. IOC, BPCL and HPCL are likely to get ₹10,000 crore during the current 2024-25 fiscal and the remaining ₹25,000 crore in the next, they said.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	THURSDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	77,620	-0.68
US Dollar	85.86	0.05
Gold	80,300	0.37
Brent oil	76.86	0.90

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter.	2477.90	-3.75
Adani Ports	1132.35	-19.95
Apollo Hosp.	7091.55	-51.10
Asian Paints	2350.20	15.85
Axis Bank	1061.75	-13.20
Bajaj Auto	8835.85	193.60
Bajaj Finserv	1690.30	-6.70
Bajaj Finance	7277.45	-77.95
Bharat Elec.	281.25	-0.85
Bharti Airtel	1607.05	7.85
BPCL	280.00	-6.80
Britannia Ind.	4926.30	66.40
Cipla	1488.20	-6.70
Coal India	372.20	-8.15
Dr Reddys Lab.	1371.60	0.85
Eicher Motors	5139.90	-23.30
Grasim Ind.	2410.40	-25.35
HCL Tech	1934.80	2.55
HFDC Life	1667.80	-26.50
Hero MotoCorp	4141.25	3.15
Hindalco	589.25	2.60
Hindustan Unilever	2435.40	34.40
ICICI Bank	1262.40	-1.35
IndusInd Bank	980.90	-0.15
Infosys	1917.30	-15.85
ITC	450.10	0.55
JSW Steel	890.50	-11.35
Kotak Bank	1790.20	21.55
L&T	3527.90	-68.45
M&M	3126.50	40.40
Maruti Suzuki	11740.55	-81.45
NestleIndia	2256.05	36.15
NTPC	320.35	-5.05
ONGC	263.18	-8.15
PowerGrid Corp	305.25	-1.40
Reliance Ind.	1254.50	-10.75
SBI	1468.45	5.30
State Bank	760.45	-10.70
Shriram Finance Ltd.	2809.85	-88.90
Sun Pharma	1826.35	-11.40
Tata Consumer Product	970.10	8.50
Tata Motors	780.10	-14.85
Tata Steel	129.93	-2.71
TCS	4038.85	-69.55
Tech Mahindra	1642.80	-20.95
Titan	3487.05	3.00
Trent Ltd.	6621.70	-77.40
UltraTech Cement	11259.80	-143.75
Wipro	292.30	-5.25

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on January 09

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	85.65	85.97
Euro	88.22	88.55
British Pound	105.15	105.55
Japanese Yen (100)	54.29	54.50
Chinese Yuan	11.68	11.72
Swiss Franc	93.90	94.27
Singapore Dollar	62.57	62.82
Canadian Dollar	59.50	59.73
Malaysian Ringgit	19.01	19.13
Australian Dollar	53.08	53.28

open liaison offices in Dubai as well as Brisbane/Melbourne, Australia.

In a filing on Wednesday, the company said the board had accorded in-principle approval for incorporation of a wholly owned subsidiary at GIFT City and the opening of the liaison offices subject to approval of the Ministry of Steel, DIPAM, and any other authority as required.

'India's new central bank chief seeks to improve forecasts'

Reuters
MUMBAI



India's new central bank governor Sanjay Malhotra has initiated a review of the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) inflation and growth forecasting tools to minimise projection errors, four sources said.

Mr. Malhotra, who took charge last month, is asking the RBI's internal teams to include new datasets, analysis and projections in inflation and growth forecasts, sources aware of the RBI's thinking said.

None of the sources wished to be identified as they are not allowed to speak with the media. The RBI did not immediately respond to a Reuters' email seeking comment.

Off the mark
The review comes amid increased scrutiny of the bank's growth and inflation estimates, which have been off the mark for much of the current fiscal year, with growth on track to be much weaker than expected and inflation higher.

At the December policy meet, the RBI cut growth forecast sharply to 6.6% from 7.2% for 2024-25 with retail inflation projections raised upwards to 4.8% vs. 4.5% earlier. This was after India's gross domestic product growth fell unexpectedly to 5.4% in the July-September quarter, its slowest in seven quarters, while inflation quickened again in November.

On Tuesday, the government forecast annual growth of 6.4% in the fiscal year ending in March, the slowest in four years and below the RBI's projections of 6.6%, weighed by weak

IOB to sell ₹11,500 cr. bad loans to ARCs

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

State-run Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) said it is selling non-performing assets (NPAs) of ₹11,500 crore to asset reconstruction companies (ARCs).

The lender said it is selling 46 loan accounts and invited expressions of interest from the

BRUSSELS

Trump must respect Greenland's sovereignty, says EU top diplomat



EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas on Thursday said that Greenland's sovereignty must be respected after President-elect Donald Trump's remarks about potential military action to seize the island. Ms. Kallas reaffirmed that "Greenland is part of Denmark" and highlighted the importance of territorial integrity. AFP

DAMASCUS

37 killed as Turkiye-backed rebels, Kurdish forces clash in Syria's east



Battles in Syria's Manbij region between Turkish-backed groups and Kurdish-led forces resulted in 37 deaths on Thursday. The fighting, supported by air strikes, involved the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and Turkish-backed factions, with casualties including combatants and civilians, a war monitor said. AFP

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka jails firebrand monk for nine months for insulting Islam



A Sri Lankan court on Thursday sentenced firebrand Buddhist monk Galagodaatte Gnanasara to nine months in prison for anti-Muslim remarks made in 2016, marking his second incarceration for similar offences. He had previously been jailed last year for disparaging the Muslim minority, which constitutes over 10% of the population. AFP

N'DJAMENA

Attack on Chad's presidential palace leaves 19 dead, 3 injured



An attack on Chad's presidential palace resulted in 18 assailants killed and six detained, with one soldier dead and three wounded. The incident occurred while President Mahamat Deby Itno was inside, but authorities quickly regained control. The attackers were described as disorganized local youth, not terrorists. AP

Wildfires rage out of control near Los Angeles, killing at least five

The biggest of the three blazes has consumed more than 5,000 acres in Pacific Palisades, a picturesque neighbourhood in west Los Angeles; officials say fierce winds were hindering firefighting efforts; California declares a state of emergency

Reuters
LOS ANGELES

At least five people were killed as several fast-growing wildfires raged out of control on Wednesday near Los Angeles, destroying hundreds of buildings, scorching hillsides and prompting officials to order some 1,800,000 people to evacuate their homes.

Fierce winds were hindering firefighting efforts and fuelling the fires, which have expanded unimpeded since they began on Tuesday.

The biggest blaze has consumed more than 5,000 acres in Pacific Palisades, a picturesque neighbour-



Smoke billows: A Bank of America building engulfed in flames in Los Angeles on Wednesday. AFP

hood in west Los Angeles County between the beach towns of Santa Monica and Malibu that is home to many film, television and music stars. More than 1,000 structures have

been destroyed, Los Angeles County Fire Chief Anthony Marrone said at a press conference on Wednesday.

Another fire, the Eaton fire, had grown to more

than 2,000 acres as it burned some 50 km inland in Altadena, near Pasadena. The L.A. County sheriff has indicated that the total death count is still being determined.

The Hurst fire, in Sylmar in the San Fernando Valley northwest of Los Angeles, had exceeded 500 acres. All three fires were 0% contained, officials said.

A "high number" of significant injuries had occurred among residents who did not heed evacuation orders, Mr. Marrone said. Officials warned that the gusty winds were forecast to persist throughout the day.

As the flames spread and residents began evac-

uating after the fires broke out on Tuesday, roads were so jammed that some people abandoned their vehicles to escape the fire. Emergency responders were going door to door to press evacuation orders.

California Governor Gavin Newsom declared a state of emergency on Tuesday. President Joe Biden planned to visit a Santa Monica fire station for a briefing from fire officials on Wednesday, the White House said.

President-elect Donald Trump, who takes office in two weeks, blamed Mr. Newsom's environmental policies for the disaster in a post on his Truth Social website.

After two years of vacuum, Lebanon elects new leader

Associated Press
BEIRUT



Joseph Aoun

Lebanon's Parliament voted on Thursday to elect Army commander Joseph Aoun as head of state, filling a more than two-year-long presidential vacuum.

The vote came weeks after a tenuous ceasefire agreement halted a 14-month conflict between Israel and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah and at a time when Lebanon's leaders are seeking international assistance for reconstruction.

Mr. Aoun was widely seen as the preferred candidate of the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, whose assistance Lebanon will need as it seeks to rebuild. The session was the legislature's 13th attempt to elect a successor to Michel Aoun, whose term ended in Oc-

tober 2022.

Hezbollah previously backed another candidate, Suleiman Frangieh, the leader of a small Christian party in northern Lebanon

with close ties to former Syrian President Bashar Assad. However, on Wednesday, Mr. Frangieh announced he had withdrawn from the race.

In a first round of voting on Thursday, Mr. Aoun received 71 out of 128 votes but fell short of the two-

thirds majority needed to win outright. In the second round, he received 99 votes.

Mr. Aoun was escorted into the parliament building in downtown Beirut where he took the oath of office.

In a speech to Parliament, Mr. Aoun pledged to carry out reforms to the judicial system, fight corruption and work to consolidate the state's right to "monopolise the carrying of weapons," in an apparent allusion to the arms of Hezbollah.

He also promised to control the country's borders and "ensure the activation of the security services and to discuss a strategic defence policy that will enable the Lebanese state to remove the Israeli occupation from all Lebanese territories".

More than 46,000 Palestinians killed in Israel-Hamas war

Associated Press
DEIR AL-BALAH

More than 46,000 Palestinians have been killed in the Israel-Hamas war, Gaza's Health Ministry said on Thursday, with no end in sight to the conflict.

The Ministry said a total of 46,006 Palestinians have been killed and 1,09,378 wounded. It has said women and children make up more than half the fatalities, but does not say how many of the dead were fighters or civilians.

Myanmar junta air strike kills 40, injures 20, drawing widespread condemnation

Agence France-Presse
YANGON



Burning houses at the site of an air strike carried out by Myanmar's military at a village in western Rakhine state on Thursday. AFP

navigated through charred ruins.

AA spokesperson Khating Thu Kha reported that initial estimates indicated

40 civilians were killed and 20 wounded. However, a local rescue worker stated that the death toll had risen to 41, with 52 injured.

The rescue team faced significant challenges in providing medical assistance due to limited supplies and difficult transportation conditions.

The military's use of air strikes against civilian communities has drawn widespread condemnation amid escalating violence following the coup that ousted Aung San Suu Kyi in 2021. The UN has warned that over 3.5 million people have been displaced by the conflict, with projections indicating that nearly 20 million people may require aid in 2025.

Militants abduct 16 mining labourers in northwest Pakistan

Associated Press
DERA ISMAIL KHAN

Militants ambushed a vehicle in restive northwestern Pakistan and abducted 16 labourers working on a mining project, police and two security officials said.

The insurgents also burned the vehicle that had been carrying the workers on a narrow road in Lakki Marwat district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan, police officer Mohammad Ijaz said.

The attack occurred as the labourers were travelling from Lakki Marwat to a nearby mining project, Mr. Ijaz said. He gave no further details. Other security officials said the mining project, police and two security officials said.

There was no immediate claim for the abduction, but suspicion is likely to fall on the Pakistani Taliban.

Djokovic could run into Alcaraz in the last eight

AUSTRALIAN OPEN



Juicy match-up: Fans would relish the prospect of Djokovic taking on Alcaraz before the summit clash. AFP

Fritz will open against fellow American Jenson Brooksby.

Djokovic and No. 3 Carlos Alcaraz could meet in the quarterfinals, with a possible semifinal against No. 2 Alexander Zverev.

Aryna Sabalenka, attempting to win a third consecutive women's sin-

Sport

Satwiksairaj and Chirag in last eight

Press Trust of India
KUALA LUMPUR

The doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty cruised to the quarterfinals of the Malaysia Super 1000 badminton tournament here on Thursday.

No. 2 Iga Swiatek and 2022 Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina are on the other half of the draw.

The Australian Open starts on Sunday morning in Melbourne and will run for 15 days.

Djokovic will be playing in his first event alongside new coach Andy Murray, his former on-court rival and a three-time Major champion.

Third-seeded Coco Gauff is a potential semifinal rival for Sabalenka.

Challenging

Gauff has a challenging first-round match against former Australian Open champion Sofia Kenin and is in the same section of the draw as four-time Major winner Naomi Osaka and seventh-seeded Jessica Pegula.

No. 2 Iga Swiatek and 2022 Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina are on the other half of the draw.

The Australian Open starts on Sunday morning in Melbourne and will run for 15 days.

Djokovic will be playing in his first event alongside new coach Andy Murray, his former on-court rival and a three-time Major champion.

Sabalenka also has 17-year-old Mirra Andreeva and Zheng in her section.

It's Del Aviz vs. Knotty Patton in feature event

RACING

BENGALURU: Del Aviz and Knotty Patton may fight out the title of the J.B. Mallardha Vyapari Memorial Trophy (I,200m), the main event of the races to be held on Friday (Jan. 10). False rails (width about 4.5m from 1,600 to the winning post) will be in position.

1. GOKAR FALLS PLATE (2,000m)

maiden 3-y-o only, 2-15 p.m.: 1. Lex Luther (I) Shreyas S 60, 2. Vyasa

(4) Trevor 60, 3. Gandolfini (2)

Srinath 55 and 4. Mystical Air (3)

Akhay 55.

1. VYASA,

2. MIRACLE STAR,

3. KHAZANA,

3. HAZAL.

4. FRANKEL TROPHY (1,100m),

maiden 3-y-o only, 3-45 p.m.: 1. El Rey (8) Vinod Shinde 56,

2. Magnetar (6) Sandesh 56, 3.

Most And More (7) Darshan 56, 4.

Ransomware (2) M. Rajesh K 56, 5.

Hazel (5) Akshay K 54.5, 6. Honeypot (1) Angad 54.5, 7. Khazana (4)

Trevor 55.8, 8. Miracle Star (9)

Mukesh K 54.5 and 9. Queendom (3) Jagadeesh 54.5.

5. CHITRADURGA PLATE (1,400m),

rated 40 to 65, 5-y-o and over, 4-45: 1. Blue God (7)

Sandesh 61.5, 2. Auspicious Queen (2) Kiran Rai 60.5, 3. Armory (4) M. Rajesh K 58.5, 4.

Crosswater (3) Aleemuddin 57.5,

5. Dynamic Force (8) Hemant 57,

6. Sekhmet (5) Darshan 55, 7.

Sundance Kid (1) Mukesh K 54

and 8. Vayu (6) Jagadeesh 52.

1. AUSPICIOUS QUEEN,

2. BLUE GOD,

3. SEKHMET

7. SHARAVATI PLATE (DIV. I),

(1,200m), rated 20 to 45, 5-y-o and over, 4-45: 1. Extraordinary

(4) P. Sai Kumar 62, 2. Own Legacy (2) Rayan 62.3, Precious Gift (3) Shreyas S 61.5, 4. Ebote (7)

Trevor 60.5, 6. Chisox (6) Faiz 59.5, 7.

Baasha (5) Vivek 59 and 8. Super

Kind (1) R. Pradeep 57.5.

1. EXTRAORDINARY,

2. EBOTE,

3. ISABELLE

Day's best: VYASA

Double: DEL AVIZ – AUSPICIOUS

QUEEN Jkt: 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7; Tr (i): 2, 3 and 4; (ii): 5, 6 and 7.

Star Admiral (6) Rayan 53 and 10.

Del Aviz (5) Akshay K 52.

IDEAL PLATFORM

Golden opportunity for younger players to impress, says Smriti



India skipper Smriti Mandhana feels that the series against Ireland is a perfect platform for the younger players to stake a claim for selection ahead of the ODI World Cup, which India is hosting later this year. "It's an opportunity for the other players (Minnu Mani and Priya Mishra, in pic) to impress."

Smriti-led India keen to sustain momentum in ODIs against Ireland



Purple patch: Smriti will look to continue her fine form.

X@BCCIWOMEN

IRELAND IN INDIA**Press Trust of India**

RAJKOT

The Women in Blue, riding high after a dominant performance against the West Indies, will look to carry forward the momentum when they take on Ireland in the opening ODI here on Friday.

India had blanked the West Indies 3-0 in the ODI series after a 2-1 win in the T20I series. Smriti Mandhana emerged the top run-scorer across formats, scoring 148 runs in the ODI series, including two half-centuries, and 193 runs in the T20s, with three successive fifties.

Smriti will look to bring the same form as she leads the team in the absence of regular captain Harmanpreet Kaur, who has been rested alongside fast bowler Renuka Singh.

The teams (from):
India: Smriti Mandhana (Capt.), Deepthi Sharma (Vice-capt.), Pratika Rawal, Harleen Deol, Jemima Rodrigues, Uma Chetry (wk), Richa Ghosh (wk), Tejal Hasabnis, Raghvi Bist, Minnu Mani, Priya Mishra, Tanuja Kanwer, Titas Sadhu, Saima Thakor and Sayali Satgare.
Ireland: Gaby Lewis (Capt.), Ava Canning, Christina Coulter Reilly, Alana Dalzell, Laura Delany, Georgina Dempsey, Sarah Forbes, Arlene Kelly, Joanna Loughran, Aimee Maguire, Leah Paul, Orla Prendergast, Una Raymond-Hoey, Freya Sargent and Rebecca Stokell.
Match starts at 11 a.m.

Lancers bounce back to edge out Team Gonasika

Kina and Zalewski find the target as the home side climbs to the third spot; defensive errors prove costly for the visitors after they seize the lead through Sunil's strike in the 14th minute

HIL**Y.B. Sarangi**
ROURKELA

Vedanta Kalinga Lancers rallied to beat Team Gonasika 2-1 in a keenly contested affair and record its second consecutive victory in the Hockey India League (HIL) at the Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium here on Thursday.

The win over Gonasika, which played on consecutive days, enabled Lancers to jump to the third spot.

Lancers used both the flanks and had more circle entries in the first quarter but Gonasika held tight to deny an early advantage to the home side. Lancers' lone penalty corner saw Alex Hendrickx shoot wide.

However, it was Gonasika which drew first blood close to the first breather.

Lee Morton sent in a cross from the right and S.V. Sunil controlled the ball at the goalmouth before tapping it in to the disappointment of local fans.

Lancers improved its performance in the second quarter.

Nicholas Bandurak scored for the host in the 23rd minute and video um-



Roaring success: Lancers, undaunted by an early reverse, hit back strongly. HIL

pire Anand Dangi, following a referral, advised that the goal should stand. However, after seeing the replay on the big screen, on-field umpire Coen van Bunge overruled Dangi's decision and disallowed the goal on the grounds of dangerous play by Lancers.

The Lancers frontline had some frustrating moments due to lack of coordination. But, when Gonasika was down to 10 men as Manpreet Singh was shown the green card, Antoine Ki-

na took advantage of a defensive lapse on the top of the circle to slam home the equaliser minutes before half-time.

After the change of ends, Lancers continued to apply pressure and penetrated the Gonasika circle a few times. It got into the lead despite issues with its passing. Hendrickx's accurate pass from outside the circle on the left was guided in by captain Aran Zalewski in a crowded 'D'. Incidentally, Gonasika was

again down by a man because of Arajeet Singh Hundal's suspension.

Lancers created chances but struggled with finishing in the final quarter. Dilpreet dived forward spectacularly to a cross from Angad Bir Singh from right but could not send the ball in. His side, however, held on to its lead till the end.

The result: Vedanta Kalinga Lancers 2 (Kina 28, Zalewski 33) bt Team Gonasika 1 (Sunil 14).

Batters falter as Tamil Nadu falls short in the chase against spirited Rajasthan

HAZARE TROPHY**S. Dipak Ragav**
VADODARA

Abhijeet Tomar's superbly-paced century (111, 125b, 12x4, 4x6) and a disciplined all-round bowling effort powered Rajasthan to a 19-run win over Tamil Nadu in the pre-quarterfinals of the Vijay Hazare Trophy here at the Kotambli Stadium on Thursday.

Asked to bat first, Rajasthan was bowled out for 267 despite Tomar's heroics and skipper Mahipal Lomor's breezy half-century (60, 49b, 3x4, 4x6) at the top of the order. The duo forged a 160-run alliance for the second wicket off just 132 balls and laid the platform for a big total.

Varun at it
However, Varun Chakaravarthy (five for 52) bowled TN back into the contest, running through Rajasthan's batting line-up as he scalped his fourth List A five-wicket haul.

In reply, TN got off to a flyer when N. Jagadeesan (65) smashed pacer Aman Singh Shekawat for six



The sizzlers: Tomar smashed 12 boundaries and four sixes in his century while Varun picked up five wickets. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR



The sizzlers: Tomar smashed 12 boundaries and four sixes in his century while Varun picked up five wickets. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

boundaries in the second over. The five-time champion was in complete control, managing 70 for two in the first PowerPlay.

Even though Rajasthan dried up the runs through their spinners once the field spread out, Jagadeesan and B. Indrajith kept the asking rate in check.

Soft dismissals
But a spate of soft dismissals saw the southern side squander their advantage. Jagadeesan first lofted left-arm spinner Ajay Kookna

straight to long-off before Indrajith's half-hearted ramp off Shekhwat went straight to the third-man fielder.

Vijay Shankar (49) and S. Mohamed Ali (34) got the chase back on track during their 51-run partnership for the fifth wicket.

However, against the run of play, Mohamed Ali set off for a non-existent single from the non-strikers end and ran himself out. It was the opening Ra-

jasthan needed to close out the contest and set-up a

quarterfinal clash against Vidarbha on Sunday.

Earlier, Tomar, who was dropped on zero, was watchful in the first 10 overs before unleashing his full range of strokes.

The Rajasthan opener used his reach to hit through the line and punished anything short by using the cut shot to good effect against the tweakers.

Just when Rajasthan looked set for a big total, Varun struck thrice in three overs to turn the tide in his team's favour. Lomor's

side lost its last seven wickets for 58 runs to be bowled out in the 48th over. But in the end, Rajasthan had enough on the board.

The scores: Rajasthan 267 in 47.3 overs (Abhijeet Tomar 111, Mahipal Lomor 60, Varun Chakaravarthy 5/52) bt Tamil Nadu 248 in 47.1 overs (N. Jagadeesan 65, Vijay Shankar 49, Aman Singh Shekawat 3/60). Haryana 298/9 in 50 overs (Parth Vats 62, Nishant Sindhu 64, Sumit Kumar 41 n.o., Mohammed Shami 3/61) bt Bengal 226 in 43.1 overs (Abhishek Porel 57, Parth Vats 3/33).

The Chennaiyin No. 10's

Honours even as OFC digs deep to deny Chennaiyin

ISL**Sankar Narayanan E.H.**
CHENNAI

Defensive errors were aplenty in the Chennaiyin FC-Odisha FC Indian Super League fixture at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here on Thursday.

The honours were split 2-2 after a pulsating contest as Odisha found two late goals to cancel out Wilmar Jordan Gil's brace earlier in the second half.

Both teams had nothing great to show in the attacking front in the first period. While CFC resorted to long balls to find its goal, OFC found it difficult to piece together any meaningful efforts with its superior ball possession.

The game, though, came alive after the break.

Odisha custodian Amrinder Singh's miss-pass was intercepted by an alert Connor Shields and his measured assist to Gil was calmly converted by the Colombian in front of goal.

The Shields-Gil pair pounced on another chance shortly.

The Chennaiyin No. 10's



Game of fine margins: Gil was on song for the hosts with a brace, but Odisha stormed back to restore parity. R. RAGU

run through the left flank had the Odisha defence lose its shape and Gil was stationed perfectly inside the box to receive the pass and slot the ball in to double the host's advantage.

Rahul K.P.'s bicycle kick hit the post and ricocheted onto the Chennaiyin goalkeeper who had no time to prevent the inevitable.

The result: Chennaiyin FC 2 (Gil 48, 53) drew with Odisha FC 2 (Dorielton 80, Nawaz og-90+8).

NATURAL LEADER

Gavaskar backs Bumrah to succeed Rohit as Test captain

**COMEBACK**

McSweeney returns to Australia squad for Sri Lanka tour

**TESTING TIMES**

Cummins' 'sore ankle' a worry for Aussies ahead of Champions Trophy



An injury concern looms over Australian skipper Pat Cummins ahead of next month's Champions Trophy with the pacer set to undergo a scan on his "sore ankle", and chairman of selectors George Bailey refusing to confirm his availability for the marquee event, starting on February 19.

Mo Farah announced as ambassador of Mumbai Marathon



Extra special: Farah will be in attendance to make a landmark 20th edition even more memorable. REUTERS

Sports Bureau

MUMBAI

ago," Farah, the only runner to achieve a double of a gold medal in 5,000m and 10,000m at an Olympic edition, said in a message relayed on Thursday.

"Road running has been a catalyst for change, as has the city of Mumbai. I am looking forward to seeing a superb celebration amidst the sights and sounds of Mumbai. I'll be there cheering for everyone at the start line."

Farah, the Somalia-born British legend, holds a record 10 global championship gold medals (four Olympic and six World titles). He has been hailed as the greatest ever distance runner.

He will be among the dignitaries who will flag off the event at the iconic Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus.

threatened to equalise throughout the fag end of the match and restored parity through Mohammad Nawaz's own goal in added time.

Rahul K.P.'s bicycle kick hit the post and ricocheted onto the Chennaiyin goalkeeper who had no time to prevent the inevitable.

The result: Chennaiyin FC 2 (Gil 48, 53) drew with Odisha FC 2 (Dorielton 80, Nawaz og-90+8).

M ND-NDE

IN BRIEF



West Ham hires Potter as its new manager

West Ham hired Graham Potter as manager on Thursday, a day after Julen Lopetegui was fired. Potter has been out of management since he was removed by Chelsea in 2023 after just seven months in the job at Stamford Bridge.

Women's Team-D and Team-A register victories

Reema Sisodia (61, 79b, 8x4) and Kanika Ahuja's (65, 60b, 5x4, 2x6) knocks helped Team-D win against Team-E by 40 runs in the BCCI Senior Women's One Day Challenger trophy in Chennai on Thursday. In another match, Team-A defeated Team-C by four wickets, thanks to skipper Shafali Verma's half-century (87, 58b, 9x4, 5x6).

The scores: Team-D 263/7 in 50 overs (Reema Sisodia 61, Kanika Ahuja 65, Laxmi Yadav 40 no., Amanjot Kaur 3/40) bt Team-E 223/9 in 50 overs (S. Shubha 34, Shweta Sehwariat 34, Ayushi Soni 61 no., Suresh Dibyadarsini 3/36). Team-C 242 in 50 overs (Yastika Bhatia 31, Henrietta Pereira 52, Sneha Rana 35, Kausalya Choudhary 40, Arundathi Reddy 3/35) lost to Team-A 245/6 in 45.2 overs (Shafali Verma 87, Dhara Gujar 30, Tanusree Sarkar 30, Shipra Giri 43).

Ambrish, Jayant and Kishore take Tamil Nadu to 358/7

Half-centuries by B.K. Kishore (54, 217b, 7x4) and R.S. Ambrish's (85, 114b, 7x4, 3x6) and an unbroken 79-run eighth-wicket stand between R.K. Jayant (79 batting, 82b, 10x4, 2x6) and R. Pravin (25 batting) powered Tamil Nadu to 358 for seven against Gujarat on the third day of Cooch Behar Trophy final in Ahmedabad on Thursday.

The scores: Gujarat 380 vs Tamil Nadu 358/7 in 131 overs (B.K. Kishore 54, R.S. Ambrish 85, R.K. Jayant 79 batting, Khilan Patel 3/141).

LIVE TELECAST

Badminton: Malaysia Open: Sports 18-3 & Hotstar, 6.30 a.m. **India Women vs Ireland Women:** 1st ODI, Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & JioCinema, 11 a.m. **I-League:** Sony Sports Ten 2 (SD & HD) & LIV, 3.30 & 7 p.m. **ISL:** Sports 18-3 & JioCinema, 7.30 p.m. **Hockey:** HIL, DD Sports, Sony Sports Ten 1, 2, 3 & LIV, 8.15 p.m. **Bundesliga:** Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 1 a.m. (Saturday) **Serie A:** gxr.world, 1.15 a.m. (Saturday) **LaLiga:** gxr.world, 1.30 a.m. (Saturday)

Yuki Bhambri and Albano Olivetti enter Auckland semifinals

Sports Bureau

Yuki Bhambri and Albano Olivetti pipped third seeds Julian Cash and Lloyd Glasspool 3-6, 6-4, [12-10] in the doubles quarterfinals of the \$766,290 ATP tennis tournament in Auckland, New Zealand on Thursday.

Other results: \$100,000 Challenger, Nonthaburi: **Doubles:** Quarterfinals: Daniel Cukierman (Isr) & Joshua Paris (G.Br) bt Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan & Vijay Sundar Prashanth 6-2, 6-0.

\$15,000 ITF men, Manacor, Spain: Pre-quarterfinals: Manas Dhaman bt Karsa Rahmani (Irl) 6-0, 7-6(5).

First round: Manas bt Patrick Foley (GBR) 6-1, 6-3.

\$60,000 ITF women, Nonthaburi: **Pre-quarterfinals:** Petra Marcinko (Cro) bt Sahaja Yamalapalli 6-4, 6-3.

Doubles: Quarterfinals: Patcharin Cheaphchandee & Punnin Kovapitukted (Tha) bt Alicia Barnett (G.Br) & Prarthana Thombare 6-4, 3-6, [10-7]; Rutuja Bhosale & Eudice Chong (Hkg) bt Hiroko Kuwata & Naho Sato (Jpn) 7-5, 6-7(12), [10-7].

\$30,000 ITF women, Nairobi: **Doubles: Quarterfinals:** Ksenia Laskutova & Monika Stankiewicz (Pol) bt Sravya Shivan & Vanshita Pathania 6-3, 6-1; Demi Tran & Lian Tran (Ned) bt Priyanshi Bhandari & Laalitya Kalluri 6-2, 6-2.

Waikar named men's team skipper for World Cup

The leadership role underlines his status as one of the best players in the country; women's team will be led by Priyanka; India will field one additional team each in men's and women's sections

KHO KHO

Vivek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

Kho kho has been a part of Pratik Waikar's life since the age of eight. The game might have begun as a fun activity or a welcome distraction from academics during his school hours, but succeeding in it as the years passed has propelled the 32-year-old from Pune to becoming the captain of the Indian men's team for the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup.



Waikar. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

sides being part of the national team since 2016, when it won gold in the South Asian Games, he has starred for Telugu Yoddhas in Ultimate Kho Kho.

Big responsibility

"I was expecting to be named captain, but it is a very big responsibility to lead the country in the World Cup. I hope to live up to the expectations. I

would want the entire team to play with discipline and focus and win the tournament," Waikar told *The Hindu* after India's men's and women's squads were announced on Thursday. "This is a huge opportunity for all the players. The hope now is for kho kho to become a global sport and get a lot of recognition."

While Waikar sensed an almost instant connection with this indigenous sport in school, the decision to become a professional kho kho player wasn't straightforward. From the lack of exciting opportunities to financial uncertainties, the man from Maharashtra had a lot to weigh up.

"Earlier, there wasn't financial support in kho kho. People would say this isn't a professional game. In terms of jobs and prize money, other sports were far ahead. So, there was resistance," he explained.

"My aim then was to just represent my State and see

how things go. But the interest kept increasing. I was also getting success and so I continued. Right after I turned 18, I got a job in the Maharashtra State Electricity Board. So my parents were happy and they never stopped me from playing kho kho after that."

The women's team, meanwhile, will be led by Priyanka Ingle. The 24-year-old also hails from Pune. India will also field one additional team each in the men's and women's sections.

The squads: Men: Pratik Waikar (capt.), Prabani Sabar, Mehl, Sachin Bhargo, Suyash Gargate, Ramji Kashyap, Siva Pothir Reddy, Aditya Ganpule, Gowtham M.K., Nikhil B., Akash Kumar, Subramani V., Suman Barman, Aniket Pote, S. Rokeson Singh.

Women: Priyanka Ingle (capt.), Ashwini Shinde, Reshma Rathore, Bhilari Devjibhai, Nirmala Bhati, Neeta Devi, Chaitra R., Subhashree Sing, Magai Majhi, Anshu Kumari, Vaishnavi Bajrang, Nasreen Shaikh, Meenu, Monika, Nazia Bibi.



Rethin Pranav in action on Thursday. KAMESH SRINIVASAN

cond set after a tussle in the first.

The results (quarterfinals): Boys: Rethin Pranav bt Samarth Sahita 6-3, 3-6, 6-4; Donghyun Hwang (Kor) bt Arnava Paparkar 4-6, 6-4, 7-5; Hyeon Seok Seo (Kor) bt Arturs Zagaras (Lat) 7-5, 6-4; Roshan Santhosh (USA) bt Damir Zhalgasbay (Kaz) 6-1, 2-6, 7-6(4).

Girls: Polina Berezina bt Polina Kuharenko 7-5, 2-6, 6-2; Ekaterina Tupitsyna bt Allegra Davies (GBR) 7-6(9), 7-5; Maaya Rajeshwaran bt Rada Zolotareva. Maaya led 6-3, 1-0 when Rada retired.

In the girls' section, Maaya Rajeshwaran continued with her fine performance as she got past seventh seed Rada Zolotareva. Maaya led 6-3, 1-0 when Rada retired.

In the semifinals, Maaya will be up against the second seed Eleejah Inisan of France, who beat the fifth seeded Serb, Petra Konjikusic, with ease in the se-

Rethin Pranav wriggles past Samarth Sahita

TENNIS

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

The reigning National men's champion Rethin Pranav shut out the challenge from Samarth Sahita 6-3, 3-6, 6-4 in the quarterfinals of the ITF junior tennis tournament at the DLTA Complex on Thursday.

Even though he was unable to play at his best, and allowed a 3-0 lead in the second set slip, top seed Rethin had enough resources at his disposal to quell the spirited approach of the talented Samarth with a classic single-handed backhand.

In the semifinals, Rethin will be challenged by fourth seed Donghyun Hwang of Korea who wriggled past Arnava Paparkar 7-5 in the third set.

In the girls' section, Maaya Rajeshwaran continued with her fine performance as she got past seventh seed Rada Zolotareva. Maaya led 6-3, 1-0 when Rada retired.

In the semifinals, Maaya will be up against the second seed Eleejah Inisan of France, who beat the fifth seeded Serb, Petra Konjikusic, with ease in the se-

Bhriguanshi stars as Delhi downs Kerala, takes on Karnataka in men's quarterfinals

BASKETBALL

Sports Bureau

Vishesh Bhriguanshi was in splendid form as he scored 35 points to guide Delhi to a 81-66 victory over Kerala in the last league match of the 74th National basketball championship in Bhavnagar on Thursday.

In the women's section, Tamil Nadu will take on the winner of the match between Chandigarh and Uttar Pradesh while Railways will clash with the winner of the Rajasthan-Gujarat contest.

In the women's section,

Tamil Nadu will play Madhya Pradesh in the quarterfinals, while Delhi will meet Chhattisgarh.

Defending champion Railways will take on the winner of the contest between West Bengal and Gujarat. Kerala will lock horns with the winner of the Maharashtra-Karnataka clash.

The results: League: Men:

Group-A: Delhi 81 (Vishesh Bhriguanshi 35, Joginder Singh 18, Prince Tyagi 12) bt Kerala 66 (Sejin Mathew 14, Antony Johnson 12, Vaisak Manoj 12, Joshua Oommen 12).

B: Railways 81 (Vishnu Prasad 13, Amrendra Naik 11, Santosh Mani 10) bt MP 63 (Harshwardhan Singh 19, Rakesh Sharma 17, Brijesh Tiwari 15).

Karnataka 78 (Priyanshu Tomar 21, Aaron Monterio 12) bt Chandigarh 51 (Gandham Sai Roshan 16, Vaibhav Saini 12).

Women: **Group-A:** Railways 102 (T. Dharsini 16, K.B. Harshita 14, P. Priyanka 14, Sathyu Senthilkumar 12, Rashi Kotan 11) bt Punjab 46 (Kanishka Dhir 11) bt Punjab 46 (Kanishka Dhir 11).

12, Babnam Jassal 12).

Karnataka 63 (C.N. Suprita 19, Ruth Blessen 18, T. Mohanbal 11) bt MP 56 (Riya Khungahdkar 19, Yashika Singhal 11, Priya Goswami 10).

B: TN 92 (Harima Sundari 14, Krithika Suresh Kumar 13, Angel Jevitha 12) bt UP 49.

Chhattisgarh 87 (Divyani Gangwal 30, Nisha Kashyap 21, Shanti Xaxa 17) bt Gujarat 85 (Aahana George 31, Naomi Lakhpal 20, Archi Patel 14).

Kerala 67 (R. Sreekala 18, Chippy Mathew 14, Kavitha Jose 12, Susan Florentina 12) bt Gujarat 59 (Hemangane Gamit 16, Naomi Lakhpal 15, Aahana George 11).

S.D. Prajwal Dev beat fifth seed Yurii Dzhavakian of Ukraine 6-4, 7-5 in the pre-quarterfinals of the \$30,000 ITF men's tennis tournament at the Arera Club, Bhopal, on Thursday.

The results: Pre-quarterfinals: Luca Caselnuovo (Sui) bt Mathys Erhard (Fra) 3-6, 7-6(0), 7-5; Eric Vanshelboim (Ukr) bt Dev Javia 6-3, 7-6(7); Alastair Gray (G.B.R) bt Siddharth Vishwakarma 6-3, 6-4; Egor Agafonov bt Kosuke Ogura (Jpn) 3-6, 6-2, 6-2; Maxim Zhukov

bt Yuta Kawahashi (Jpn) 4-6, 7-5, 6-1; Sergey Fomin (Uzb) bt Vladyslav Orlov (Ukr) 6-4, 6-2; S.D. Prajwal Dev bt Yurii Dzhavakian (Ukr) 6-4, 7-5; Sidharth Rawat bt Rohan Mehra 6-4, 6-2.

Doubles: Quarterfinals: Yeongseok Jeong & Uisung Park (Kor) bt Constantine Koumzine (Fra) & Orlov 6-4, 6-3; Sai Kartee Reddy & Vishnu Vardhan bt Castelnouvo & Vanshelboim 6-4, 6-4; Maan Kesharwani & Mehra bt Nitin Kumar Sinha & Manish Suresh Kumar 7-6(5), 2-6, 12-10; Chirag Duhan & Dev Javia w/o Parikshit Somani & Dhakshineswar Suresh.



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*EXTRACT OF AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024 (₹ in crores)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter ended December 31, 2024 (Audited)	Quarter ended September 30, 2024 (Unaudited)	Quarter ended December 31, 2023 (Audited)	Nine Months ended December 31, 2024 (Audited)	Nine Months ended December 31, 2023 (Audited)	Year ended March 31, 2024 (Audited)
1.	Total Income from Operations	1,698.99	1,630.38	1,253.20	4,84		

Back to the drawing board as questions about the road ahead loom large

Tours of Australia generally have a way of shaking up the established order, especially when they don't produce the desired results. A limited restructuring can't be ruled out before India heads to Dubai for the Champions Trophy in six weeks' time in search for its first global 50-over title since 2013



GETTY IMAGES

R. Kaushik

It's been less than a week since India slumped to a six-wicket defeat at the Sydney Cricket Ground which saw them relinquish their grip on the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. The final Test, and the 1-3 score line, was a disappointing outcome for a team which had promised much after its surprise victory in the series-opener in Perth, but which went steadily downhill as the five-match showdown claimed its inevitable victims.

The biggest setback for the visitors was the loss for a Test and a half of Jasprit Bumrah, the stand-in captain in Sydney after Rohit Sharma opted out owing to poor form. Rohit's decision is unprecedented in Indian cricket; 31 runs from five innings after missing the Perth win owing to paternity leave convinced the 37-year-old that on current form, he didn't deserve a place in the best Indian XI for the series decider against Pat Cummins' Australia. It's another matter that the man for whom he made way, Shubman Gill, didn't exactly cover himself in glory with two poor strokes that extended his abysmal record outside Asia in the four years since his excellent debut down under on India's previous tour in 2020-21.

Bumrah was the standout performer throughout the series and on a tricky surface which perhaps took even Sydney curator Adam Lewis by surprise, he could only bowl 10 overs for the match. There is no gainsaying how Australia's chase of 162 on day three would have unravelled had the brilliant pacer been available for battle. The back spasms that kept him out of commission must surely be a huge source of concern. Bumrah had surgery on that part of his body a couple of years back, is 31 and pencilled in to be Rohit's successor. That's in the long term. In six weeks' time, India will line up in Dubai for the Champions Trophy and the leadership group will be hoping Bumrah is fully fit by then as they renew their quest for their first global 50-over title since 2013.

The biggest talking points from a series that could so easily have gone the other way had India seized key moments were the sub-par performances of the captain and his predecessor. Rohit's poor form began at the start of the home international season in September against Bangladesh, spilled over to the three Tests against New Zealand and came to a shuddering denouement in Australia.

Between the middle of September and the end of December, in eight Tests and 15 innings, the captain had a solitary half-century and a slew of single-digit scores against his name. As form slumps go, this was quite extraordinary, leaving huge question marks hanging over his Test future. India's next Test assignment isn't until June in England, when another five-Test series beckons. Rohit has little chance to work himself back among red-ball runs unless he chooses to skip the IPL and hops across to England for the County Championship. The chances of that happening - your guess is as good as ours.

Achilles heel

India's cause was further hampered by Kohli going off the boil at about the same time. A second-innings century in Perth had sparked the hope that it would be the start of another spectacular outing for the right-hander in the land where he made his first Test ton in early 2012, but that proved to be a false dawn. As much as the bouquet of low scores - his next highest score in the series was 36 - what was particularly startling was his inability to arrest an alarmingly similar mode of dismissal. Eight times out of eight, he was out caught behind the wickets, feeling for deliveries he could well have left alone. Scott Boland alone accounted for him four times, reopening old wounds first inflicted by James Anderson and England in 2014. In 10 innings then, Kohli made only 134 runs, after which he embarked on a five-year journey of dismantling bowling attacks all over the world. Now 36, it's debatable if Kohli can reprise that magical run.

Which begs the question - as India brace for the start of the next World Test Championship cycle, what do they do with Rohit and Kohli? The argument that their contributions allow them to exit on their own terms is floating around in many quarters and while there is no questioning the roles they played in bolstering India's global image as a cricketing force, the decision-making group will ponder long and hard over what tack to embrace. By the time of the England series, Rohit will be 38. He has shown himself to be selfless and a team man above all and anyone else, and if he feels that the fire is still burning bright, he will commit himself to one final, glorious hurrah, just as Kohli will.

But the temptation for Ajit Agarkar's selection panel and for head coach Gautam Gambhir, also under strife with

India losing six and winning just three Tests in his 10 games at the helm, to make a fresh start might be overwhelming. There have been promising signs from Yashasvi Jaiswal, one of the few top-order batters to return from Australia with his reputation enhanced, and from the young duo of Nitish Kumar Reddy and Washington Sundar, both of whom have shown that they deserve to be in the top half of the batting order. Alongside K.L. Rahul, once again lapsing into inconsistency after starting the series with so much confidence and ending it in typically underachieving fashion, and Rishabh Pant, these three could form the core group going forward.

Concentration lapses

Normally, Gill too will automatically figure in this list but the right-hander from Punjab has a singularly unedifying record outside the subcontinent. Since his 91 against Australia in Brisbane in January 2021, his highest score in England, Australia, the West Indies and South Africa combined in 10 Tests in 36. For someone batting in the top three, that's a miserable return. Gill looks like a million dollars when he is on song, but he has been prone to concentration lapses and to rushes of blood that have pegged his average back to a middling 35.05 after 32 Tests. As it is, Rahul himself has an average of 33.6 after 58 Tests and a decade at the international level. These are not encouraging numbers. To be blessed with great talent is one thing, to maximise it is something else, and it's this yawning gap between ability and performance that Rahul and Gill have been unable to bridge.

R. Ashwin's sudden, mid-series retirement leaves a huge lacuna in home Tests though overseas, he has been used sparingly in the last half-decade and therefore that might not be that much of a factor. Ravindra Jadeja's future too has come under focus after mediocre scores at No. 6 in the last three Tests in Australia and while India will be hard pressed to find replacements for the two all-rounders who boast more than 800 wickets and nearly 7,000 runs (10 centuries) in Tests between them, time doesn't stand still for anyone, does it?

The pace department, which will be expected to do the bulk of the heavy lifting in England as the next WTC cycle kicks off, is heavily dependent on Bumrah, and that is only to be expected when one is so far ahead of the rest of the support cast. Bumrah's 32 wickets put

him in rarefied territory; oftentimes, he was unplayable with old ball and new, with red ball and pink. Such is his genius that he will continue to spearhead the Indian bowling till such time that he is playing the game. While the threat levels inevitably drop when he is off the attack, India do have reasonable depth that should be bolstered further by the imminent return after more than 14 months of Mohammed Shami.

Siraj's milestone

In Sydney, Mohammed Siraj became the latest Indian bowler to reach the milestone of 100 Test wickets. It took him 36 games doing so, which might appear unflattering till one figures out that he has a strike rate of a wicket every 53.1 balls and that he is very sparingly used in India even when he is in the playing XI. Siraj had a good tour of Australia, 20 wickets - the fourth most across the two teams - at a strike rate of 47.15, but against Bumrah, those numbers have been deemed commonplace. Siraj will accept that he could have done better, but like Akash Deep, the rub of the green didn't quite go his way throughout the five games. He did show mettle, leadership and bottle while bowling 11 unchanged overs in the Sydney second innings in a desperate bid to make up for Bumrah's non-availability, but how does anyone ever compensate for life without Bumrah?

Bumrah, Siraj, Shami, Deep and Prasidh Krishna is almost as good a pace crop as any going in the world currently - don't forget the 'almost'. Deep has played only seven Tests and Prasidh three; both are 28, therefore not exactly spring chickens but with enough experience to continue to progress along expected lines. England will test them even more than Australia because they won't get the same purchase from the surfaces and because Bazball will place great demands on their character, apart from their skills. How well Siraj, Deep and Prasidh back up Bumrah and Shami, and how much Nitish develops as a quick, will be watched with keen interest. Nitish is scheduled to work on his bowling with former India bowling coach Bharat Arun in the immediate future, indicative of the 21-year-old's determination not to let the grass grow under his feet.

Tours of Australia generally have a way of shaking up the established order, especially when they don't produce the desired results. Maybe not *perestroika*, but a limited restructuring can't be ruled out this time too.

THE GIST

▼ The biggest talking points from the series were the sub-par performances of captain Rohit and Kohli

▼ The most significant setback was Bumrah — the standout performer throughout the series — missing a Test and a half

▼ Jadeja's future too has come under focus after mediocre scores at No. 6

▼ Jaiswal, one of the few top-order batters to return from Australia with his reputation enhanced, and the young duo of Nitish Kumar Reddy and Washington could form the core group going forward, along with Rahul, and Pant

SCIENCE



According to the IOC, screening and health evaluation are the only ways to reduce the incidence of cardiovascular accidents. FILE PHOTO

'Periodic screening' required to avert sudden cardiac deaths in athletes

During vigorous physical activity, there is a substantial increase in sympathetic nervous system activity. In predisposed individuals, this surge can trigger arrhythmias and potentially lead to sudden cardiac arrest. Understanding this mechanism is crucial for prevention and risk assessment.

Lakshmi Sundar

Exercise is a vital tool for promoting health and well-being. It improves cardiovascular risk factors like lipid levels, hypertension, insulin sensitivity, and weight. Multiple studies have established a positive correlation between moderate aerobic exercise and reduced risk of coronary artery disease. However, instances of sudden cardiac death (SCD) in athletes, while rare, remain a significant concern that requires careful attention and preventive measures.

SCD is defined as a sudden, unexpected death due to cardiac causes or sudden death in a structurally normal heart with no other explanation and a history consistent with cardiac-related death. The most common cause of SCD is sudden cardiac arrest (SCA), characterised by an unexpected circulatory arrest typically due to cardiac arrhythmia, occurring within an hour of symptom onset. SCA may be reversible with prompt medical intervention, particularly defibrillation.

SCD in athletes draws unwanted media attention and emotionally affects the athlete and the family. An activity that is normally associated with health can draw negative attention.

What does exercise do?

What happens during exercise? During vigorous physical activity, there is a substantial increase in sympathetic nervous system activity. In predisposed individuals, this surge can trigger arrhythmias and potentially lead to sudden cardiac arrest. Understanding this

mechanism is crucial for prevention and risk assessment.

The risk factors for SCA and SCD include coronary artery disease, a genetic predisposition, hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, and arrhythmias; pre-existing heart conditions, weight issues, high-intensity exercise without proper training, a history of smoking (current or past), and increased ambient temperature.

According to International Olympic Committee recommendations, pre-participation screening and periodic health evaluation are the only ways to reduce the incidence of cardiovascular accidents and other injuries in athletes.

Elite athletes and people in competitive sports who perform at the highest level are not exempt from cardiovascular incidents on the field. Although the incidence is low, hereditary and congenital abnormalities of the heart are the leading cause of non-accidental deaths in young athletes.

The World Athletics Health and Science Department, based on IOC guidelines, recommends a pre-participation medical evaluation (PPME) at the start of the season for athletes in competitive sports. This includes personal history, family history, physical examination, and 12-lead resting ECG. Those with a positive history or findings will be further evaluated with an echo cardiogram, ambulatory ECG, stress testing, or cardiac MRI, as the case may be.

A study conducted on the benefits of PPME demonstrated a drop in the incidence of SCD by 90% in young athletes from 3.6/100,000 person-years to 0.4/100,000 person-years. They also found that most of the deaths in athletes under 35 years are due to congenital or

acquired cardiac malformations. In the middle-aged population it is due to undiagnosed coronary artery disease.

This kind of screening may not be possible in mass endurance events where the majority of participants are recreational athletes. As event organisers, the registration form for such events could carry specific questions that could identify at-risk individuals. Such individuals could be asked to get a thorough assessment to be done by their physician before the event. Medical bibs could be distributed to help identify athletes at risk.

Despite screening, sudden cardiac arrest may be challenging to predict. But evidence points to excellent survival rates after arrest in this group when appropriate resuscitation is started promptly. For every minute delay, there is a 7% decreased chance of survival. Personnel trained in CPR and access to defibrillators on the route and at sports venues are crucial in reducing the incidence of sudden cardiac death. It is essential for race organisers to have a medical team and plan in place for events with mass participation. The goal isn't just to identify risk – it's to create pathways for safe participation whenever possible.

Health evaluations

The onus just doesn't lie on the organisers. As athletes, competitive or recreational, it is important to have periodic health evaluations. A metabolic panel with a 12-lead ECG is sufficient as step 1. The ECG needs to be read by a trained physician who is aware of the physiological and structural adaptations in the heart of an athlete. There is no benefit in doing an echocardiogram or cardiac MRI as a primary prevention tool.

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Athletes should also be honest in providing correct medical information.

Although SCD is rare, it is a traumatic event that has a significant impact on society. Exercise is health-promoting and the benefits for physical and mental well-being far outweigh the risks. The risk of sudden cardiac death is higher in those with pre-existing conditions, and hence it is important that exercise be carried out under supervision or with the help of a trained coach. While sudden cardiac events in sports are concerning, they shouldn't prevent us from embracing the profound benefits of physical activity.

Through thoughtful preparation, supportive communities, and responsive care systems, we can create environments where everyone can pursue their athletic aspirations safely. By combining evidence-based preventive measures and responsible training with compassionate support systems, we can help ensure that sports remain a source of health, joy, and community for all participants.

(Dr. Lakshmi Sundar is president of the Indian Society of Lifestyle, a board certified LM Physician and has been certified in race emergency medicine by the World Endurance Medicine Academy. sundarlakshmi@hotmail.com)



Participants in the Chennai Marathon 2025 which was held last Sunday. RAGU R

Medical tents keep marathon runners out of the danger zone

Sahana Mira S

A marathon is not a run in the park, it comes with its levels of difficulty for the athletes, but also for the organisers. A great deal of preparation is required to iron out the logistics. During the race, medical management is the only thing that stands between euphoria and a possible tragedy.

Over 25,000 runners laced up at 3 a.m. for the Chennai Marathon, hosted by Chennai Runners on Sunday. There were many first-timers amongst this number who took the 10 km route from Napier Bridge. Seasoned runners tackled the half marathon and the full 42 km run, concluding at the Indian Maritime University (IMU) on East Coast Road. But between the adrenaline and the cheers, there were a few incidents, which were handled by race medical director Lakshmi Sundar and her squad of first responders and doctors spread across all 8 zones the run covered.

Dr. Sundar said that the medical team had prepared for various levels of health support, with some zones focusing on minor issues that were treated with ice packs and foot elevation, and some on non-critical care too, while the third level was emergency life support. On reaching the Indian Maritime University, the medical team dealt with the kind of emergencies that accompany long-distance running, such as hyperthermia (elevated body temperature) and hyponatremia (low sodium levels).

Dr Sundar identified a case involving severe hyperthermia. A runner who had completed her race was brought to the tent showing signs of disorientation. The medical team immersed her in a complete ice water bath, leaving her head exposed outside the tub, to cool her core temperature. Once

The medical tent at the IMU was equipped with critical care and non critical care beds, buckets of ice, and an ice water bath, alongside doctors with an AED defibrillator

stabilised, she was transferred to an emergency bed, dried off and left the venue an hour later.

The medical tent at IMU was equipped with critical care and non critical care beds, buckets of ice, and an ice water bath, alongside doctors with an AED defibrillator. Other incidents on the day included runners who fell on the Adyar Bridge and suffered open wounds that were treated at the tent. Another runner who felt discomfort abandoned the race and was monitored using an ECG.

There were many cases of cramping, but with buckets of ice, they were able to get back on the road. The first responders also provided salt to runners in the tent experiencing dizziness due to dropping levels of sodium in the blood.

The doctors observed that participants in the 10-km run, many of whom were new to running, experienced mostly minor injuries. This was partly because of the lack of preparation – some runners hadn't eaten properly before the race, while others overhydrated. Doctors attending to the initial zones of the 10-km run, including assistant race medical director Erika Patel and lead doctor Tamil Anbu, treated cases of nausea, sprain, ankle inflammation, and falls. (sahana.mira@thehindu.co.in)

Let medical reasons guide decisions to perform hysterectomies, say specialists

Ramya Kannan

National attention has been sought and secured on the conduct of caesarean sections, pointing out a possible excess. The likely reliance on more than medical factors to perform the procedure has also become an issue. Calls to regulate have been loud and purposeful, particularly recently in Karnataka. But activists also point to hysterectomies, raising the question of whether such procedures are being done only when warranted.

Does the social and economic status of a woman impact the decision to perform a hysterectomy? What are the factors that truly influence the decision in health care settings in the country?

A study of National Family Health Survey-4 data on hysterectomies revealed that on either end of the income and literacy spectrum, more women were undergoing surgery to

remove the uterus.

In an article *Hysterectomy across Different Occupational Groups of Women in India: A Cross-sectional Study*, recently published in the *Journal of Medical Evidence (AIIMS Rishikesh Journal)*, authors Gaurav Gunnal and Sudeshna Roy (from the Department of Biostatistics, International Institute for Population Sciences) recorded that while five in every 100 women had undergone a hysterectomy, it was more likely to be high among agricultural workers in India and women in high-income groups.

Dual trend

"Our paper indicated a dual trend where women from both ends of the wealth/education spectrum exhibit a tendency to undergo hysterectomies, though for different reasons and under distinct circumstances," said Mr. Gunnal.

For women agricultural workers limited awareness of sexual and reproductive health, delayed treatment of

gynaecological issues, and poor hygiene are primary causative factors.

"In addition, we need to factor in menstrual taboos, the physical burden of labour-intensive agricultural work, and a desire to eliminate menstruation-related disruptions to their productivity when it comes to these women."

The authors point out that financial incentives through public health insurance schemes sometimes enable access to hysterectomies. Also significant is the lack of alternative treatment options and counselling, which further pushes these women toward hysterectomy.

Ms. Roy points out that on the other side of the spectrum, women in the highest wealth quintile also tend to have more hysterectomies since they are able to afford the expense.

Surgery the last option

Hrishikesh Pai, past president, Federation of Obstetric and Gynaecological Societies of India, says the bottom

line is that every woman should get the right treatment.

"Any medical treatment starts with conservative management; only if that fails do we look at minimally invasive interventions; surgery is the last option," he says. Dr. Pai was on the committee that drew up guidelines for conducting hysterectomies and fixed the protocol and standardised algorithms for the treatments.

"What is important is to maintain equity of care for all. We must give the same treatment to all women, but we are not able to do so. Clearly the yardstick is not merely clinical, it involves the social and economic as well. However, we are doing well – regulations are in place – and monitoring is important in order to ensure that no woman gets treatment that she does not need," Dr. Pai emphasises.

Last year, the Supreme Court urged states and union territories to implement guidelines to monitor "unnecessary" hysterectomies with

in three months. This followed a public interest litigation that alleged "unnecessary hysterectomies" were carried out in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, and Rajasthan under the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana.

Excessive bleeding

Excessive menstrual bleeding was the most common underlying condition for undergoing hysterectomy, many studies have shown.

"Ultimately, it is when the patient comes to us that decides what kind of treatment can be started," says N. S. Kanimozi, obstetrician and gynaecologist and founder of Thaimai Hospital, Chennai. There already exists a rural-urban divide in terms of when women report problems, she adds.

"In our experience, we find that sometimes women only notice they have a problem after they have fainted. They do not think excessive bleeding is abnormal. There is a fainting episode after which they are forced to seek care."

"The immediate task is to treat the anaemia and narrow down on the basic cause – if there are fibroids or cysts. We then put them on drugs, oral contraceptives, and if this does not work, we start procedures such as endometrial ablation, and hormonal Intra-Uterine Device insertions. It is only when all this fails that we need to schedule a hysterectomy," Dr. Kanimozi explains.

She said with modern devices, it is now possible to do minimally invasive hysterectomies, and open surgery is rare. In her opinion, the baseline for determining the course of treatment should be the condition of the patient, and the doctor must be satisfied that the only option left is to perform a hysterectomy. (ramya.kannan@thehindu.co.in)

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